

## Latest Updates from the NCGA



**From** Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>  
**To** <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>  
**Reply-To** <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>  
**Date** 2024-07-26 16:26

# Natasha **MARCUS**

NC Senate District 41



## NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

July 26, 2024

### 2024 Legislative Session In Recess



The NCGA ended our official short session in June. 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.

### Department of Public Safety Reports and Updates



As a member of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety, I received a legislative report from North Carolina's Department of Public Safety regarding the Treatment for Effective Community Supervision (TECSP) Program. The program is designed to support evidence-based practices to reduce relapses into criminal behavior and promote coordination between state and community-based corrections programs. The target populations for these programs are high-risk, high-need offenders who face significant barriers or destabilizing factors that contribute to reoffending. Some of the most salient details from each report are below:

- Historically, TECSP funding has primarily focused on substance abuse treatment. However, new research indicates that Cognitive Behavioral Intervention (CBI) aids in the reduction of reoffending behavior, so the Department has dedicated a large portion of the program's funding to CBI.
- Recidivism Reduction Services is the single largest program funded under the TECSP umbrella and serves the largest number of offenders through services available in 100 counties during FY 22-23.
  - The core services offered to offenders include cognitive behavioral intervention, booster sessions, and a continuum of substance abuse services, including outpatient and aftercare/recovery management services.
  - Support services such as education, employment, health/nutrition, education, and social support services based on the offender's needs must also be addressed.
- The issue of homelessness among offenders supervised in the community has been a significant problem for supervising officers. Transitional and Temporary Housing (TH) is community-based housing for offenders to provide a safe environment and reduce recidivism.
- Reentry services provided through TECSP are handled by Local Reentry Councils (LRCs), which are composed of various individuals and agencies that have a role or significant interest in helping people successfully transition out of correctional supervision.
- In FY 2022-23, the Department used nine vendors across the state to provide 182 transitional housing beds. Additionally, 829 admissions (individuals staying at least one night) were made.
  - The average length of stay was 49 days.
  - Offenders typically reside in housing for up to 90 days, but that period can be extended up to 120 days under unique circumstances.
  - The average daily population was 137 individuals in transitional housing for FY 2022-23.
- Across the state, 12,313 justice-involved individuals received services under the TECSP during FY 2022-23. In some instances, offenders may have been enrolled in multiple programs during the reporting period.
- In FY 2022-23, 17 LRCs covered 19 counties, and numerous communities organized to support establishing an LRC council in the future.

The report has not been published online yet, but you can find it [here](#) once it has been.

Additionally, the Department of Public Safety's Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJ) has launched a quarterly newsletter to provide updates on the division's latest happenings. You can subscribe to "The Juvenile Justice Journal" [here](#).

## Charlotte Improves National Ranking On Economic Mobility



Opportunity Insights, a Harvard University-based research group, has published data indicating that Charlotte has moved from No. 50 to 38 in economic mobility. Compared to peer cities, Charlotte is ranked third of 50 on economic mobility progress. The study indicates that racial gaps are closing, but class gaps are widening nationally. In addition, the study notes that Charlotte's success in improving economic mobility may be due to the frequency at which individuals at different income levels maintain community and form bonds within the city. Learn more [here](#).

## Updates on Menstrual Product Tax Laws



[Period Law](#) released its monthly newsletter on the fight to end the menstrual products tax and highlighted my bill, [SB831](#), as one that deserves a hearing and will need to be reintroduced next year when I'm no longer in the Senate. Of the 12 states that introduced sales tax repeal bills this session, six states had bipartisan bills, and the number of states that continue to impose a tax on menstrual products was reduced to 20. South Carolina passed its tax-exempt law this year, but in North Carolina, the Legislature won't allow debate on the bill. Learn more [here](#).

## Innovative Way To Measure Air Quality Near Coal Ash Plants Coming To NC



Contamination from coal ash is a concern in the Lake Norman area and other parts of the state. As an example, Wayne County's H.F. Lee Power Plant, owned by Duke Energy, used to burn coal before transitioning to natural gas in 2012. The plant also processes coal ash by removing excess carbon. The processed coal ash is then used as an ingredient in cement, and Wayne County residents are worried about what this process may do to the quality of the water and air. If enough of the metal particles found in coal ash make it into the air, they can severely impact the health of anyone who breathes them in.

