

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



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NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

May 5, 2023

BREAKING NEWS: Abortion Ban Passes in North Carolina House and Senate on Party Line Vote



Yesterday was historic. My Senate Democratic colleagues and I used every procedural, persuasive, and legal tool we had to fight the **dangerous abortion ban, SB20**. We used every rule, motion, appeal and allotted minute to speak that we had available. We started at 10 am and finished after 5 pm. We felt strongly that the bill will severely restrict access to abortion care, drive OB/GYN doctors out of our state, and tell NC women that our government doesn't trust us to make decisions for ourselves. It was a dark day for women's rights. Media outlets around the nation, including the NYT, WSJ and MSNBC, covered the longest floor debate in the Senate Chamber and the fact that the abortion ban is **worse than you think**.

You can watch the full debate [here](#) (my remarks are from 31:44 to 43:44).

As expected, we didn't have the votes to defeat SB20. Governor Cooper said he will veto this dangerous bill. Given the Republican supermajority, it is unlikely to be upheld. Stay tuned for updates.

Updates on Noteworthy Votes



SB 650 CS	
	PASSED 3RD 4 AMENDMENTS
Gun Violence Prevention Act. (2nd Ed.)	
A1, SB 650	TABLED
S650-ACE-63-v-6 (Marcus)	TABLED
A2, SB 650	TABLED
S650-ACE-66-v-2 (Marcus)	TABLED
A3, SB 650	TABLED
S650-ACE-64-v-2 (Marcus)	TABLED
A4, SB 650	TABLED
S650-ACE-65-v-3 (Marcus)	TABLED

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

Key bills on which I voted YES:

- **[SB321](#), [Medical Debt De-Weaponization Act](#).** * Limits ability of large medical facilities to charge unreasonable interest rates and employ unfair tactics in debt collection and limits ability of non-hospital health care facilities to charge "facility fees."
- **[SB326](#), [Firefighter Cancer Insurance/Alternative Criminal Record Check](#).** * Makes the Firefighters' Health Benefits Pilot Program permanent and allows county clerks of court to conduct criminal background checks on certain fire-fighting and prevention services applicants.
- **[SB339](#), [Modify Limited Driving Privilege/Criminal Law](#).** * Bipartisan bill that modifies the statutory provisions affecting limited driving privileges and prohibits the impersonation of taxicab drivers.
- **[SB360](#), [Modify Victim and Sex Offense Registry Laws](#).** * Bipartisan bill that modifies the laws protecting and aiding victims of crime and clarifies certain registration processes of the NC Sex Offense Registry.
- **[SB376](#), [Expanding Members' Access to HOA Records](#).** * Addresses property owners' desire to have ways to hold their HOA accountable and encourage transparency.
- **[SB542](#), [DOL/Omnibus Law Changes Agency Bill](#).** * Requires employers to keep accurate records to provide evidence of when overtime wages are due and makes other changes per Department of Labor recommendations.
- **[SB565](#), [Remove Barriers to Jobs and Housing](#).** * I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this bipartisan bill that improves the Second Chance Act by revising the laws governing automatic expunctions.
- **[SB574](#), [Authorize NIL Agency Contracts](#).** * Authorizes NIL contracts for college athletes and exempts them from public records requirements.
- **[SB579](#), [Prevent Harm to Children](#).** Protects children from being subjected to obscenity, as it is currently defined under NC law, by increasing the penalty for doing so. Democrats offered [an amendment](#) to 1) update the law to modern standards with understanding that technology provides access to obscenity in ways that were not available when the original law was passed, and 2) establish a Prevent Harm to Children Taskforce. It would have made the bill better, but the amendment was tabled. You can read more about the bill [here](#). Notable point: the bill does not change the definition of obscenity or target or mention child shows.
- **[SB625](#), [Child Welfare, Safety and Permanency Reform](#).** * Comprehensive child welfare bill that makes long overdue bipartisan-endorsed changes to our child welfare, foster, and adoption systems which will help our state's most vulnerable children.
- **[SB626](#), [Modify Laws Related to Human Trafficking](#).** * Comprehensive anti-human trafficking bill per recommendations from the [NC Human Trafficking Commission](#). Creates a right of victims to seek a lifetime no-contact order against their trafficker, expands the crime to include patronizing and soliciting to address the demand side of the problem, and allows victims to collect compensation even if they commit a misdemeanor if done at the behest of their trafficker.
- **[SB640](#), [Various Criminal Procedure Changes](#).** * Helps law enforcement solve crimes by requiring sharing of matches on CODIS, a software database of DNA profiles of convicted offenders, unsolved crime scene evidence, and missing persons.
- **[SB650](#), [Gun Violence Prevention Act](#).** * Increases the criminal penalty for possession of a firearm while committing a felony. I am disappointed that my bill, [SB210](#), also named the Gun Violence Prevention Act, did not receive a vote as it is a much more comprehensive approach to curbing gun violence. I introduced 4 commonsense amendments with broad bipartisan support to strengthen SB650 ([mandate universal background checks](#), [implement red flag laws](#), [prohibit assault weapon sales to those under 21](#), [require safe storage of firearms](#)), but they were all tabled.
- **[SB678](#), [Promote Clean Energy](#).** * Omnibus clean energy bill that includes nuclear as an option to reach our carbon neutral climate change remediation goals.
- **[SB722](#), [Child Care Flexibilities](#).** * Addresses workforce shortages in early childhood facilities by changing certain credential requirements.

