

For Immediate Release



From Sen. Joyce Waddell <joyce.waddell@ncleg.net>
To <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <joyce.waddell@ncleg.net>
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From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate
Mecklenburg County

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CONTACT: Sen. Joyce Waddell
(919) 733-5650
Joyce.Waddell@ncleg.net
<https://joycewaddell4nc.com/>



Greetings:

The year is ending and the 2021-2022 biennium business of the General Assembly is coming to an end. Committee meetings are still being held in Raleigh and I attended committee meetings that were held in the district.

Joyce Waddell

Community College Enrollment

The North Carolina Community College System just released their strategic plan that emphasizes the colleges' role as "economic first responders" dealing with a changing education landscape. North Carolina's 58 community colleges receive widespread praise for providing convenient, low-cost classes for students and helping new and existing industries train workers.

UNC System enrollment increased 10% between 2012 and 2021, to about 221,500 FTEs. It declined about 2% in 2022, reversing many years of steady increases. The strategic report lists five goals aimed at continuing the community colleges' role as a "nimble, responsive and innovative catalyst."

The state board "has determined that an all-out systemwide effort must be mobilized to increase student access, enrollment and completion," according to the report.

Beginning at a Community College is a great financial decision for some who want to further their education but spare themselves of the large financial burden that comes with going to a 4-year university. They can also be a gateway into 4 year universities. It is a good way to gain certifications, other educational opportunities and an Associates degree. Going to a Community College can also be a great financial decision to begin your education.

Holiday Celebration

Senator Waddell joins other elected officials
in a holiday celebration sponsored by
Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County



Diesel Shortage

The crisis in Ukraine and the move toward cleaner-burning fuel are two factors causing a diesel shortage in some Southeastern states, including North Carolina. With those fuel prices going up, prices of everyday goods could also rise. Diesel is a very important resource for our economy. It is the main resource used to transport everything we need from coast to coast.

That means you could be paying even more for everyday things. As the availability of diesel fuel goes down, as it becomes less attainable, it is going to be harder to get day-to-day goods, which will raise the price, and price hikes are going to be passed onto the consumer. The diesel shortage will also raise the cost and availability of jet fuel, so we are going to see airline prices go up, which is probably not a surprise.



Advocacy

Senator Waddell discusses legislation about advocacy for local programs.

Bus Search

North Carolina's Democratic congressional delegation members are asking the U.S. attorney general to investigate a South Carolina sheriff's office weeks after a bus full of Shaw University students was stopped and searched on the way to Georgia.

A group of 18 students and two advisers were on their way to a conference in Atlanta on Oct. 5 when Spartanburg County sheriff's deputies pulled over the group's chartered bus. Shaw University's President said in a statement that the stop was prompted by a "minor traffic violation" and that drug-sniffing dogs searched through riders' luggage. Deputies found nothing illegal and the students arrived home safely after attending the conference.

The incident has drawn sharp criticism from the president of the historically Black university and concern from the Governor.

I believe our students deserve better. If this stop was motivated by anything other than a true traffic violation, I would like to go on record by condemning this action. As a community, we should all feel uncomfortable with any reason other than making sure we stay focused on what keeps our communities safe.

We are still enjoying this holiday season. People are shopping and enjoying outings with their families. I am excited to see what 2023 will bring.

During your outings, please exercise caution COVID, Influenza, and other respiratory issues are still very prevalent. The CDC is continuing to recommend COVID and Influenza vaccines. Many are being hospitalized because of these viruses. Please be careful.

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Sen. Joyce Waddell, District 40 | 1113 Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601

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