

Latest Updates from the NCGA



From Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
To <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
Date 2022-04-01 17:10

Natasha
MARCUS
NC Senate District 41



NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

April 1, 2022

The NCGA is not in session, so there are no votes to report this week.

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Access to Healthcare and Medicaid Expansion



The [Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Access to Healthcare and Medicaid Expansion](#) met again this week to discuss and debate the future of healthcare in North Carolina. This week's discussion focused on the [SAVE Act](#), a bipartisan bill that would

modernize nursing regulations and ease the requirements that make it costly or difficult for nurse practitioners to treat patients. This bill would be especially impactful in rural areas, where there are often physician shortages. I was **proud to co-sponsor the SAVE Act** during long session, and hope we will see it again for short session.

Healthcare experts both in support of and against the bill gave presentations during the committee meeting. Notably, nearly every legislator who spoke during the committee meeting was in strong support of the SAVE Act. Unfortunately these meetings are not recorded, but you can read the presentations from this past committee meeting [here](#).

The Hunt Institute Legislator Retreat on Education



Last weekend I was back in the Triangle for The Hunt Institute's Annual Legislators Education Retreat. We heard from education experts on **teacher retention, the pipeline to higher education, workforce development, and more.**

One of the more impactful experiences was the small group discussion with early childcare workers about how hard it is to provide **affordable, quality childcare to working families.** It's clear we need to support this industry in order to grow our state's economy and our next generation. You can read more about what we discussed during the retreat [here](#).

Tour of New Parr Center at CPMC



The New Parr Center is four buildings in one -- a library, a theater, a student union, and student services



Mecklenburg Delegation members with Dr. Deitemeyer, President of CCCC (From L to R: Rep. Majeed, Sen. Marcus, Rep. Belk, Dr. Deitemeyer, Rep. Hunt, Rep. Carney, Rep. Harris, Rep. Logan)

Last week I was treated to a sneak peek of the amazing new Parr Center about to open at [Central Piedmont Community College](#) with the Mecklenburg Delegation. It's a combined library, student Union, student services office, art gallery and theater. It's all brand new and so beautiful! This will be a fantastic new hub for students. Did you know that **most students can attend CCCC for FREE right now thanks to the NC Longleaf Grant Program?** Find out more at [this link](#).

Meeting with Alliance Health: Updates on LME/MCO Realignment



This week I met with representatives from Alliance Health for updates on the recent LME/MCO Realignment for Mecklenburg County. We made the transition from Cardinal Innovations effective December 1, 2021 and, from all accounts, it's been a smooth switch for patients and families needing care for **behavioral health, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance abuse and traumatic brain injury**. If you are not receiving the services you believe you deserve, please let me know and I can help you get in touch with their staff.

NCGA Page Program Applications



APPLICATIONS OPEN ON APRIL 4TH

The NCGA Page Program is open to NC high school juniors and seniors to learn about and participate in the legislative process in our state for a 1-week period during the summer.

**The program will be offered the following weeks:
May 23-26, May 31 - June 2, June 6-9, June 13-16,
June 20-23, June 27-30**

Interested applicants can email me at natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov for the application link. Learn more about the program at the link below.

<https://ncleg.gov/Senate/PageProgram>

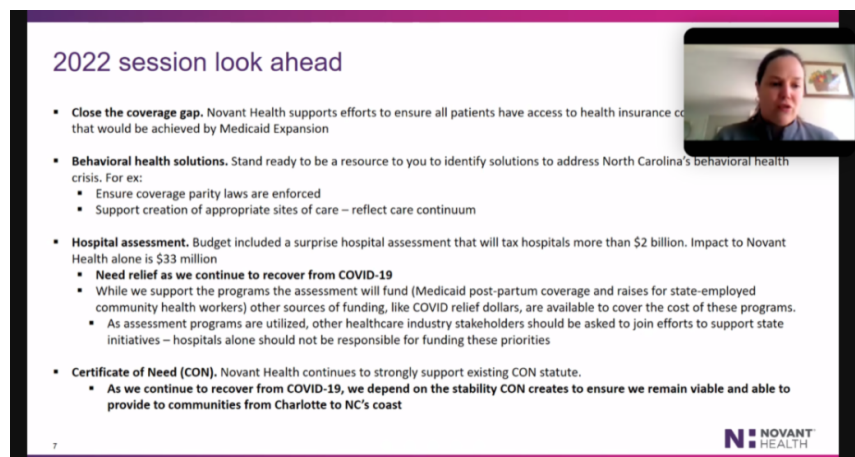
Senator Natasha Marcus

The Page Program is returning to the NCGA after a hiatus due to the pandemic. We will welcome high school juniors and seniors from across the state to the NCGA this summer for this great program. **This one-week program offers young men and women the opportunity to learn about and participate in the legislative process of our state.** Senate Pages are important to the operation of the General Assembly as they assist the members and staff of the Senate during the legislative session.