Key bills on which I voted NO:

- **[SB20](#), [Care for Women, Children, and Families Act](#).** Dangerous abortion ban bill, full details in section above.
- **[SB319](#), [Captive Insurance Provisions](#).** Creates a special tax carve out for out-of-state captive insurance companies. I believe they should have to pay the same tax as NC-based companies.
- **[SB329](#), [Retail Installment Sales Act Amendments](#).** Raises the rates on consumer credit installment sales contracts (i.e. appliances and cars), which will increase costs for working families across the state.
- **[SB364](#), [Nondiscrimination & Dignity in State Work](#).** An unnecessary, poorly drafted bill that is motivated by the sponsor's desire to fight "wokeism" and is based on his belief that state agencies should not hire, promote and train employees in equality,

diversity and inclusion concepts. Bill sponsors refused to accept [an amendment](#) from Sen. Chaudhuri that would have implemented paid parental and sick leave and put an end to insurrectionists from being government employees.

- [SB508, Remove Volunteer Chaplain Education Requirements](#). The Department of Corrections opposes the bill due to the security risks of allowing anyone to enter prisons as a chaplain. Prison chaplains should be required to show minimum credentials in order to be granted the access to prisoners that is afforded to chaplains.
- [SB582, North Carolina Farm Act of 2023](#). Comprehensive omnibus agriculture bill. I voted no because 1) it will remove important state protections for wetlands, thereby increasing the likelihood of flooding and state expenses related to flooding, 2) it allows hog farmers to burn biogas without sufficient provisions to protect air quality, and 3) it does not provide any support for small and minority farmers, despite [an amendment](#) Democrats offered to include such funding.
- [SB737, Address ESG Factors](#). Addresses use of environmental, social, and governance criteria (ESG) by state agencies and state pension plan fiduciaries. I do not support this bill because we need to ensure that our investment funds are sound and stable, and prohibiting ESGs does not do that.

*Passed Senate unanimously

Judiciary Committee Updates

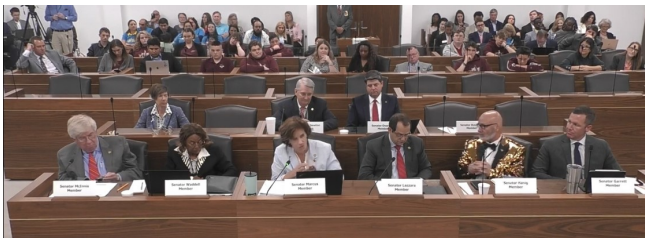


The following noteworthy bills were discussed in the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#) over the past two weeks:

- [SB321, Medical Debt De-Weaponization Act](#). * See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB364, Nondiscrimination in State Employee Hiring](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB376, Expanding Members' Access to HOA Records](#). * See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB508, Remove Volunteer Chaplain Education Requirements](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB579, Prevent Harm to Children](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB625, Child Welfare, Safety and Permanency Reforms](#). * See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB640, Various Criminal Procedure Changes](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB574, Authorize NIL Agency Contracts](#). * See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB582, Farm Act of 2023](#). * See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB650, Gun Violence Prevention Act](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.

*Bipartisan

Education Committee Updates



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

- [SB406, Choose Your School, Choose Your Future](#). Expands the "Opportunity Scholarship" program to any and all families, no matter their income, and establishes a path for early high school graduates. **I do not support the expansion of the private school voucher program to allow even the wealthiest families to use taxpayer money to pay for private school, especially when public schools are so underfunded.** You can read more about the bill [here](#).

*Bipartisan

Commerce and Insurance Committee Updates



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

- [SB319, Captive Insurance Provisions](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB527, Safety Requirements for Elevators](#). Changes elevator safety requirements for certain residential rental accommodations.
- [SB542, DOL/Omnibus Law Changes Agency Bill](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.
- [SB737, Address ESG Factors](#). See "updates on noteworthy votes" section.

*Bipartisan

Senator Marcus in the Community & Meetings in Raleigh



Naveen Shankar DOL my first Senate Page of the biennium this past week. Thank you, Naveen, for coming to the NCGA for the week to assist the Senate in our committees and floor votes.



I met with advocates from the MS Society to discuss the importance of Medicaid expansion and legalizing medical marijuana.



I had a great meeting with [United Way of Greater Charlotte](#) last week. We discussed the importance of affordable housing and anti-poverty initiatives.



I met with advocates from the [Komen Society](#) last week, when we talked about the importance of preventive screening mammography and of fair and equal coverage for breast cancer.



The [NC Optometric Society](#) recently stopped by my office, where I met with SD41-based optometrists about [SB659](#), Optometry Practice Models and [SB624](#), the Healthcare Practitioner Transparency Act.