As a result, [Down East Coal Ash Environmental and Social Justice Coalition](#)'s Director of Research, Chris Hawn, has implemented a program that uses spider web biomonitoring to glean information about the environment, as spider webs collect dust from that can be tested for pollutants. Learn more about the program and the process of spider web biomonitoring [here](#).

## Senator Marcus in the Community



I attended the [Charlotte LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce](#) lecture on crystal meth and the gay population, led by Sobriety Coach Dallas Bragg of Huntersville, who explained how gay men are especially vulnerable to this powerful drug, which is a worsening epidemic in the gay male community. If you or someone you know needs assistance with a drug dependency, contact Mr. Bragg at [www.drdallasbragg.com](http://www.drdallasbragg.com) or seek help from Promise Resource Network or Time Out Youth in Charlotte.



I visited two homes in the [Habitat for Humanity of the Charlotte Region](#) Repair Program. One was waiting for critical repairs to the foundation and several other structural areas, and the second home had been fully restored. The owners of both homes were very grateful for the assistance from Habitat, which will allow them to remain in their homes safely.

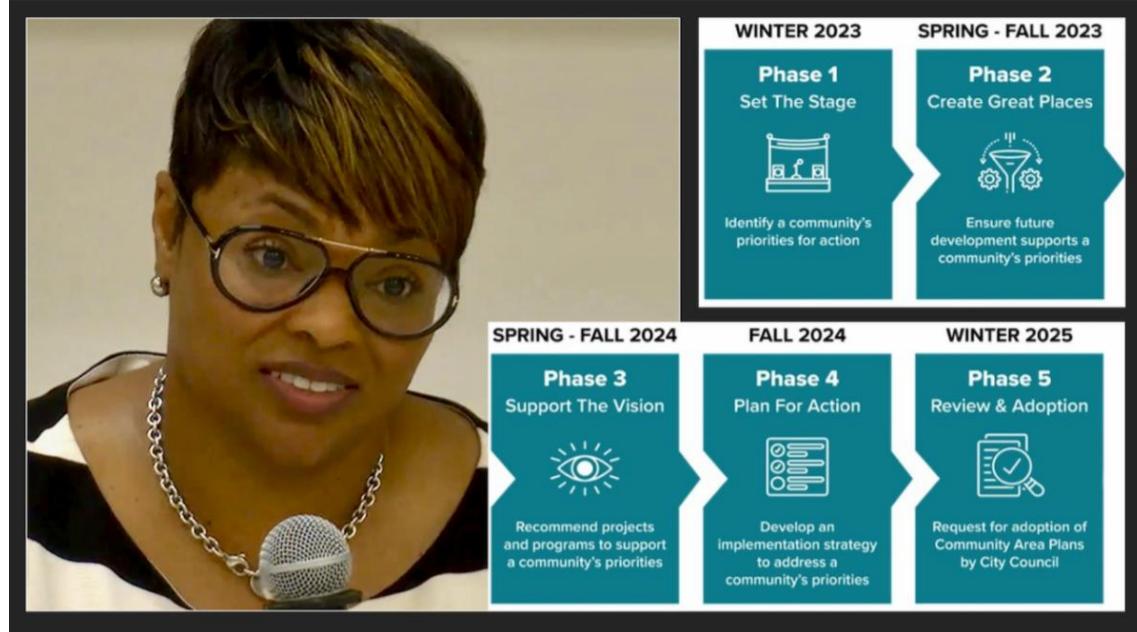


Following my visit to the homes included in Habitat's Repair Program, I participated in a panel that Habitat hosted for their homeowners and soon-to-be homeowners. We discussed the importance and expense of homeowners' insurance, finding the right policy, [SB882](#) to study the insurance companies' use of consent to rate notices to charge in excess of the maximum permitted by the state, and more. We took questions from the audience. The panel included a representative of AARP and WBTV newscaster Claire Kopsky as moderator.



I was honored to be named a Hometown Hero by the [Kannapolis Cannon Ballers](#) minor league baseball team.

## CLT Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan



Earlier this week, City Planning Assistant Director Alyria Osborne presented the CLT Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan at **Charlotte's Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum**. Her presentation focused on what Charlotte will look like in the upcoming decades and how to keep Charlotte liveable and growing. In the next 20 years, the City of Charlotte expects at least 400,000 new residents and at least 200,000 new jobs. Osborne's presentation addressed some of the unintended consequences of this level of growth, as well as Charlotte's plan for policies and development and the importance of community feedback. You can watch the presentation and view the slides from the presentation [here](#).

