

## Legislative Updates from the Office of Rep. Nasif Majeed



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## **Representative Nasif Majeed**



**District #99  
Mecklenburg  
County**



### **NC HOUSE WEAKENS GUN SAFETY LAWS**

Peace. Gun violence is on the rise in North Carolina and across our country. We need to be taking common-sense steps to make communities safer while respecting a citizen's right to purchase and own a gun responsibly. Universal background checks are one of those common-sense steps that work to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. We need to strengthen background check laws in our country, but the NC House passed a bill this week that moves us backwards instead.

HB 50 would eliminate a long-standing state law requiring someone to obtain a pistol purchase permit from their local sheriff before buying a handgun. The current system is important because our federal background check system only applies if you're buying a gun from a federally licensed dealer.

The bill passed with all Republicans present voting for it and all Democrats present voting against it. It now goes to the State Senate for its consideration. In the past, Governor Cooper has vetoed a similar bill.

### **GOVERNOR COOPER ANNOUNCES \$7.7 MILLION FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IN STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

This week Governor Roy Cooper announced \$7.7 million in new funding to support North Carolina's postsecondary institutions in providing additional mental health services to students. This investment in the University of North Carolina (UNC) System will support new mental health initiatives and provide funding to sustain existing initiatives.

The UNC System will collaborate with the North Carolina Community College System and the state's independent colleges and universities to offer suicide prevention training to faculty and staff across all three education systems. These trainings will provide faculty and staff with the tools they need to better identify and support students in crisis.

The UNC System will also use this funding to continue to provide students across all 17 UNC institutions access to an after-hours mental health hotline and develop a new resiliency training program for faculty, staff, and students.

With the initial \$5 million investment in 2021, the UNC System launched a Mental Health First Aid training initiative to help college and university faculty and staff identify, understand and respond to mental health and substance abuse disorders. As of November 2022, the UNC System had trained 274 Mental Health First Aid instructors across the UNC System, the NC Community College System, and the state's independent colleges and universities. Those trained instructors have, in turn, trained nearly 2,500 faculty and staff across their campuses.

## BILL FILED TO RESTORE NONPARTISAN ELECTION OF JUDGES

Almost everyone agrees that judges should be independent and nonpartisan, elected by the people to fairly administer the laws. North Carolina's system is the exact opposite of this ideal.

Almost all judges in our state belong either to the Republican or Democratic parties. Before they serve they must run in and win a party primary where voter turnout is low and most partisan of voters are deciding who wins and loses. After the primary, a potential judge must win a second election in November where the contest may feature a Democrat and a Republican just like for Congress or Governor or other political office. Races can get expensive and potential judges must raise money to fund their campaigns, money that is often raised from the lawyers who will appear before them in court. It is a terrible way to choose judges.

House Bill 68 would return us to the nonpartisan election of judges. Judicial candidates would file for office. If more than two filed, there would be a nonpartisan primary where the top two vote getters would advance to the general election. Party labels would not be on the ballot and judicial candidates could opt into a public financing system rather than rely on fundraising from lawyers and others to fund their campaigns.

Our state constitution gives voters the power to elect judges. I support HB 68 because judicial elections should be as nonpartisan and free of special interest influence as possible. We need judges who will be impartial and treat everyone fairly under the law.

## REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM ADVOCACY DAY





On Tuesday, the Statewide Coalition on Reproductive Rights hosted a Citizen Advocacy Day here at the General Assembly. Members from across North Carolina attended to thank legislators that supported HB19 and SB19, the Codify Roe and Casey Protections bills that were introduced this session.

Representatives from Charlotte were in attendance and able to share information with members of the Mecklenburg delegation on why they support reproductive freedom.

### **MECKLENBURG CO. RESIDENTS ENCOURAGED TO COMPLETE ANNUAL BUDGET SURVEY**

**Mecklenburg County leaders are planning next year's budget. As a resident, you have TWO ways to get involved:**

- Attend a community workshop in your neighborhood to learn more about Mecklenburg County programs and how your tax dollars pay for them.
- Take the community survey and share what's important to you.

[Budget.MeckNC.gov](https://Budget.MeckNC.gov)



Mecklenburg County residents can still submit their budget priorities by completing the [online survey](#) or registering to participate in one of six in-person [Community Budget Workshops](#).

The survey will remain open until Monday, March 6, 2023.

The results of the survey will be shared with the Board of County Commissioners and the community at the public policy meeting on April 25, 2023.

To learn more about the County's ongoing budget engagement efforts visit [budget.mecknc.gov](http://budget.mecknc.gov).

Have a great weekend.

PEACE,



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