

For Immediate Release



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greetings:

Session has begun. Wednesday, January 11 was the first day back for the new biennium. We have been assigned committees and the business of creating new bills has just begun.

Joyce Waddell

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
for 2023-2024 Biennium**

- Appropriations/Base Budget
- Appropriations on Education/Higher Education
- Education/Higher Education
- Finance
- Rules and Operations of the Senate
- Pensions and Retirement and Aging
- Joint Commission on Governmental Operations

Senate Oath

I was excited to pledge the oath to represent the constituents of District 40 and all other North Carolinians to the best of my ability.





NC Legislative Black Caucus



Opening day at the General Assembly was full of firsts.

Wednesday was the first of many caucus meetings welcoming all new members to the NCLBC.

Sen Waddell was elected as 2nd Vice Chairperson for the NCLBC.

\$500 NC College Tuition

The NC General Assembly returned for its 2023 session, and state legislators deserve credit for something good thing we did for the state's public universities: NC Promise.

The program offers in-state tuition of \$500 a semester for in-state students and \$2,500 a semester for out-of-state students. It started at three UNC System universities in 2018: Elizabeth City State University, UNC Pembroke and Western Carolina University. This academic year, Fayetteville State University joined NC Promise.

The NC Promise program is about affordability and access in higher education. There were fears, skepticism and hesitation at first, though Fayetteville State and Winston-Salem State both asked to be removed when NC Promise was first proposed in the 2016 session of the General Assembly.

Elizabeth City reversed its declining enrollment, which fell to just 1,357 students in fall 2016. By fall 2022, it had climbed to 2,149 – a 58% increase. And with the addition of Fayetteville State, FSU enrolled its largest class ever in fall 2022 – when most UNC System schools saw enrollment decline.

Many have said the NC Promise Program has been a success on multiple fronts, which has been proven based on the UNC System's annual report on the program.



2023-2024 NC Senate Democrats

2023-2024 NC Senate Women Democrats

*(Women make up 13 members
of the Democratic Caucus)*



Senator Waddell is pictured with the Intern - Nada Elraddaf.

Opening Day at the NC General Assembly

During opening day and amid the smiles, photographs, receptions and family members crowding the legislative building in Raleigh on Wednesday, in the backs of our minds health care policy, Medicaid in particular, will be on the lists of priorities for the legislative biennium that began this week.

At the top of the list for many is mental health issues, but another concern was health care workforce issues and the shortage of child care workers.

Other health care topics that topped lawmakers' lists included: Addressing mental health issues faced by foster children and giving more independence to advanced practice nurses.

Wednesday was just the start of a process that will play out over the coming months and perhaps years to come. Many of the initiatives would take state funding, which will pit interest groups against each other — and lawmakers know how frustrating that can be.

I am sincerely hoping that we can work together versus pitting ourselves against each other - because in the end all decisions should be for the good of North Carolinians as a whole.

The Influenza (the flu) and COVID are once again making a comeback.

Did you know that quite a bit of spreading these viruses could be eliminated by: Washing your hands, limiting large gatherings, staying home when you have fever, runny noses, or coughs. By practicing most of these habits and getting boosters and vaccinated, we can reduce the spread.

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