

*****SPAM*** Latest Updates from the NCGA**



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NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

July 22, 2022

The General Assembly did not convene for session over the past 2 weeks. So there are no votes or committee meetings to report.

WSOC-TV Story on Ocular Melanoma

As questions still loom, eye cancer survivor speaks up following Huntersville mother's death



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Thank you to WSOC-TV for reporting on the continuing cases of ocular melanoma and the horrible impacts on the Huntersville community. As I explained to reporter Allison Latos, I am disheartened that the [\\$150,000 I requested to fund a study on ocular melanoma](#) was not included in [the budget](#) (one of many reasons why I voted no).

I am passionate about securing funding for OM research because the disease strikes so randomly and is so deadly. **I am not giving up on advocating for OM answers and will continue to file legislation to fund a study on this important local issue.** You can watch the full WSOC-TV interview [here](#).

Senator Marcus's Bill to Increase Funding for Rape Victims Becomes Law



During short session, I filed [Senate Bill 900, Increase Funding for Rape Victim Assistance](#). North Carolina has the lowest cap in the nation for state support to cover the forensic test kits for sexual assault victims. My bill increased the cap from \$800 to \$1,400 and I am happy to report that the bill was added as an amendment to [HB674](#), which **Governor Cooper signed into law**.

You can read more about this bill, and other legislation in support of sexual assault victims, [here](#).

Colonial Pipeline Updates



Colonial Pipeline provided an update on the gasoline leak and clean-up efforts this morning. Key updates, in their words:

"Working closely with state regulators on the recovery and response effort has been a priority for Colonial, and we are pleased to have reached an agreement with the state to provide the released volume estimate and the methodology used to arrive at this updated release. **Following extensive operational data collection and analysis, Colonial determined July 27, 2020, as the start date of this release.** This date was validated by a third-party expert and allowed us to further analyze the operational data to estimate an updated estimated released volume."

"Colonial has recovered more than 35,500 barrels to date, and we now estimate the released volume to be 47,600 barrels (2 million gallons). Our commitment to product recovery is evidenced by the volume recovered to date, which is **approximately 75%** of the updated release estimate. We will be here for as long as it takes to remediate the location."

This is the first time I'm aware that Colonial Pipeline has admitted how long the pipe was leaking before the contamination was detected. **Plenty of people, myself included, are deeply disappointed in the 18 day delay,** which we now know allowed at least two million gallons of gasoline to seep into the ground in the Oehler Nature Preserve. **This is the largest gasoline spill in US History, by a lot.** I'm angry that my constituents are the victims of this environmental injury and that we must endure this year-long clean-up. **It's been two years since the leak began and it's frustrating to hear that 25 percent of the spilled gasoline is still on site.**

Colonial will continue to keep DEQ and my office updated on key developments, which I will share with you as quickly as possible.

Governor Cooper Vetoes Harmful Legislation



Governor Cooper has recently vetoed various harmful bills. I voted no on all of these bills and support the Governor's veto.

- **SB101, Require Cooperation with ICE 2.0.** The bill makes it harder for local law enforcement officers to do their job by undermining relationships with victims and witnesses and also would instill fear in immigrant communities. It attempts to force local sheriffs to do the work of ICE agents.
- **SB593, Schools for the Deaf and Blind.** This bill would inject partisan politics into the Board of Trustees for the School of the Deaf and the Blind.
- **HB49, Concealed Carry Permit Lapse/Revise Law.** I spoke against this bill on the Senate floor because it chips away at commonsense gun safety measures.
- **HB823, Child Advocacy Centers/Share Information.** This is a well-intended bill to better serve children, but due to the hurried conclusion of short session, it has several critical flaws that need to be worked out with DHHS.

Free Bookbags and School Supplies Event in Davidson



Gethsemane Baptist Church of Lake Norman is hosting their 16th annual Back2School community outreach program. This program ensures that K-12 and college students are equipped for the upcoming school year with backpacks and much needed supplies. The event will be on **Saturday, August 13, 2022 from 10AM-12PM at Gethsemane Baptist Church.**

Donations are needed to help support the anticipated 700 students who will come out to the event for school supplies. You can make a monetary donation online through Givify (search for Gethsemane Baptist Church of Lake Norman), Cashapp (using \$gpclakenorman), or by check (make the check payable to Gethsemane Baptist Church and either drop it off at the church office or mail it to 565 Jetton Street, Davidson NC).