## Lake Norman Marine Commission Resumes Free Life Ring Program



Anyone with a dock on Lake Norman can apply to the Lake Norman Marine Commission (LNMC) to receive a free US Coast Guard-approved life ring. The LNMC will deliver the ring to you, or the ring can be picked up at the Commission's monthly meeting. To get your dock safety life preserver, just download [this form](#), fill it out, and either return it to the LNMC or email it to [LNMC@LNMC.org](mailto:LNMC@LNMC.org). Learn more [here](#).

## July 31: Davidson Police Department Hosts Summertime Storytime Event

**Summertime Storytime**  
**WEDNESDAY JULY 31, 2024**  
**1:30 P.M. Town Green**

AUTHOR EDEN ESTABROOK  
WILL READ *ARNIE THE ARMADILLO GOES TO ANTARCTICA*  
**AND**  
AUTHOR ASHLEY BELOTE  
WILL READ *LISTEN UP, LOUELLA, & DON'T WASH WINSTON*

 Davidson Police Department  
Community Engagement  
704-892-5131  
policeinfo@townofdavidson.org

Davidson residents are invited to attend a Summer Storytime Event on the Town Green at **1:30 PM on Wednesday, July 31**. The event will kick off from the steps of the Davidson Public Library (**119 N. Main Street**).

Two authors, Ashley Belote and Eden Estabrook, will each read from their books. Eden will read *Arnie the Armadillo Goes to Antarctica*, and Ashley will read *Listen Up, Louella*, and *Don't Wash Winston*. Attendees will be able to participate in Q&A sessions following the readings. Copies of each book will be available for purchase from Main Street Books, which the authors may then sign. Whit's Frozen Custard of Davidson will be on-site.

In case of inclement weather, the Summer Storytime events will move to the Davidson Town Hall and Community Center Auditorium (**251 South Street**) on the main level.

For additional information or questions, email Davidson Police Community Engagement Officer Mike Prather at [DPDCommunityEngagement@townofdavidson.org](mailto:DPDCommunityEngagement@townofdavidson.org). Learn more [here](#).

## August 10: Davidson Fire Department Invites Community to “Stuff the Truck”



Thanks to the collaborative efforts of FeedNC, the Davidson Fire Department, and the Mecklenburg County Professional Firefighters Association (Local 5326), a back-to-school Stuff the Truck event will be held on **Saturday, August 10**, at Davidson United Methodist Church (**233 S. Main Street**). **Donations can be made from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM.**

This annual event collects critical school supplies to ease the burden on children and their families. Suggested donations include lunch boxes, hygiene items, granola bars, Goldfish, fruit snacks, applesauce pouches, breakfast bars, chewy bars, gluten-free snacks, Cheez-its animal crackers, pretzels, popcorn, individual peanut butter packets, cookies, graham crackers, and other individually wrapped crackers. First Responders will be on site with Fire Engine 3 to assist with drop-offs throughout the event.

For questions regarding the 2024 Stuff the Truck event, please contact Bonnie Battalia with FeedNC by emailing [bbattalia@feednc.org](mailto:bbattalia@feednc.org).

## August 17: Military Service Academy Day Event in Charlotte



On **Saturday, August 17, from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**, Congressman Jeff Jackson will host a Military Service Academy Day event at Charlotte Catholic High School (**7702 Pineville-Matthews Rd, Charlotte, NC 28226**). High school students who may have an interest in one or more of the U.S. Military Service Academies are encouraged to attend and explore their options in service. For more information, email Nyhrie Chapman at [nyhrie.chapman@mail.house.gov](mailto:nyhrie.chapman@mail.house.gov).

## September 24: State Health Plan Transition to Aetna - Information Event in Charlotte



For state employees and retirees with questions about the impending switch from BCBS to Aetna - mark your calendar! In 2025, Aetna will be the new Third-Party Administrator for the North Carolina State Health Plan Network. To aid in the transition, Aetna is hosting 20 information events across the state.

