

SPAM Latest Updates from the NCGA



From Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
To <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
Date 2023-11-17 15:15

Natasha **MARCUS**

NC Senate District 41



NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

November 17, 2023



Legislative Update: Governor Cooper Signs Final Bills of This Year's Legislative Session



Last week, Governor Cooper signed the final two bills of this year's legislative session:

- **SB274, Senior Care Options.** This bill creates new regulations for home assistance services for seniors and people with disabilities by expanding the definition of home assistance service provider. These home assistance service providers require licensure to operate in order to protect the people in their care. The new definition includes providers that assist with meal preparation; cleaning and organizing the home; home management; retail and grocery shopping; errand services; and travel to and from medical appointments, social events, and community activities.
- **SB409, Various Changes to Criminal and Civil Laws.** This bill contains some necessary and helpful provisions relevant to firefighters, but also unfortunately contains a harmful provision regarding the authority of the state's elected commissioner of insurance. Firefighters will receive more insurance coverage for cancer treatment through a state-funded program as a result of this legislation. This change has been long-needed, as firefighters are more likely contract the disease as a result of their work and exposure to smoke and toxins.

Learn more [here](#), and read the Governor's statement on **SB409** [here](#).

2023 Legislative Session Is Now Over



The NCGA ended our long session, following the passage of the budget and the completion of redistricting. As a result, there have been no committee meetings or votes over the last two weeks. I'll keep you posted about any special sessions that may arise.

Use of Federal Medicaid Incentives in NC Budget



When North Carolina finally expanded Medicaid earlier this year, the federal government provided a \$1.6 billion dollar bonus. This money was provided to the NCGA to spend as it saw fit and was allocated in the following ways:

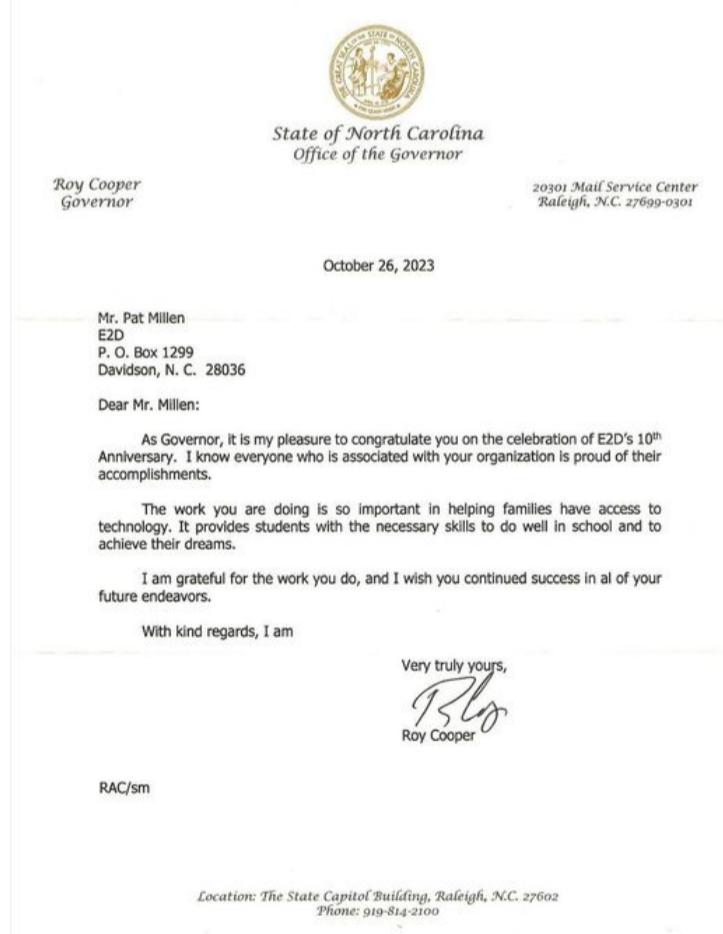
- \$105 million for three new rural health centers
- \$80 million for mobile health crisis teams and respite care
- \$75 million for a new children's and teens' behavioral health hospital in the triangle
- \$40 million for a pay boost for skilled nursing and personal care workers
- Hundreds of millions of dollars to universities and community colleges to expand medical, nursing and health sciences programs
- Millions to various hospitals throughout the state

Not all of this bonus was used to expand healthcare, though. Other expenditures included:

- \$5 million for the new Civil War museum in Fayetteville
- \$4.5 million for a performing arts center for Belmont Abbey College in Gaston County
- \$3.2 million for a library expansion in Swain County
- \$300,000 to renovate bathrooms at the Rockingham Dragway in Richmond County

Learn more [here](#).