The program will be offered the following weeks: May 23 - 26, May 31 – June 2, June 6 – June 9, June 13 – 16, June 20 – 23, and June 27 – 30. Availability of weeks is based on a first-come, first-served basis. No experience necessary. Parents of pages will be responsible for securing lodging during the time their child serves.

Applications will be available starting Monday, April 4. If you or someone you know is interested in applying, please email me at natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov for the application link. You can learn more about the application process and the Page Program [here](#).

Novant Health Briefing for State Legislators



2022 session look ahead

- **Close the coverage gap.** Novant Health supports efforts to ensure all patients have access to health insurance coverage that would be achieved by Medicaid Expansion
- **Behavioral health solutions.** Stand ready to be a resource to you to identify solutions to address North Carolina's behavioral health crisis. For ex:
 - Ensure coverage parity laws are enforced
 - Support creation of appropriate sites of care – reflect care continuum
- **Hospital assessment.** Budget included a surprise hospital assessment that will tax hospitals more than \$2 billion. Impact to Novant Health alone is \$33 million
 - **Need relief as we continue to recover from COVID-19**
 - While we support the programs the assessment will fund (Medicaid post-partum coverage and raises for state-employed community health workers) other sources of funding, like COVID relief dollars, are available to cover the cost of these programs.
 - As assessment programs are utilized, other healthcare industry stakeholders should be asked to join efforts to support state initiatives – hospitals alone should not be responsible for funding these priorities
- **Certificate of Need (CON).** Novant Health continues to strongly support existing CON statute.
 - **As we continue to recover from COVID-19, we depend on the stability CON creates to ensure we remain viable and able to provide to communities from Charlotte to NC's coast**

NOVANT HEALTH

Last week legislators from across the greater Mecklenburg region heard from [Novant Health](#) leadership about issues currently facing their facilities. Our conversation included workforce challenges, COVID-19 updates, and key policy issues facing the healthcare system. I was happy to see that **closing the Medicaid coverage gap is one of their top**

priorities for 2022.

Mecklenburg Delegation Tour of International Paper Plant



Earlier this week I joined the Mecklenburg Delegation for a tour of the [International Paper Plant](#) in Charlotte. They operate 3 facilities in Charlotte and have nearly 1,600 employees in their unionized workforce across the state. The plant in West Charlotte makes boxes for major companies like McDonald's, Gatorade, Tyson and Kroger. It was a great opportunity to meet some of their staff and tour the facility.

Mark Your Calendar: Virtual Listening Session

THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY DELEGATION TO THE
NC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST VIRTUAL LISTENING SESSION OF 2022



Thursday, April 21 | 8:00 PM

Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/mecklenburgdelegation>

*Attendees must sign up in advance to join the Listening Session

The Mecklenburg County Delegation to the NC General Assembly is hosting our first virtual listening session of the year on **Thursday, April 21st at 8pm**.* The 17-member Delegation wants to hear from you about what is on your mind, what you would like us to know about your community, and what you would like us to work on. **This is your opportunity to talk to us and for us to listen.** Attendees must sign up in advance to join the Listening Session. I hope you will join us.

*Note the start time is 8pm, not 7pm.

[Sign Up Here](#)

NC Department of Justice Panel on Cannabis Policy




Considerations for Structuring Legal Cannabis Supply

Office of the NC Attorney General
Series on Medical Marijuana
April 1, 2022

Rosanna Smart, PhD
Associate Director, RAND Drug Policy Research Center
Economist, RAND

Today, Attorney General Josh Stein hosted the third in his series of webinars about **legalizing cannabis in North Carolina**. This is an issue that may come up during the short session this Spring. You can watch the full presentation [here](#).

COVID-19 Updates



**Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests,
Free Shipping**

U.S. households can place a total of 2 separate orders for free at-home COVID-19 rapid tests (4 tests per order). If an order was previously placed for your address, you can place a second order now.

Note: No physical mail is associated with this notification.

DHHS recently changed the data points on their dashboard. This week's results of the 6 data points are below, and you can read the full report [here](#).

