

SPAM Latest Updates from the NCGA



From Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
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NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

April 29, 2022

Tour of the NC Zoo with Joint Legislative Oversight Committee



One of the perks of serving on the [Joint Legislative Oversight Committee for Agriculture and Natural and Environmental Resources](#) is getting special behind the scenes access at the world-class North Carolina Zoo. **The NC Zoo is the largest natural habitat zoo IN THE WORLD.**

Our tour included an opportunity to pet a “baby” rhino named JoJo and to stand very close (but just out of reach of) an African elephant named Artie. Our state’s zoo is really amazing and I am proud to support recent investments to add new areas: Asia, Africa and Amazon -- all coming soon. If you have not visited recently, you should plan a trip. Tell them Senator Marcus sent you.

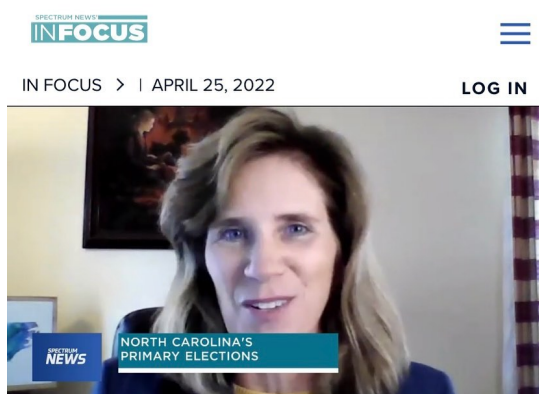
Please remember to only support zoos with AZA (Association of Zoos & Aquariums) accreditation.

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 telehealth services. The committee heard from industry experts from across the country, including Dr. Rissmiller, the Executive Vice President of [Atrium Health](#), on the benefits and potential unintended consequences of telehealth services. You can read the presentations from this week's committee meeting [here](#). This was the final meeting before Short Session begins, and the **committee Chairs stated that there is still not a final consensus on if there will be a plan to include Medicaid expansion in legislative discussions for Short Session.**

Interview with Spectrum News on Voting Rights

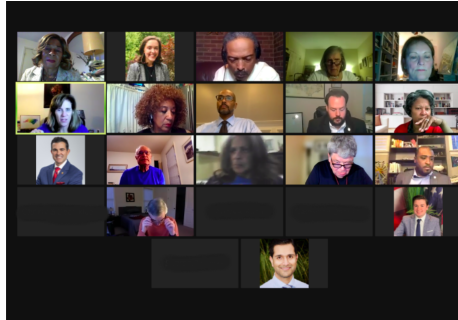


Earlier this month I recorded an interview about voting rights with the "In Focus" News Show on Spectrum News. The other guest was Senator Hise, Chair of the Senate Elections Committee. You can see that interview [here](#).

I spoke about the [recent](#) court ruling that it is unconstitutional to deny people their right to vote while they are on probation or parole. **The court held that once incarceration ends, voting rights must be restored.** This is the largest expansion of

voting rights in NC since the Voting Rights Act in 1965, impacting 50,000+ North Carolinians.

Mecklenburg Delegation's First Virtual Listening Session of the Year



Thank you to everyone who joined the Mecklenburg Delegation for our first Listening Session of the year last week. We appreciated hearing from you about **climate change, labor rights, criminal justice reform, healthcare access, nursing home regulations**, and more.

If you were unable to attend, I encourage you to reach out to your respective legislators if you have comments you wish to share. You can find your legislators' contact information [here](#).

Cornelius Residents Advocate to Save Smithville with ARPA Funds



I joined residents of Cornelius at Town Hall on April 18 to **urge the Town Board to appropriate the \$6.6 million needed to enact the Smithville Revitalization Plan**. The town is getting a total of \$9.6 million of federal ARPA funds, which is separate from its regular revenues and budget. Willie Jones, who has been the leader in developing the Plan, asked the Board to "Please take

responsibility,” after so many years of ignoring the needs of this historically African American neighborhood and its residents. **It's a matter of racial equity and important for preservation of history and affordable housing.**

The Town will be seeking a second round of resident input soon, so you are encouraged to respond to that with your priorities. I will continue to seek state funding to help fund this important effort to Save Smithville.

Rest in Peace



Jessica Boesmiller with her family



Senator Marcus and former Huntersville Mayor Jill Swain in 2014

This week, we lost two very special women.

