

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



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## NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

April 6, 2023

Special Edition to accommodate Spring Break at the NCGA

### Introduced & Co-Sponsored Bills



These are the bills I have introduced and co-sponsored in the past week. Today was the bill filing deadline for the Long Session. You can find a full list of the bills I have supported [here](#).

#### Introduced bills:

- [SB462](#), **Highway Safety Omnibus/Additional Magistrates**. Increases magistrates and state troopers in Mecklenburg County, revises certain penalties for failure to stop for a school bus, and expands the operational hours of the Charlotte iMap Center.
- [SB495](#), **2023 Safe Drinking Water Act**. Protects NC citizens from harmful toxins in drinking water by requiring the Commission for Public Health to establish maximum contaminant levels for chemicals that are probable or known carcinogens or are otherwise toxic.
- [SB503](#), **Menstrual Products Sales Tax Exemption**. Exempts menstrual products from the state sales tax.
- [SB537](#), **The Patrick Mays Hazard Light Safety Act**. \* Requires use of hazard warning signal lamps for vehicles stopped in highway traffic. Named in honor of constituent who passed away when traffic was stopped on I-77 and his car was hit from behind by a tractor trailer that didn't stop in time.
- [SB554](#), **Study and Abate Ocular Melanoma/Funds**. Appropriates \$200,000 to ECU Department of Public Health to study and abate ocular melanoma in Northern Mecklenburg County.
- [SB555](#), **Working Families Act**. Omnibus bill co-sponsored by all House and Senate Democrats in support of working families that would reduce childcare copayments, reenact the childcare tax credit, increase the minimum wage, support homebuyers, and enact paid family leave.
- [SB569](#), **Create Public App. for Reporting Threats**. Directs DPS to develop a plan to create a digital application that will encourage and allow people to quickly and anonymously report tips regarding threats to public safety.
- [SB575](#), **Domestic Violence Victims' Separation Waiver**. \* Waives the required one-year period of separation for divorce when a person in the marriage is a victim of domestic violence.
- [SB603](#), **Confidentiality of Animal Services Records**. \* A bill requested by the ASPCA keeping personally identifiable records relating to animal adoptions confidential, including when animals are placed in foster care due to domestic violence situations.
- [SB676](#), **Restricted Drivers License for Undocumented Immigrants**. Authorizes the DMV to issue restricted drivers licenses to undocumented immigrants.
- [SB681](#), **Polluters Pay**. Makes persons causing or contributing to contamination responsible for costs of cleanup and provision of alternative water supplies to persons with water supplies affected by such contamination.
- [SB733](#), **Identity Theft protection Act/Changes**. Ensures greater protection from security breaches and publication of personal information per recommendations from the Department of Justice and the NC Retail Merchants Association.

#### Co-sponsored bills:

- [SB384](#), **Carbon Monoxide Detectors/School Buildings**. \* Studies the installation of adequate carbon monoxide alarm and detection systems and the implementation of radon gas testing in all identified public schools.
- [SB424](#), **Restore the American Dream**. Expands workforce housing by providing current and ongoing funding for the Housing Trust Fund.
- [SB437](#), **Hate Crimes Prevention Act**. Increases the scope and punishment of hate crimes; requires SBI to create and maintain a hate crimes statistics database; provides training for law enforcement officers and prosecutors on how to handle and prosecute hate crimes.
- [SB450](#), **Seized Weapons Security Act**. Authorizes local law enforcement agencies to destroy unclaimed firearms and firearms confiscated after conviction of certain offenses in order to keep the weapons off the streets.
- [SB453](#), **Supporting Law Enforcement**. Strengthens policies and standards surrounding law enforcement officers, including support for community policing programs, a ban on chokeholds, and setting standards for hiring and training of officers.
- [SB457](#), **Amend Animal Fighting & Welfare Laws**. \* Increases the scope and punishment of certain dog fighting and baiting offenses; allows additional tools to collect evidence for felony animal fighting offenses; amends the dangerous dog laws to permit a case by case determination as to whether a dog trained for fighting is dangerous; and makes animal fighting and other cruelty to animal offenses subject to the state racketeer influenced and corrupt organizations law.
- [SB461](#), **Reenact EITC**. Reenacts the Earned Income Tax Credit to help middle income families.
- [SB467](#), **2023 MOMnibus Act**. Enacts the North Carolina MOMnibus Act by establishing the Maternal Mortality Prevention Grant Program, tackling implicit bias in healthcare, and supporting and diversifying lactation consultant training programs
- [SB481](#), **Small Business Investment Grant**. Provides funds to assist small businesses.

