

## 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:**

*I would like to thank all constituents and friends for allowing me to provide you weekly updates through this newsletter. I try to bring you information that is up to date and relevant to our area and state. As we begin this long session in the NC General Assembly, I hope you will stay in the trenches with me and I promise to try to keep you informed.*

*If you know of anyone who does not receive my newsletter that would like to, please send the request to my office.*

*Joyce Waddell*



**MLK Event**

*Senator Waddell participates with UNC Charlotte's graduates at an MLK event held at the university.*



## North Carolina Lottery and Education Funding

The North Carolina Education Lottery (NCEL) plays a significant financial role in supporting education across the state. In the 2023-24 fiscal year, the lottery contributed over \$1 billion to education, continuing a trend of increasing funding in recent years. Since its inception, the lottery has raised over \$10 billion for education in North Carolina, according to NCEL data.

Despite this substantial contribution, lottery funds represent only a small portion of the state's total education spending. In 2023-24, North Carolina allocated \$12.3 billion to K-12 public schools, excluding school construction. Of this total, \$407 million, or 3.3%, came from lottery proceeds. These funds, while relatively small compared to the overall budget, play a crucial role in addressing specific needs, such as school construction grants.

The lottery's establishment in 2005, under the North Carolina State Lottery Act, was controversial. At the time, North Carolina was the last state on the East Coast without a state-sponsored lottery. Advocates argued it would supplement education funding.

The ethics and impact of state-sponsored gambling remain contentious. Lotteries are often viewed as a form of regressive taxation, disproportionately affecting lower-income households. Studies indicate that people in lower-income counties are more likely to participate in lottery games, raising concerns about exacerbating financial vulnerabilities. While a 2018 study found lottery players' demographics largely mirror the state's population, critics note that slightly higher participation rates among certain groups, including Black residents, highlight potential disparities.

I believe that we have utilized lottery dollars to help schools, especially since the funding has dwindled. NC public schools can use all the help we can find.



### **City of Charlotte Transportation**

*Senator Waddell provides remarks regarding working together for improved transportation for the City of Charlotte.*

## Airport Guns

The number of firearms discovered at airport security checkpoints in North Carolina increased last year, with Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU) seeing a 17% rise, according to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). TSA officers found 89 firearms at RDU, an increase from 76 the previous year. At Charlotte Douglas International Airport, which handles significantly more passengers, 117 firearms were discovered, a slight decrease from 124 the year before. Most of the firearms found were loaded.

When a firearm is detected in an X-ray scan, TSA agents halt the screening process and alert airport police. The bag is removed, and the weapon is confiscated. Authorities then decide on appropriate actions, ranging from civil citations to felony charges, depending on the situation.

Passengers caught with firearms face fines of up to \$15,000 and lose their TSA PreCheck eligibility for a minimum of five years.

In North Carolina, firearms were found at a higher rate. The 250 firearms discovered across the state's 10 commercial airports equated to 9.7 firearms per 1 million passengers screened, a decrease from 10.3 the year before. However, the total number of firearms found in the state rose by about 5% last year.

## 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.

*You can view bills in full by visiting [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov).*



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