Senator Marcus in the Community



I requested a letter of recognition from Governor Cooper to celebrate [Eliminate the Digital Divide's](#) 10th Anniversary. Over the last decade, E2D has supplied over 38,500 laptops to students and their families in many counties of our state, allowing them to do school work, job-related work and other online activities. I am proud to have such a successful organization headquartered in District 41, and would like to commend founders Pat Millen, Eileen Keeley, and their children, Paddy, Franny, and Sam, and all the staff and volunteers at E2D on their work.



The **Veterans Bridge Home** hosted a festival and concert for veterans and their families last weekend at the American Legion Memorial Stadium in Charlotte. I was honored to be invited and happy to get to see Elle King perform. Thank you again to all our current and veteran service members, including my favorite, my son in law, Lt. Parker Simpson, who is in the Navy and will be deployed next month.

November 18th: First in Families Turkey & Food Boxes Distribution Event



[First In Families of Mecklenburg County](#), a project of [InReach](#) and [Charlotte Rescue Mission](#), is hosting a Free Turkeys & Food Boxes Distribution Event on Saturday, November 18, 2023, at 10:00 AM. The event will be held at 4530 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209. In order to participate, please complete [this form](#) and bring it with you on Saturday.

For more information, contact Keiba Young, FIF Project coordinator, at **704-536-6661 (ext. 437)** or by email [here](#).

Gratitude for Educators and Public Schools



As we approach Thanksgiving I'd like to share [this article from EdNC](#) because I share the author's gratitude for educators and public schools and the determination to encourage our state to make better investments in our kids and our future.

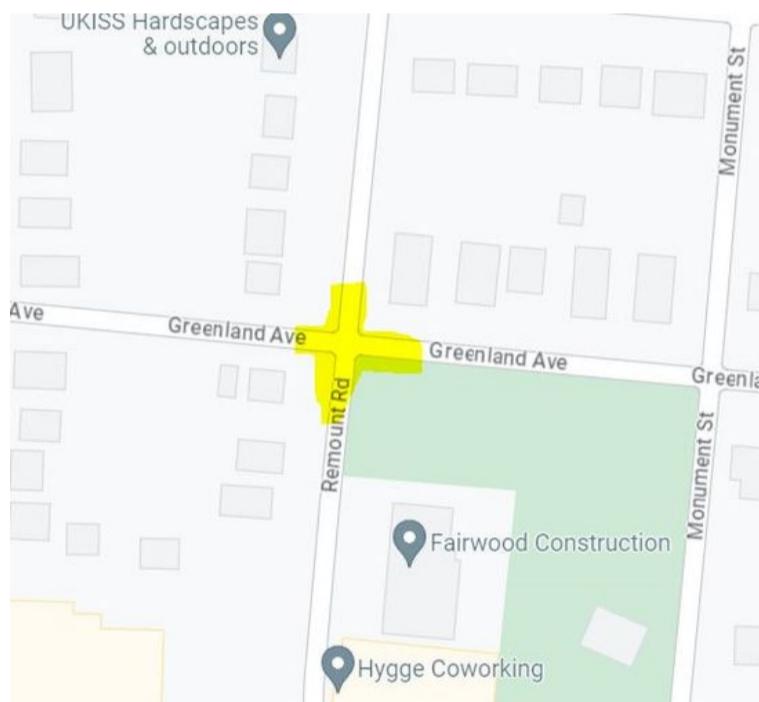
Air Monitoring Network in Huntersville, Cornelius, and Davidson in Development



[CleanAIRE NC](#) will partner with local nonprofits, [Lena's 1Stop Shop](#) and the [North Mecklenburg Economic Mobility Collaborative](#), in Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson to establish an air monitoring network in those communities. A 2021 study from Duke University found that residents in the southern Piedmont region of North Carolina have higher rates of a variety of illnesses, including Alzheimer's, and part of that increased risk is the result of poor air quality. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the southern Piedmont has some of the highest levels of particulate matter pollution in North Carolina.

