

For Immediate Release



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Greetings:

*Fall is here and I have been spending a good amount of time in the district. Although I am in the district, my Raleigh office continues to be open to receive constituent contact.*

*Joyce Waddell*



## Farewell to Colleague

*Senator Waddell represents District 40 constituents in bidding farewell at the funeral of the Honorable Representative Kelly M. Alexander, Jr.*

## School Vacancies

Recent data from public school superintendents indicate an improvement in the number of teaching and total school employee vacancies across the state this school year.

This fall, superintendents reported 8,335 total school employee vacancies statewide, including 3,142 teaching vacancies, 787 of which are in special education. You can read the full report [here](#).

This year marks the first time all school districts in the state reported their vacancy numbers to NCSSA. However, Hoke noted that in previous years, only the largest districts consistently responded, making direct year-to-year comparisons challenging due to missing data from over a dozen smaller districts.

Despite this, one clear trend emerged: even with more districts reporting this year, the number of K-12 classroom teacher vacancies has decreased across elementary, middle, and high schools compared to last year.

Data from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) supports the rise in residency license teachers, although NCSSA acknowledged previous undercounts of these teachers compared to state data.



## Unite For Our Rights!

*Senator Waddell participates in a rally and march to provide information on voting to the community.*



## Prison Copays

Prisons are constitutionally required to provide health care to incarcerated individuals, but that doesn't mean it comes without a cost.

In North Carolina, as in nearly 40 other states, incarcerated people are charged copays for certain health care services. According to the N.C. Department of Adult Correction's copay policy, inmates are charged \$5 for medical and dental services they request, and \$7 for self-declared emergency visits. However, if staff determine that the visit was indeed an emergency, no fee is applied.

Although these fees may seem modest, advocates argue they can create financial barriers, especially considering the low wages paid to incarcerated individuals. In the 2022-23 fiscal year, 90% of incarcerated workers earned between 40 cents and \$1 per day inside prison facilities, while those in Corrections Enterprises earned up to \$3 per day.

Research indicates this can pose serious health risks for incarcerated individuals, as well as those reentering society after release—not just in North Carolina but nationwide. Some states are reconsidering these copay policies.

Certain prison health care services are exempt from copays, including medical care initiated by the facility, such as initial screenings, physicals, and emergency care, per the N.C. Department of Adult Correction.

The department does emphasize that no one is denied medical care based on their ability to pay. If an inmate cannot afford a copay at the time of care, the fee is placed as a lien on their account, with future deposits automatically applied to cover outstanding charges.

## COVID & Influenza Vaccinations

Flu season usually increases in the fall, and with COVID numbers going up in North Carolina, please be sure to get vaccinated and continue safety precautions.

## NC General Assembly

Visit [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov), the official website of the North Carolina General Assembly. Use this website as a tool to track bills, find and communicate with your state representatives, as well as follow chamber activity, meetings and issues before the General Assembly.

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