- **SB492, Go Big for Early Childhood Education.** Appropriates funds to provide an ongoing, increased source of funds for the NC Pre-K Program and the NC Partnership for Children, raises the base reimbursement rates for NC Pre-K sites, and provides a tax credit to early education teachers and directors.
- **SB502, Modify School Performance Grades.** Modifies school performance grades to provide that all schools receive a grade for school achievement and a grade for school growth.
- **SB509, Victims' Right To Know/Rape Kit Status.** Provides for the notification of victims of rape regarding the status of their sexual assault examination kit.
- **SB516, Improve Cancer Cluster Investigations in NC.\*** Establishes a Cancer Cluster Advisory Committee within the NC Collaboratory and appropriates funds to establish positions to assist with its cancer cluster investigation duties.
- **SB517, Structural Fill Remediation Pilot.\*** Establishes and funds a pilot program for the remediation of certain coal ash structural fill sites.
- **SB534, Protect Whistleblower LEOs from Retaliation.\*** Protects from retaliation law enforcement officers that report the use of excessive force or other improper or unlawful activity by fellow officers.
- **SB543, Remove Barriers to Labor Organizing.** Provides labor organizations with the unabridged right to enter into labor agreements and repeals restrictions on labor organizing by public employees.
- **SB548, Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act.\*** Protects family landowners from forced sales to help them keep their land intact, often for farming. As North Carolina continues to grow, this bill will help preserve our natural and rural heritage, including important wildlife habitat and family farms.
- **SB550, Direct Support Professional Wage Increases.\*** Increases wages to direct support professionals that serve Medicaid beneficiaries receiving services under the North Carolina Innovations Waiver.
- **SB558, Broadband Affordability Program/Digital Equity.** Establishes the NC Broadband Assistance Program to provide funds to eligible low-income families to help make broadband more affordable.
- **SB565, Removing Barriers to Jobs and Housing.\*** Improves the Second Chance Act by revising the laws governing the automatic expunction of records and the availability of expunged records.
- **SB567, School Mental Health Support Act.** Appropriates funds for a school mental health grant program and establishes a mental health worker loan repayment program.
- **SB588, Increase Juror Pay.** Raises the pay rate of jurors to the hourly minimum wage.
- **SB598, Healthy Students - A Nurse in Every School.** Requires at least one school nurse in every school beginning in the 2023-24 school year and appropriates additional funds to meet that requirement.
- **SB642, Independent Redistricting Commission.** Amends the NC Constitution to provide for an independent redistricting process and establishes the NC Citizens Redistricting Commission.
- **SB652, Investing in North Carolina Act.** Supported by all House and Senate Democrats. Increases Cost of Living Adjustment for retirees, implements raises for teachers and state employees, creates a small business tax credit, and enacts other economic investment measures for the state.
- **SB710, Community Solar Program Changes.** Updates the 2017 law to include resiliency and other changes to make the program more accessible to residents.
- **SB713, Build Safer Communities and Schools Act.** Supported by all House and Senate Democrats. Increases funds for school safety equipment and mental health services, restores the pistol purchase permit background check for private gun sales, requires universal background checks, and creates an extreme risk protection order law.

\*Bipartisan

## Updates on Noteworthy Votes



Below are a few noteworthy bills I voted on over the past week. You can find a full list of bills I voted on [here](#).

**Key bills on which I voted YES:**

- **[SB80, State Auditor Disclosure and Discovery Act.](#)**\* Modifies provisions governing the State Auditor's obligation to make records pertaining to an audit or investigation available for inspection to State or federal government officials seeking access to such records in connection with a criminal investigation or other official matter.
- **[SB228, Private Condemnation/Withdraw Support.](#)**\* Allows disbursement without prejudice of all or a portion of the deposit made by a condemnation in a private condemnation proceeding.
- **[SB303, Strengthen Juvenile Laws.](#)** Comprehensive juvenile justice reform bill; the NCGA agrees with last biennium's "raise the age" legislation.
- **[SB340, Expand Probation Officer/Sheriff Authority.](#)**\* Bipartisan bill that allows district attorneys to file probation modification petitions, allows probation officers to reduce a term of supervised probation in certain instances, and exempts sheriff's officers from certain state contracting requirements when contracting for food services at detention facilities.

