

For Immediate Release



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

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Greetings:

At the General Assembly
For the Week

I hope you all are gearing up to go vote. Early voting has begun and there are many important changes we are voting for.

I participated in several activities and events throughout the district.

Joyce Waddell



Early Voting Begins

Senator Waddell provides campaign materials to early voters in Mecklenburg County.

Solar Rates

Renewable energy advocates were in court on Wednesday, challenging Duke Energy and state regulators over new regulations that are set to increase energy bills for individuals and businesses with solar panels. Nine environmental groups and activists have filed a lawsuit against Duke Energy and the North Carolina Utilities Commission, alleging that the commission disregarded evidence on the benefits of solar energy – both financial and environmental – when approving the new regulations last year. The North Carolina Court of Appeals conducted oral arguments in the case on Wednesday.

The regulations pertain to how much Duke Energy can charge or pay solar customers, particularly focusing on "net metering," a process where utilities purchase excess power from solar customers at a flat rate. The new rules, set to end net metering by 2027, will instead allow Duke Energy to pay varying rates at different times of the day, with lower rates during peak solar production periods.

The lawsuit centers on the decision-making process of the Utilities Commission, which allegedly relied heavily on Duke Energy's report, ignoring alternative perspectives. Environmental groups argue that the commission should have considered unbiased information rather than solely relying on Duke Energy's data.

The outcome of the lawsuit remains uncertain, with a potential appeal to the state Supreme Court if Duke Energy and the Utilities Commission prevail. If the solar advocates succeed, the issue would likely be remanded to the Utilities Commission for reconsideration.

I believe there is room in North Carolina for both energy companies to exist. I hope we can come together and find a solution that works for all.



International Minority Coalition

*Senator Waddell speaks to members
of the International Minority
Coalition about the importance of
early voting.*



Math Instruction

On Monday, the North Carolina Public School Superintendent addressed state lawmakers, expressing her desire for substantial changes to how math is taught to students. Speaking before the House Select Committee on Education Reform, she stressed the need for legislative support in implementing these changes.

While the Department of Public Instruction has the authority to review math standards and provide recommendations to schools, legislative action can formalize and fund specific initiatives. Data from tests indicates a decline in math performance as students progress through school, with less than half of ninth-grade students achieving proficiency in math.

Under the proposed plan, all kindergarten through eighth-grade students would receive a minimum of 60 minutes of grade-level math instruction daily. This ensures that remedial work, if needed, supplements rather than replaces grade-level instruction.

Some lawmakers praised the plan, particularly highlighting the importance of parental involvement in fostering student success. They acknowledged challenges in recent changes to math instruction, which may hinder parental support if not understood.

Highlighting ongoing math teacher shortages, especially in rural areas, the Deputy State Superintendent emphasized the need for trained educators. Many current math teachers lack formal teaching backgrounds, transitioning from other careers. He stressed the distinction between subject knowledge and effective teaching skills.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Retired School Personnel Highlights Advocacy

Senator Waddell is recognized for her tireless advocacy for retired school personnel.



Vaccines

With the the days of winter coming to an end, we should continue our plans to stay safe. When the weather breaks, we will see people being outside more and more and we will still need to use precaution. Adopting hand washing and distancing as an all day everyday policy can make a great difference.



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