Jessica Boesmiller was diagnosed with ocular melanoma during her pregnancy with her twins, about five years ago. The cancer spread through her body. Despite many heroic attempts to save her life, she died this week, leaving everyone who knew her heartbroken. I knew her from our time at the Lake Norman YMCA and want to express my deep condolences to her husband, Mark, their four children and the rest of her family. Her obituary and information about services is [here](#). Jessica's death is a powerful reminder about why we need to keep pushing for research about the cause of OM in our area.

We are also in shock to learn of the sudden and unexpected death of **Jill Swain**, former mayor of Huntersville and well-known community leader, volleyball coach, and friend to many. She was healthy, but hospitalized with a sudden onset infection of some kind, declined quickly, and passed yesterday morning. I want to extend my deep condolences to her family, especially her children. James Funeral Home of Huntersville is handling funeral arrangements. You can read more about Jill [here](#).

Good News: Transportation Revenue Forecast





Many areas of SD41 need road improvements due to population growth. [NC Department of Transportation](#) has been underfunded, causing many local projects to be delayed. This week, we got some good news about revenue for DOT and I'm hopeful that this will mean **local road projects can get moving forward without further delays.**

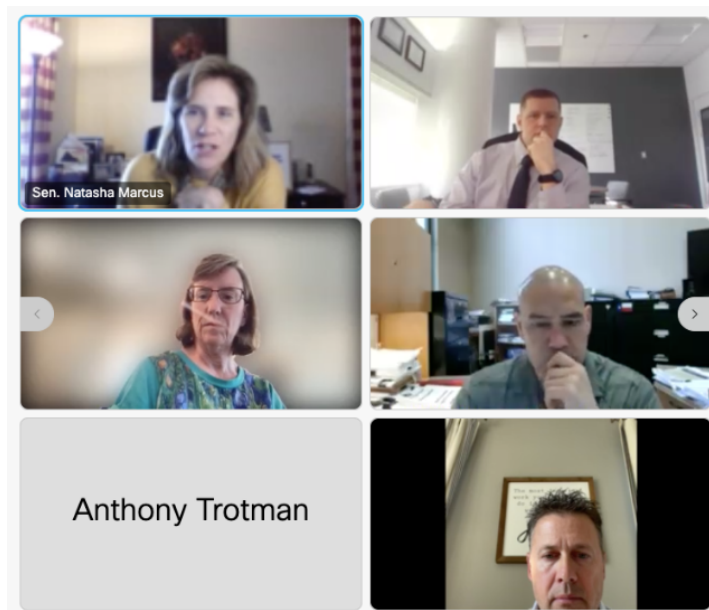
The Fiscal Research Division and the Office of State Budget and Management have reached consensus on revisions to the Highway Fund and Highway Trust Fund forecast for the 2021-23 biennium.

The **forecast expects revenue to be above the amount budgeted to the Department of Transportation**, which was based on the June 2021 revised forecast.

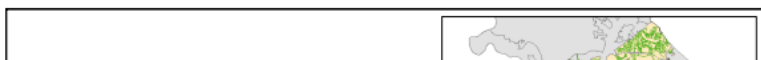
- For FY 2021-22, the current fiscal year, combined Highway Fund and Highway Trust Fund revenues are revised upward by \$182.5 million (4.4%).
- For FY 2022-23, forecasted revenues for the two funds are revised upward by \$248.9 million (5.7%).

The current year's anticipated over-collection is driven by motor fuel tax collections, which increased because consumption returned to pre-pandemic levels faster than anticipated in the June 2021 forecast. In addition, the rise in vehicle prices led to highway use tax collections exceeding expectations. The highway use tax is charged when a vehicle is sold, and the amount of tax is based on the price of the vehicle.

Preparing for Short Session

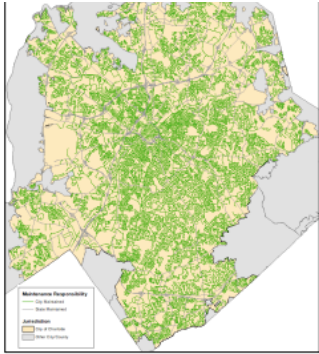


Meeting with Mecklenburg County Stakeholders, including the Towns of Davidson, Cornelius and Huntersville



Street Maintenance and Powell Bill Funding

- ▶ State Powell Bill allocations fund a large part of the City's local street maintenance budget
- ▶ Over the past two years, the City's Powell Bill allocation has been capped at an amount below the City's FY 2020 statutory allocation
- ▶ **Request** is that the City's allocation be restored to statutory funding



CITY OF CHARLOTTE

Screenshot from City of Charlotte Presentation. Restoration of full [Powell Bill](#) funding is one of the city's top priorities.

