

**\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\* For Immediate Release**

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**Date** 2022-05-30 21:15



**From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate**  
Mecklenburg County

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, May 30, 2022  
Volume 23

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## Greetings:

*Last week I attended committee meetings for our first week of the short session. Hopefully, we will wrap up session business in a more efficient manor than we did during the long session.*

*Joyce Waddell*

## Prison Lawsuit

It has been two and a half years since an incarcerated woman went through a pregnancy, labor and birth while incarcerated at the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women. The lawsuit is about her experience during childbirth that she filed last year against state prison officials for unlawful treatment during the most vulnerable time in a woman can have in her life. Lawyers say her case could be reflective of the way pregnant people are treated in prisons in North Carolina and beyond.

She claims she was shackled while she was in active labor at the hospital, something that has since been outlawed, and that prison staff denied her access to her mental health medications and that she was forced off treatment for her opioid use disorder once she gave birth. She labored for twelve hours with cuffs around her ankles and one leg and arm chained to her hospital bed before officers removed her shackles, according to the complaint. Less than an hour after she gave birth, she was in handcuffs again.

The case involves events from 2019, but by then the use of restraints during labor and birth violated the state prison system's own policy, which was established in 2018. In 2021, the Governor signed a bipartisan bill limiting the use of restraints on pregnant people incarcerated in North Carolina's jails and prisons.

I am happy to have been a sponsor of this bill. Shackling during childbirth was a cruel practice that I am happy to know has been outlawed.

## ***63<sup>rd</sup> running of the Coca-Cola 600***

*Senator Waddell participated in the activities at the 63<sup>rd</sup> running of the Coca-Cola 600.*



*Senator Waddell congratulates the Lt. Governor of Virginia - Winsome Earle-Sears (2nd from*



*North Carolina Legislators come together for the Coca Cola 600 race and activities.*

*left) at the Coca Cola 600.*

## Youth Suicide

In recent years suicide rates among youth have worsened, and the pandemic has exacerbated the problem. A recent report from the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force finds that in 2020 the leading cause of death for children ages 10 through 14 was suicide. In 2020, for teens between the age of 15 and 17, suicide was the third leading cause of death. Ninety-six percent of these deaths were caused by firearms. The task force found a correlation between firearm deaths and suicides because firearms were used in about half of all child suicides, and during the pandemic the rates of firearm purchasing rose.

Due to the alarming rates of firearm youth suicide, the task force supports legislation to create a firearm initiative focused on firearm safety, storage, and education. This initiative could cost the state up to \$155,700. However, this is a cost the task force deems necessary as they find that the safe storage of firearms has been proven to be a critical strategy to prevent gun deaths.

North Carolina has many other issues dealing with our youth, and we must do everything in our power to diminish the number of death by suicide.

### Education Committee

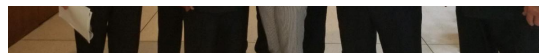
*Senator Waddell speaks out about HB 755 Academic Transparency, the latest education bill.*



### Firefighters Present Award

*The firefighters presented Senator Waddell an award for being a great supporter of the health and welfare of firefighters.*





Senator Waddell is working tirelessly for Senate District 40, but she cannot do this alone. In November she will have an opponent running against her. Can she count on your help to continue working for the district?

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*Covid is on the rise again, please exercise safety precautions. If you have not received your vaccine, please consider doing so.*

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