On **Tuesday, September 24**, the Open Enrollment Aetna Outreach Bus will be at Central Piedmont Community College (**1201 Elizabeth Avenue Charlotte NC 28204**) from **11:00 AM - 3:00 PM**, and Aetna representatives will be available to answer questions about the transition, including the ability to look up your providers. **Attendees will have the opportunity to receive a flu shot on a first-come, first-served basis.** No registration is required, and attendance is free. Learn more [here](#).

## Mecklenburg County Homes Program Now Available for Homeowners in Charlotte and Davidson



The Helping Out Mecklenburg Homeowners with Economic Support (HOMES) Program has returned for another season. From **July 1 – Nov. 22, 2024**, Mecklenburg County is partnering with the City of Charlotte and the Town of Davidson to provide grant funding to qualifying residential homeowners to help address the rising costs of retaining their homes. **Program recipients must apply for consideration annually.**

Grant funds will be paid to the Mecklenburg County Tax Collector, who will reduce the total amount of taxes due for qualifying recipients' primary residence. The amount granted will equal 35% of the Mecklenburg County tax amount on the last available tax bill, rounded to the nearest dollar, not to exceed \$648.

Incomplete applications will not be approved; however, re-submissions may be considered if received before the deadline. Applications and accompanying documents are subject to program audit.

**Applicants must not be participants in any of the following programs:**

- North Carolina Homestead Exclusion
- North Carolina Property Tax Homestead Circuit Breaker
- North Carolina Disabled Veterans Exclusion
- North Carolina Present Use Value (PUV) Program

To be eligible:

- The property must be located within Mecklenburg County, NC.
- The property must be the owner's legal primary residence at the time of application and consistently for the past three consecutive years, as verified by recorded legal documents.
- The resident grant recipient's name(s) must be on the recorded deed, title, or life estate.

Paper applications can also be obtained from:

- Department of Community Resources (**3205 Freedom Drive, Suite 1000, Charlotte, NC 28208**)
- County Assessor's Office (**3205 Freedom Drive, Suite 3500, Charlotte NC 28208**)
- Ella B. Scarborough Community Resource Center (**430 Stitt Road, Charlotte, NC 28213**)

Paper applications must be mailed to the Department of Community Resources.

Learn more about the program and complete the application [here](#). Contact the HOMES Program at **980-314-4663** or [4homes@mecknc.gov](mailto:4homes@mecknc.gov) for help with the application process.

## North Carolina Summer Meals Programs for Kids

# NC SUMMER Nutrition Programs

More than 900,000 North Carolina students rely on the nutritious meals and snacks served during the school year through the School Breakfast, School Lunch and Afterschool Snack Programs. When school is out, those low-income children lose access to meals. Summer Meals Programs provide nutritious meals at no cost for children and adolescents ages 18 and younger to help close that gap.

To find nutritious summer meals at no-cost near you for kids and teens:

- Text "Food" to 304-304 for information in English or "COMIDA" to 304-304 for information in Spanish.
- Use the [N.C. Site Finder Map](#)
- Check your local school district website, social media or other communications.
- Learn more [here](#).

As part of these programs, there will be fitness, fun, and farm-to-summer activities across the state that encourage program operators to serve local food as part of meals and snacks and teach about agriculture. Learn more and sign up for the Farm to Summer challenge [here](#).

## Sun Bucks



The USDA has launched a permanent program to provide food assistance to children and families during the summer. SUN Bucks will provide grocery-buying benefits to qualifying families with school-aged children during the summer months when schools are on summer break. SUN Bucks will be issued to EBT cards that families can use to purchase nutritious food. Beginning in summer 2024, families will receive \$120 per eligible child for the summer period. Some families will have to apply for the program, but many students will automatically qualify. Children will automatically qualify if they already participate in any of the following programs:

- Free or Reduced-Price (FRP) meals at school because they have an approved FRP application at school, or
- Food and Nutrition Services (FNS, food stamps), or
- Work First (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), cash assistance), or
- Medicaid with household income below 185% of the federal poverty level, or
- Foster care.

Families will be able to use their EBT cards to buy food at grocery stores, farmers' markets, and [some online retailers](#). Find out if your child automatically qualifies or if you will need to apply for the program [here](#). View the Sun Bucks FAQ [here](#). Learn more [here](#), and receive information on the program as it becomes available [here](#).