The two organizations plan to address the worsening air quality of the area with a \$500,000 grant received from the [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program](#). This project will involve the distribution of air monitoring systems throughout each community that will allow CleanAIRE NC to alert residents to the quality of the air on any given day. Recent wildfires burning in western North Carolina have worsened air quality in North Mecklenburg, and this air monitoring system will help residents make informed decisions about protecting themselves on bad air quality days. More info [here](#).

Heads Up: New Four-Way Stop in Historic Camp Greene



The Historic Camp Greene Neighborhood of West Charlotte has two new stop signs at the intersection of Remount Road and Greenland Avenue, making it a four-way stop. With a park located at this intersection, I hope the introduction of the four-way stop will reduce the number of speeding drivers and collisions.

Charlotte's Alternatives to Violence Program Expands Into West Boulevard Corridor



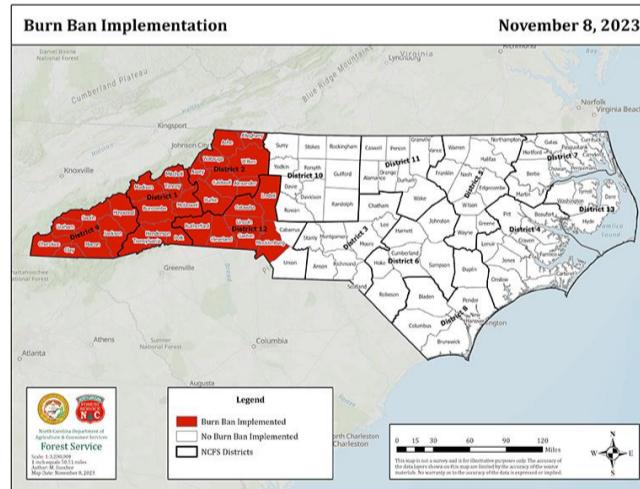
Charlotte has expanded its Alternatives to Violence program, which works to reduce crime by using trained community members known as "violence interrupters," into West Boulevard (SD41). The Alternatives to Violence program operates by building relationships within the community and working on a level of trust to ensure that tense situations are de-escalated safely. The violence interrupter teams work to get at-risk members of the community access to support systems and services such as job opportunities, emotional support, and temporary housing assistance. Data show that the areas surrounding West Boulevard had a violent crime rate nearly three times greater than the county's average last year, and the work that violence interrupter teams are doing can help. Read more about the program [here](#).

Camino Community Development Corporation Research on Mecklenburg County Latin Population



[Camino Community Development Corporation](#) is a bilingual, multicultural nonprofit organization based in Mecklenburg and Cabarrus counties. They provide a number of services to community members regarding their primary care, behavioral health, wellness, and food security. In addition, the organization advocates for Latin communities in the region by providing research to help identify the root causes of issues and develop solutions. Their recent report includes the finding that **residents of Latin descent compose 17% of Mecklenburg County's population, and Cornelius and Huntersville are the two townships in Mecklenburg County with the largest Latin communities, other than Charlotte.**

30 Western North Carolina Counties, Including Mecklenburg, Under a Burn Ban



Effective beginning earlier this month, two burn bans are now affecting the 30 westernmost North Carolina counties, including Mecklenburg County. Preliminary reports show that 26 wildfires burned 43.6 acres of private and state-owned land in N.C. on Sunday, November 13, 2023, and careless debris burning is the leading cause of wildfires in North Carolina. More info, including monthly fire summary data, [here](#).

COVID Updates and Information



As a reminder, every U.S. household can now place an order to receive four free COVID-19 rapid tests delivered to their home. The U.S. government will continue to make COVID-19 tests available to uninsured individuals and under-served communities through existing programs. Please contact a [HRSA health center](#), [Test to Treat site](#), or [ICATT location](#) near you to learn how to access low- or no-cost COVID-19 tests. Learn more [here](#).

The updated vaccines are available now. I got mine last month, just in time to avoid getting sick despite exposure to someone who later tested positive! For updated vaccine-related recommendations depending on health and age, click [here](#). To find a vaccine near you, click [here](#).