Short Session at the General Assembly begins in a few weeks. In preparation, I have chaired the Mecklenburg Delegation in meetings with county and city local leaders to hear about their legislative priorities. Our conversations have included the desire for more local government authority, funding for road maintenance and transportation projects, and criminal justice reform. Our meeting with the City of Charlotte is recorded [here](#).

American Airlines Celebrates 40 Years at Charlotte Douglas International Airport



This week I joined members of the Mecklenburg Delegation, City of Charlotte officials, Congresswoman Adams, Congressman Bishop and Senator Tillis to celebrate American Airlines' 40th anniversary at the Charlotte airport. The program included a fashion show of uniforms over the past 40 years. I appreciated the opportunity to join these elected officials and airport staff to hear more about the impact American Airlines has had on our region over the past decades.

NCGA Page Program Applications

PAGE PROGRAM

**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.

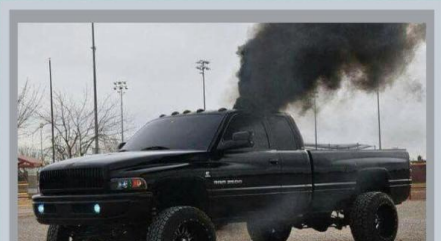
The program will be offered the following weeks: May 23 - 26, May 31 – June 2, June 6 – June 9, June 13 – 16, June 20 – 23, and June 27 – 30. **Availability of weeks is based on a first-come, first-served basis.** No experience necessary. Parents of pages will be responsible for securing lodging during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

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](#).

Studying Impacts of Coal Rolling in North Carolina

Rolling Coal in the US


Coal rolling is the process of modifying a vehicle's exhaust system or engine to emit excess exhaust.




The practice of rolling coal has a negative impact on air quality equivalent to that of 9 million, emission-compliant pickup trucks.

compliant pickup trucks


Issues of Enforcement



**No Preventative
Hard/Software**




**Police
Inaction**



**Tamper-Friendly
Vehicle Inspectors**

Tampered Diesel Pickups
15%

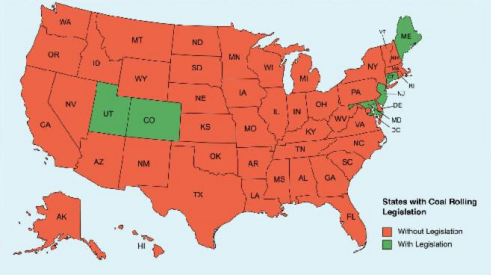


Un-Tampered Diesel Pickups
85%

Emission Facts:

The EPA estimates that rolling coal has contributed to an excess release of:

- 570,000 tons of Nitrous Oxide
- 5,000 tons of Particulate Matter



States with Coal Rolling Legislation

Legend:
■ Without Legislation
■ With Legislation

REFERENCES

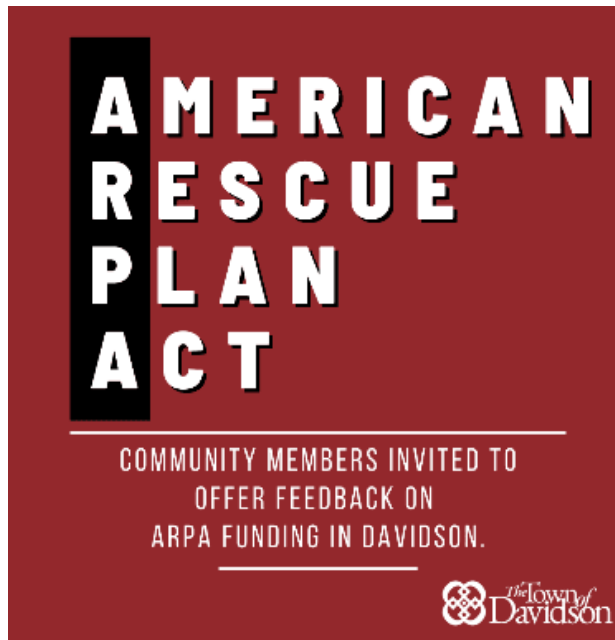
- https://www.autoevolution.com/pdf/news_attachments/the-epa-says-diesel-pickup-trucks-are-rolling-coal-like-theres-no-tomorrow-152156.pdf
- <https://www.surreyautorepair.com/engine-tune-up>
- <https://carorbis.com/blog/what-is-an-emission-control-system-different-types-and-how-they-work/>
- <https://www.sttrib.com/opinion/bagley/2018/08/06/bagley-cartoon-air-we/>
- <https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/industry-car-manufacturing-cartoon-vector-24391133>
- <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/541909767642125947/>

I am working on the issue of coal rolling, which poses a **growing public safety and environmental threat**. For those who are unaware of the practice, it is summed up in the graphic above.