## Fans Available for Seniors and Adults who Receive Disability Income (Registration Required)



Seniors (60+) and adults 18-59 who receive disability income in Mecklenburg County may receive box fans for free by registering [online](#) or calling one of the eight pickup locations listed below:

- Albemarle Road Recreation Center (5027 Idlewild Road North in Charlotte)  
980-314-1101
- **David B. Waymer Recreation Center (14008 Holbrooks Road in Huntersville)  
980-314-1127**
- Eastway Regional Recreation Center (3150 Eastway Park Drive in Charlotte)  
980-314-3772
- **Northern Regional Recreation Center (18121 Old Statesville Road in Cornelius)  
(980) 314-6772**
- **Southview Recreation Center (1720 Vilma Street in Charlotte) 980-314-1105**
- Sugaw Creek Recreation Center (943 W. Sugaw Creek Road in Charlotte)  
980-314-1124
- Tyvola Senior Center (2225 Tyvola Road in Charlotte) 980-314-1320
- **West Charlotte Recreation Center (2401 Kendall Drive in Charlotte)  
980-314-1120**

Fans are limited to one per person. When picking up a fan, you must show a valid ID providing proof of age and a current Mecklenburg County address. Pre-registration is required, and walk-up requests will not be accepted. Learn more [here](#).

## Financial Update on the State's General Fund

<b>Beginning Cash, Friday, July 12</b>	<b>12,630,787,578.27</b>
<b>Add Receipts:</b>	
Tax and Non-Tax Receipts	728,255,854.58
Coronavirus Relief Receipts	0.00
Other Receipts	334,844,639.76
<b>Less Disbursements:</b>	
Payroll	78,171,858.98
State Aid	80,818,786.92
Medicaid/Other Provider Payments	130,775,723.17
Tax Refunds/Distributions	39,672,222.31
Debt Service	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Transfers Out	0.00
General Operating	313,412,704.99
<b>Ending Cash, Friday, July 19</b>	<b>13,051,036,776.24</b>
<b>Less Reserved Cash:</b>	
Due to Local Governments – Sales and Use Tax Payable	607,763,868.75
Other Reserves	11,278,663.58
American Recovery Plan Act Reserve	38,860,806.99
Carry Forward Reserve	227,691,009.68
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	735,832,000.00
Federal Infrastructure Match Reserve	121,758,723.00
Housing Reserve	0.00
Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Reserve	55,897,900.22
Information Technology Reserve	410,307,521.00
Local Fiscal Recovery Reserve-ARPA	0.00
Local Govt Coronavirus Relief Reserve	0.00
Local Project Reserve	0.00
Medicaid Contingency Reserve	726,512,736.00
Medicaid Transformation Reserve	60,642,170.00
NC GREAT Reserve	0.00
NC Innovation Reserve	0.00
Opioid Abatement Reserve	39,131,690.48
Public School Contingency Reserve	0.00
Public School Need Based Capital Reserve	0.00
Reg Economic Dev Reserve	4,650,000.00
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	669,362,475.46
Transportation Reserve	0.00
Unfunded Liability Solvency Reserve	0.00
Wilmington Harbor Enhancements Reserve	283,800,000.00
World University Games Reserve	0.00
<b>Unreserved Cash Balance, Friday, July 19</b>	<b>3,307,546,097.10</b>

The Office of the State Controller (OSC) released the General Fund Cash Watch numbers for the week ending Friday, July 19. OSC provides a weekly update on the State's General Fund cash position, which can be found at [osc.nc.gov](http://osc.nc.gov). The current unreserved cash balance in state coffers is \$3.307 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.

## 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.

**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](#).

**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](#).

## Contact Our Office

Phone: (919) 715-3050

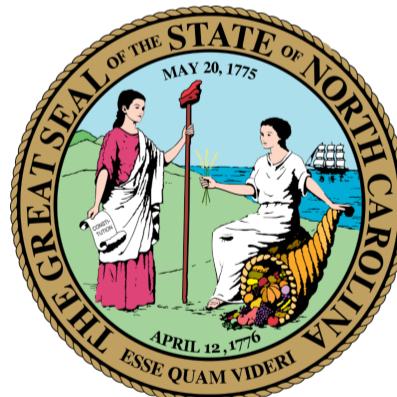
Email:

[Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov](mailto:Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov)  
[Sarah.E.Reynolds@ncleg.gov](mailto: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 US

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