Links to Helpful Information

Domestic Violence Hotline: If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence or partner abuse, please call [Safe Alliance](#) at **704-332-2513** and they can help you.

Mecklenburg's County Bar website provides a list of pro bono resources for those unable to afford legal counsel.

Mecklenburg's Department of Community Resources provides individuals and families with [immediate access](#) to a diverse range of Mecklenburg County Health and Human Services programs and community partner services in Community Resources Centers throughout the County.

Mecklenburg's Energy Assistance Programs: Do you need help paying your heating or cooling bills? Mecklenburg offers [two different programs](#) to help eligible low-income households with their energy needs.

Property Tax values and histories in Mecklenburg County can be searched on [this site](#) that includes links to Polaris and information about past assessments. You can find more detailed information on real estate values on the [Mecklenburg](#) site.

Suicide Prevention: If you have thoughts of harming yourself, **please call or text 988**, the Suicide Prevention Hotline for help.

Unclaimed Cash! Visit [NCCash.com](#) today to see if you have unclaimed property under the supervision of the NC Treasurer's office. More info [here](#).

Voter Information: You can find your current information on the [NC Voter Lookup page](#).

Free Property Tax Assistance Services



Do you need help with your property taxes? The [Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy](#) is providing free assistance to help homeowners prepare their NC property tax relief applications. Call **980-256-7952** or visit their website to learn more [here](#).

Financial Update on the State's General Fund

Beginning Cash, Friday, November 03	16,350,362,109.83
Add Receipts:	
Tax and Non-Tax Receipts	401,484,871.61
Coronavirus Relief Receipts	0.00
Other Receipts	1,124,838,374.86
Less Disbursements:	
Payroll	109,557,785.95
State Aid	125,752,956.66
Medicaid/Other Provider Payments	1,268,678,241.85
Tax Refunds/Distributions	71,398,360.47
Debt Service	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Transfers Out	0.00
General Operating	188,460,354.15
Ending Cash, Friday, November 10	16,112,837,657.22
Less Reserved Cash:	
Due to Local Governments – Sales and Use Tax Payable	934,546,219.36
Other Reserves	36,702,041.08
American Recovery Plan Act Reserve	133,837,075.59
Carry Forward Reserve	280,026,901.32
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	591,900,000.00
Federal Infrastructure Match Reserve	95,328,642.00
Housing Reserve	0.00
Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Reserve	58,534,539.00
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
NC Innovation Reserve	0.00
Opioid Abatement Reserve	8,380,211.23
Public School Contingency Reserve	0.00
Public School Need Based Capital Reserve	0.00
Reg Economic Dev Reserve	0.00
Repairs and Renovations Reserve	0.00
Retiree Supplement Reserve	0.00
SCIF General Fund Reserve	0.00
Savings Reserve	4,750,001,113.98
Stabilization and Inflation Reserve	1,000,000,000.00
State Emergency Response/Disaster Reserve	872,194,121.18
Transportation Reserve	0.00
Unfunded Liability Solvency Reserve	10,000,000.00
Wilmington Harbor Enhancements Reserve	283,800,000.00
World University Games Reserve	0.00
Unreserved Cash Balance, Friday, November 10	6,466,488,712.48

The Office of the State Controller (OSC) released the General Fund Cash Watch numbers for the week ending Friday, November 10. 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 \$6.466 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

Phone: (919) 715-3050

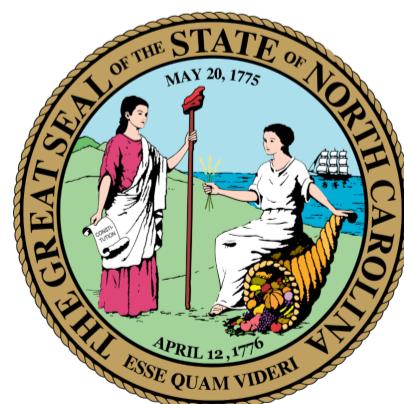
Email:

Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov
Sarah.E.Reynolds@ncleg.gov

Sara

Mailing Address:

300 N. Salisbury Street,
Rm. 519
Raleigh, NC 27603



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

[Senator Natasha Marcus](#) | [Website](#)



Sen. Natasha Marcus, District 41 | 300 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27603

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