**Key bills on which I voted NO:**

- **[SB27, Partisan Districts for Soil & Water.](#)** Provides the option for Soil and Water Conservation Districts to change their elections from non-partisan to partisan. I do not support this bill as I believe we should not be making all elections partisan.
- **[SB282, Veterinary Medical Board Inspections.](#)** Amends the inspection process of the veterinary medical board. I voted no because this bill does not have support from the NC Veterinary Medical Board.
- **[SB286, Make Pamlico Board of Education Election Partisan.](#)** Provides for the partisan election of members of the Pamlico County Board of Education. The residents in this area made clear that they do not want this change.
- **[SB512, Greater Accountability for Boards/Commissions.](#)** Amends the compositions of and appointments to various state boards and commissions. I oppose this bill as this is another power grab by Republican Legislators to take the Governor's executive branch power. There are significant constitutional concerns with this bill; it will be litigated if it becomes law. [An amendment](#) that would have ensured appointees were not family members, donors or lobbyists was voted down by the majority.
- **[HB149, Remote Charter Academies.](#)** Authorizes charter schools to provide remote instruction to students via remote charter academies, with no cap on the number of such remote charter schools. Also provides a 1-year extension to the expiring virtual charter school pilot program, allows enrollment growth and increases funding. I oppose this bill because the virtual charter schools that exist now have had D grades each of the five years they have operated in the pilot program and [they are not improving](#). Additionally, Republicans added a [last-minute amendment](#) in Education Committee to give the NCGA power to approve or reject the appointed underlying of the NC Community Colleges. This amendment has no relation to the underlying bill and is another power grab by Republican Legislators. The bill was added to the calendar at the last minute on the Senate floor, providing little time for additional debate. You can read more about the bill [here](#).

\*Passed Senate unanimously

## Judiciary Committee Updates



The following noteworthy bills were discussed in the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#) over the past week:

- **[SB80, State Auditor Disclosure and Discovery Act.](#)** Details in the "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- **[SB303, Strengthen Juvenile Laws.](#)** Details in the "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- **[SB308, Guardianship Rights.](#)** Bipartisan bill that amends the laws governing guardianships and powers of attorney.
- **[SB340, Expand Probation Officer/Sheriff Authority.](#)** Details in the "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- **[SB512, Greater Accountability for Boards/Commissions.](#)** Details in the "updates on noteworthy votes" section.

### Education Committee Updates



The following noteworthy bills were discussed in the [Senate Education/Higher Education Committee](#) over the past week:

- [HB149, Remote Charter Academies](#). Details in the "updates on noteworthy votes" section.

### Commerce and Insurance Committee Updates



The following noteworthy bills were discussed in the [Senate Commerce and Insurance Committee](#) over the past week:

- [SB44, Mobile Beauty Salons](#). Bipartisan bill that provides licensure of mobile beauty salons and ensures their safe and hygienic operation. Similar to the bill that allowed mobile barbershops last biennium.

### Senator Marcus in the Community & Meetings in Raleigh



Last Friday I toured the [Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy](#). I had a great time meeting their staff and learning more about the important work they do to support our community. If you need help with seeking asylum, tax debt or preparation, securing public benefits, domestic violence protections, tax disputes, or any other legal matter, contact the Center to ask for assistance.



I participated in the [Mayor's Fitness Challenge](#) on Sunday. Each of the three towns had about the same number of participants in attendance, but I believe Davidson "won" the day based on percentage of registered participants. No matter which town you're playing for, I hope you're outside enjoying the beautiful spring weather.



Last week the American Kennel Club stopped by Raleigh for their "Canines at the Capitol" event. It was a nice treat to visit with this adorable puppy and other unique dogs.



I had a great meeting with the Cheek family from Huntersville yesterday to learn more about their homeschooling and discuss my role in state government.



Last week I attended a legislative reception to hear from graduate students from across the UNC System. They were engaging speakers, doing impressive research and teaching in their field, including AI, transportation, food scarcity, film, and more. NC's future is bright.

### Student Walkouts: I See You



**Students around Mecklenburg staged walkouts this week to demand action from the NCGA to reduce gun violence**, including students at North Mecklenburg High School in SD41. I see you. I see you. I'm trying. I filed a comprehensive gun safety bill last month, [SB210](#), the **Gun Violence Prevention Act**, fought against the repeal of our state background check for handguns ([SB41](#), Guarantee 2nd Amendment Freedoms and Protections), and will keep working to pass common sense gun reform.

I spoke to a reporter with WSOC-TV about the students' protests. You can see the story [here](#).

### Applications Open for the 2023 North Carolina Award



**Nominations are being accepted for the 2023 North Carolina Award, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the state, now through April 30.**

The award recognizes “notable accomplishments by North Carolina citizens” in the fields of **literature, science, fine arts and public service.**

Award nominations may be submitted by anyone. A new, simplified nomination form is [available online here](#).

The 2023 North Carolina Award recipients will be honored at an event later this year. Past award recipients have included some of the country’s most distinguished artists, poets, writers, performers, journalists, scientists and public servants.

Information on the award and the online nomination process are available [here](#). To receive forms by mail or e-mail contact Jennifer Fontes at [Jennifer.fontes@ncdcr.gov](mailto:Jennifer.fontes@ncdcr.gov) or (919) 814-6756.