I sought the assistance of the [Duke PolicyLab](#) to assess which policy solutions would be most successful. Their advice was to change the law to allow citations for rolling coal and to expand vehicle inspections to include a check for the after-market modifications which enable diesel vehicles to roll coal.

I will continue to consider the options about how to proceed and will be working with my colleague in the House, Rep John Autry. If you have been the target of coal rolling in NC, please contact my office.

Survey for Davidson Residents on American Rescue Plan Funds



The Town of Davidson invites residents and other community members to attend one of several **upcoming public input sessions and offer their input on American Rescue Plan Act funding**. These events are dispersed geographically throughout town, and the town will also be offering a virtual and outdoor option for those who may not be able to return to indoor in-person meetings just yet.

- Davidson Town Hall – Wednesday, May 4 at 6pm
 - 216 S. Main Street, Davidson, NC
- ARPA Booth at Town Day on Town Green – Saturday, May 7 from 10am-3pm
 - 119 S. Main Street, Davidson, NC

There is also online survey to collect feedback from residents about how they would like to see the town allocate its ARPA funding. To complete the survey, please click on the link [here](#).

If you would like more information about the American Rescue Plan Act and the Town of Davidson's approach on this effort, please visit www.townofdavidson.org/ARPA. For specific questions, please email ARPA@townofdavidson.org.

COVID-19 Updates





The [DHHS COVID-19 Dashboard](#), which is updated weekly every Wednesday, shows the following data points:

- Wastewater testing has shown an increase to 11.3m particles from 5.1m particles.
- COVID-like illness in hospital emergency departments remains steady at 2%.
- COVID-19 reported cases for the week are up to 9,431 from 7,587.
- COVID-19 hospital admissions of COVID-19 patients the week are down to 254, compared to last week which was at 277.
- Booster rates are 53% 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.
- 10.38% of the cases are Omicron BA.1, 87.81% are Omicron BA.2.

More information on COVID-19 in North Carolina, including how to schedule a vaccine appointment or where to find a COVID-19 test, can be found [here](#).

Airport Community Roundtable Seeks Davidson Representative



The Airport Community Roundtable (ACR) at the Charlotte airport (CLT) is seeking a representative from the Town of Davidson. The ACR is a **broad-based community initiative to provide input into airport-related noise impacts and to find, where possible, practical solutions and recommendations** for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to consider when determining aircraft operating procedures at CLT.

ACR membership consists of twenty-five representatives from across Charlotte and Mecklenburg County as well as Gaston and York counties. The FAA, airlines, and the airport serve as advisory members of the ACR. The meetings are professionally facilitated by an airport consultant and supported by professional technical consultants, with the purpose of discussing and, possibly, proposing recommendations for aircraft operating changes at CLT.

More details can be found [here](#), and those interested in representing Davidson at the ACR can complete the application [here](#). No technical knowledge of the aviation industry is required to serve on the ACR as the Town of Davidson Representative. **The deadline to apply is May 18, 2022.**

For more information specifically about the ACR, contact **Dan Gordon, Noise Abatement Specialist with the Charlotte Douglas Airport, at 704-359-4031.**

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

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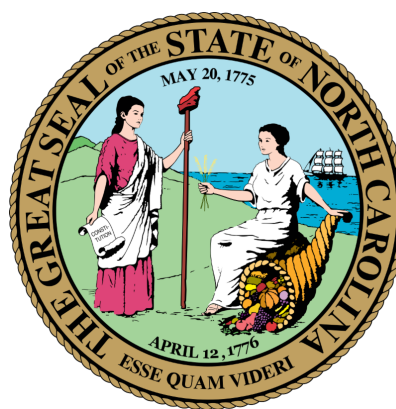
Jessica.Bolin@ncleg.gov

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Rm. 519

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

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



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