- Wastewater testing remains steady at 1.2 million particles. This is an early, reliable indicator of how much of the virus is present in the population.
- COVID-like illness in hospital emergency departments remains steady at 2%.
- COVID-19 reported cases for the week are down to 2,733 from 2,919.
- COVID-19 hospital admissions of COVID-19 patients the week are down to 319 from 401.
- Booster rates are 50% for the total population. We have 76% of adults with at least one dose and 38% of children and teens ages 5-17 with at least one dose.
- 81% of the cases are Omicron BA.1, 19% are Omicron BA.2.

Additionally, there are more **free at-home COVID-19 tests** available, you can place your order [here](#).

Booster Shot: the **4th COVID-19 booster shot** is available for people 50 and older and certain people who are immunocompromised. A Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech booster is

available at least 4 months after their last dose. You can learn more about who is eligible [here](#) and how to schedule an appointment [here](#).

Cornelius Survey on American Rescue Plan Funds



The Town of Cornelius will be allocated \$9.6M through the [American Rescue Plan Act](#) (ARPA). The purpose of these funds is to help **communities respond to the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by improving, assisting, and serving our community.**

The Town is seeking public input on how the ARPA funds should be spent in Cornelius. Complete the survey [here](#).

Women in STEM Event in Charlotte

CALLING ALL STEMINISTS

STUDENTS MIDDLE SCHOOL AND OLDER, TEACHERS AND PARENTS

LEARN ABOUT A FUTURE IN STEM WITH
AEROSPACE ENGINEER SHAYLA RIVERA

Students, educators and parents **FREE!**

[BFBFoundationshayla.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bfbfoundationshayla)

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022
10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

CENTRAL PIEDMONT'S DALE F. HALTON THEATER
Following Shayla's talk, all attendees are invited to a MEET AND GREET WITH SHAYLA

Raffle Drawing \$500 CASH **FREE TSHIRTS FOR FIRST 100**

Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor
SECU

Hosted by BFB Foundation
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The information in this flyer is not sponsored or endorsed by the Board of Education, the District, or the School System.

We need more women in STEM. You're invited to a free event next Saturday designed to **encourage girls to consider this career path.**

[Central Piedmont Community College](#) and [BFB Foundation](#) invite you to an upcoming free speaker event featuring aerospace engineer, Shayla Rivera, to be held in CPCC's Halton Theater.

Rivera is a former rocket scientist with NASA turned salesperson, corporate trainer, and now international keynote speaker, TEDx speaker, TV & radio host. She is also the current director of the ENGR[x] program and professor of practice with the College of Engineering at Texas A&M University. She has been a lifelong champion of science and education.

All are invited to come and be inspired. You don't have to be a girl interested in STEM.

Reserve Your Ticket Here

Property Tax Exemptions for Low-Income & Elderly Mecklenburg Residents



If you are at least 65 years old, have a low income, and are a homeowner in Mecklenburg County, you may qualify for a property tax exemption - the Homestead Exemption. Applications are due by June 1. You can find more details about eligibility and how to apply at this [link](#).

Career Fair for Individual with Disabilities



The NC Office of Human Resource will hold a virtual **career fair for individual with disabilities** on Wednesday, April 13th from 9am to 6pm. This event is free and open for every level of candidate, from experienced professionals to recent graduates. Learn more about the event and register [here](#).

U.S. Census Data and Impacts on NC

CAROLINA DEMOGRAPHY

The [2021 county population estimates](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau are the first set of population estimates based on the 2020 Census. **73 NC counties have grown since 2020**, and our state [grew by 112,000 people or 1.1% between April 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021](#), faster than the national rate of 0.1%. The counties with the fastest-growth were coastal

counties and Triangle suburbs.

Learn More Here

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to receive future editions, please subscribe at [this link](#) or email me at Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov and let me know you want to subscribe to the biweekly newsletter.

Contact Our Office

Phone: (919) 715-3050

Email:

Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov

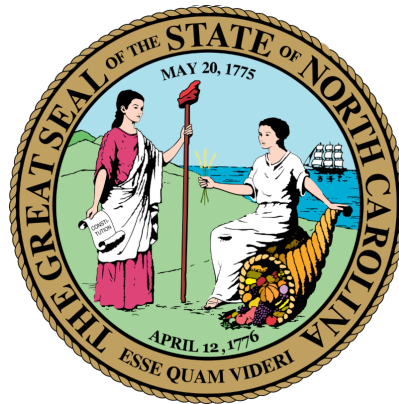
Jessica.Bolin@ncleg.gov

Mailing Address:

300 N. Salisbury Street,

Rm. 519

Raleigh, NC 27603



How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



Sen. Natasha Marcus, District 41 | 300 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27603

[Unsubscribe sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org](mailto:sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org)

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