If a student is interested in receiving a free bookbag, they must pre-register at [this link](#) by **August 1.**

Webinar on Abortion Access from Pro-Choice NC

PRO-CHOICE NORTH CAROLINA

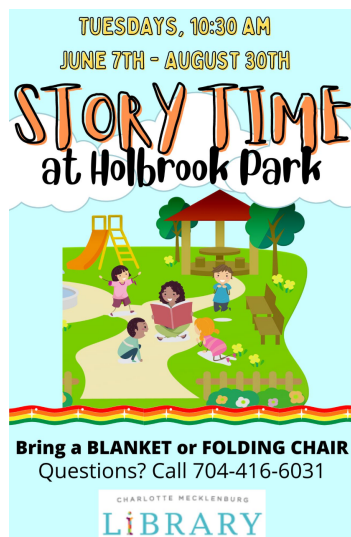
Last week I attended a webinar hosted by [Pro-Choice NC](#) to review resources on abortion access in North Carolina and across the country, and I wanted to share them with you:

- [Miscarriage and Abortion Hotline](#)
- [Repro Legal Helpline](#)
- [Abortion pills information](#)
- [Abortion clinic information](#)

North Carolina Information:

- [Abortion clinics in NC](#)
- [Accessing Abortion in NC](#)
- [Anti-abortion centers](#)

Storytime at Holbrook Park



Charlotte Mecklenburg Library will be hosting story time on Tuesdays at 10:30am through August 30th at Holbrook Park (100 Sherwood Drive, Huntersville). These events are **geared towards children up to age 3 to support early literacy skill development and help foster a love of books and reading.** This is a rain or shine event and no registration is required. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to participate. More information can be found at [this link](#).

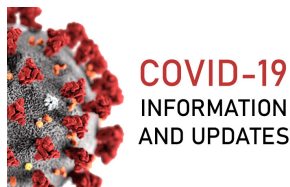
Remember this Number: New "988" Suicide and Crisis Lifeline



988 is the new three-digit dialing code to route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - now known as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. As of this week, it is active everywhere in the United States.

When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary. You can learn more about the new program [here](#).

COVID-19 & Monkeypox Updates



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

- Wastewater testing has shown an **increase** to 16.5m particles, compared to 15.8m last week.
- COVID-like illness in hospital emergency departments **remained constant** at 5.5%.
- COVID-19 reported cases for the week **decreased slightly**, from 25,562 to 25,051.
- COVID-19 hospital admissions of COVID-19 patients this week **increased** to 971, compared to last week which was at 895.
- Booster rates are 58% for the total population. We have 77% of adults with at least one dose and 29% of children and teens ages 5-17 with at least one dose.
- The Omicron variant continues to represent the vast majority of COVID diagnoses. BA.5 represents 37% of cases, BA.2.12.1 36%, BA.4 15%, BA.2 10%, and BA.1.1.529 2%.

For more information about how vaccines for children work and where you can find a vaccination appointment nearby, visit [MySpot.nc.gov](#). The North Carolina COVID-19 Vaccine Help Center can also help you make an appointment by calling **888-675-4567**. The help center is open 7 a.m.-7 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m.-4 p.m. on weekends.

Monkeypox vaccines are free and available in Mecklenburg County, but currently in limited quantities. If you are experiencing symptoms or believe you have been exposed, contact your doctor or local health department. In Mecklenburg, that number is 980-314-9400. More information about monkeypox is available on the CDC website.

Contact Our Office

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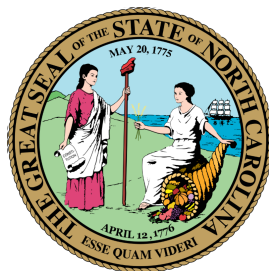
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How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

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