## Senate Page Program Accepting Applications

A graphic with a light green background and a dark green and blue geometric design on the right side. The text is centered and reads: "PAGE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS ARE LIVE". Below this, it says "The NCGA Page Program is open to NC high school sophomores, juniors and seniors to learn about and participate in the legislative process for a 1-week period during the 2023 Long Session." Then, "The program will be offered from Feb. 6 to June 29, 2023. Each Senator can select up to 5 pages for a one-week slot within the time frame listed." Below that, it says "Interested applicants can email me at natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov for the application link. Learn more about the program at the link below." and provides the URL "https://ncleg.gov/Senate/PageProgram". At the bottom, it says "Senator Natasha Marcus".

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Interested applicants can email me at [natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov](mailto:natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov) for the application link. Learn more about the program at the link below.

<https://ncleg.gov/Senate/PageProgram>

**Senator Natasha Marcus**

The Page Program has returned to the NCGA for the 2023 Long Session. We will welcome high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors from across the state to the NCGA. **This one-week program offers young people the opportunity to learn about and participate in the legislative process of our state.** Senate Pages are important to the operation of the General Assembly as they assist the members and staff of the Senate during the legislative session.

The program will be offered for one-week sessions through June 29, 2023. Availability of weeks is based on a first-come, first-served basis. Each Senator can select up to five Pages for the Long Session and preference is given to students who live in the district. No experience necessary. Parents of pages will be responsible for securing lodging during the time their child serves.

**Applications are open now.** If you or someone you know is interested in applying, please email me at [natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov](mailto:natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov) for the application link. You can learn more about the application process and the Page Program [here](#).

## Financial Update on the State's General Fund



Beginning Cash, Friday, March 24	12,915,135,345.21
<b>Add Receipts:</b>	
Tax and Non-Tax Receipts	360,196,971.80
Coronavirus Relief Receipts	0.00
Other Receipts	589,924,742.79
<b>Less Disbursements:</b>	
Payroll	1,106,869,940.48
State Aid	147,326,480.62
Medicaid/Other Provider Payments	238,794,147.82
Tax Refunds/Distributions	189,380,938.25
Debt Service	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Transfers Out	0.00
General Operating	462,374,924.90
Ending Cash, Friday, March 31	11,720,510,627.73
<b>Less Reserved Cash:</b>	
Due to Local Governments – Sales and Use Tax Payable	813,391,046.46
Other Reserves	31,305,101.31
American Recovery Plan Act Reserve	54,098,841.60
Carry Forward Reserve	301,031,979.43
Clean Water Drinking Water Reserve	0.00
Coronavirus Capital Projects Reserve	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Reserve	0.00
Earthquake Disaster Recovery Reserve	0.00
Economic Development Project Reserve	642,275,000.00
Federal Infrastructure Match Reserve	95,328,642.00
Housing Reserve	0.00
Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Reserve	60,652,613.81
Information Technology Reserve	108,943,174.00
Local Fiscal Recovery Reserve-ARPA	0.00
Local Govt Coronavirus Relief Reserve	0.00
Local Project Reserve	0.00
Medicaid Contingency Reserve	326,512,736.00
Medicaid Transformation Reserve	155,642,170.00
NC GREAT Reserve	0.00
Opioid Abatement Reserve	0.00
Public School Contingency Reserve	0.00
Public School Need Based Capital Reserve	0.00
Repairs and Renovations Reserve	0.00
Retiree Supplement Reserve	0.00
SCIF General Fund Reserve	0.00
Savings Reserve	4,750,000,000.98
Stabilization and Inflation Reserve	1,000,000,000.00
State Emergency Response/Disaster Reserve	748,786,242.90
Unfunded Liability Solvency Reserve	0.00
Wilmington Harbor Enhancements Reserve	283,800,000.00
World University Games Reserve	25,000,000.00
Unreserved Cash Balance, Friday, March 31	2,323,743,079.24

The Office of the State Controller (OSC) released the General Fund Cash Watch numbers for the week ending Friday, March 31, 2023. OSC provides a weekly update on the State's general fund cash position which can be found at [osc.nc.gov](https://osc.nc.gov). The current unreserved cash balance in state coffers is \$2.324 billion.

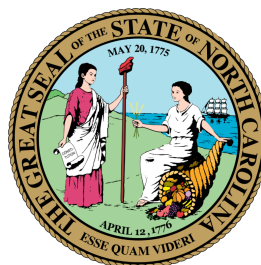
The State Controller is North Carolina's chief fiscal officer and serves as an independent resource to ensure the financial integrity of the State.

### Contact Our Office

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

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



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