I met with several athletic trainers to hear about their work in public schools in Mecklenburg and neighboring counties. I met three ATs who literally saved the lives of student athletes and one parent in the stands. Kudos!



I met with Mecklenburg advocates from [El Pueblo](#) last week, and we discussed [SB50](#), a dangerous anti-immigrant bill. I do not support this harmful bill and appreciate their advocacy.

My Bill to Support Domestic Violence Victims Gets National Attention

TIME

SPOTLIGHT U.S. SECURITY-CLEARANCE PROCESS HAS A DIGITAL BLIND SPOT

SIGN IN

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$19

HEALTH & SOCIETY

America Makes It too Hard and Dangerous to Get Divorced



One of my bills is getting national attention as part of this story in last week's Time Magazine. [SB575](#) a bipartisan bill to exempt domestic violence victims from North Carolina's mandatory one year waiting period for divorce. You can read more about how antiquated and unfair our divorce laws are in the full story [here](#).

Rental Assistance for Eligible Cornelius Seniors



The Cornelius Community Development Corporation (CDC) will be administering a **one-time senior rental assistance program**. It will be limited to seniors living in the Town of Cornelius, and the maximum allowance will be half of any proposed rent increase, up to \$200/month per rental unit.

Seniors will be required to submit applications which show they have experienced a rent increase of at least 15%. Applicants must also show proof of total earnings of 70% of Area Median Income (AMI) or below. Applicants for senior rent relief must be single or married households of persons 55+ on fixed income not employed.

To request an application, send an email to michelle@corneliuscdc.com or set up an appointment at the Cornelius CDC office by calling **(704) 897-7340**.

E2D Hosting Laptop Distribution Event



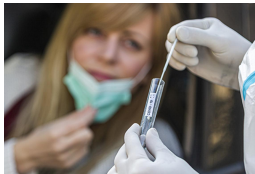
E2D, a Davidson-based nonprofit, has launched a **monthly laptop distribution event** called "Tech Tuesday". All distributions are on a first come first serve basis. Laptops cost \$80 each if paying with cash or money order; \$84 each if paying with a card. They have a maximum of 2 per family/household. The next event will be at 18605 Northline Drive in Cornelius from 3-5PM on May 16th.

Study on Juvenile Recidivism Rates



The North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission conducts biennial recidivism studies of juveniles in North Carolina and of the effectiveness of programs receiving Juvenile Crime Prevention Council grant funding in North Carolina. The study followed 5,822 juveniles with a delinquent complaint who exited the juvenile justice system in FY 2020 following diversion, probation, or commitment to a youth detention center. Of the 3,305 diverted juveniles, most (90%) successfully completed their diversion plan or contract. Juveniles with a successful diversion spent an average of 4 months in the juvenile justice system compared to an average of 3 months for those with an unsuccessful diversion. **Only 9% of diverted juveniles recidivated during their juvenile justice involvement.** You can read the full report [here](#).

COVID-19 Test & Vaccine Updates



NC DHHS is partnering with Project Act to provide **free COVID-19 tests to all North Carolinians**. This program used to just be available for select zip codes, but it is now available statewide. Order your free tests [here](#).

Additionally, DHHS has **approved additional booster shots for folks 65+ and/or who is at high risk for severe illness**. Anyone who meets the age requirement is eligible for a bivalent booster if it has been at least 4 months since their previous vaccine. Folks with compromised immune systems can get a booster if it has been at least 2 months since their last vaccine. More information [here](#).

Financial Update on the State's General Fund

Beginning Cash, Friday, April 21	14,610,635,767.82
Add Receipts:	
Tax and Non-Tax Receipts	1,563,010,473.27
Coronavirus Relief Receipts	0.00
Other Receipts	864,488,416.87
Less Disbursements:	
Payroll	1,199,016,959.17
State Aid	145,995,383.60
Medicaid/Other Provider Payments	225,996,749.79
Tax Refunds/Distributions	185,130,015.61
Debt Service	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Transfers Out	0.00
General Operating	457,622,324.82
Ending Cash, Friday, April 28	14,824,373,224.97
Less Reserved Cash:	
Due to Local Governments – Sales and Use Tax Payable	803,063,203.84
Other Reserves	54,316,652.09
American Recovery Plan Act Reserve	75,331,202.90
Carry Forward Reserve	283,517,232.34
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	631,900,000.00
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	765,130.94
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	748,779,970.12
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, April 28	5,420,820,495.95

The Office of the State Controller (OSC) released the General Fund Cash Watch numbers for the week ending Friday, April 28. OSC provides a weekly update on the State’s General Fund cash position which can be found at osc.nc.gov. **The current unreserved cash balance in state coffers is \$5.42 billion.**

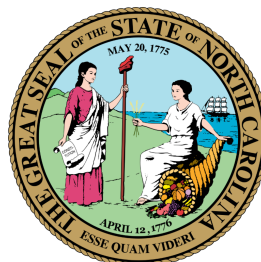
The State Controller is North Carolina’s chief fiscal officer and serves as an independent resource to ensure the financial integrity of the State.

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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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