

For Immediate Release



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

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Greetings:

Last week the General Assembly met and passed bills and confirmed cabinet members for the state in the Senate. Some of the bills are listed below:

SB 177 Add Psychiatric Hospitals to Medicaid Hasp
SB 190 Physician Assistant Licensure Compact
SB 369 Medicaid Telehealth Services
SB 370 Repeal Certificate of Need Laws
SB 257 Appropriations Act (The Budget)

SR 372 Confirm McKinley Wooten, Secretary of Revenue
SR 760 Confirm Lee Lilley, Secretary of Commerce

Joyce Waddell

SB 257 - 2025 Appropriations Act

The North Carolina Senate has approved a \$32.6 billion budget proposal for the 2025–26 fiscal year, initiating a process that will involve negotiations with the House of Representatives to finalize the state's spending plan. The proposal emphasizes continued income tax reductions, aiming to lower the individual income tax rate to 3.99% in 2025 and eventually to 2.99% by 2028. This approach has drawn criticism from some who argue that it may limit the state's capacity to fund essential services and disproportionately benefit higher-income individuals.

In terms of expenditures, the budget allocates approximately 57% of its funds to education, including \$12.1 billion for K-12 education in the first year. Teachers are slated to receive an average pay increase of 2.3% in the first year and 3.3% over the biennium, along with a \$3,000 bonus spread over two years.

The proposal also includes \$700 million in additional aid for Hurricane Helene recovery and sets aside \$1.1 billion in reserves for future emergencies. It also proposes the elimination of 850 vacant state government positions and reductions. The budget now moves to the House, where it is expected to undergo revisions before a final version is agreed upon.

I am continuing to speak for changes as this budget moves from the Senate to the House.

Senate Bill 370

State lawmakers are once again addressing the issue of certificate-of-need (CON) rules, a key regulatory framework that governs health care competition in North Carolina.

One of the factors complicating the debate this year is a ruling from the North Carolina Supreme Court, which allowed a lawsuit to proceed that could potentially lead to the statewide invalidation of the CON laws on constitutional grounds.

Overall, the ongoing debate over the future of the CON system highlights the deep divisions within the healthcare industry and the challenges lawmakers face in balancing competition, access, and cost containment in the state's healthcare system.



Committee Meeting

Senator Waddell participates in a Health Care Committee that heard bills regarding mental health organizations, hospital regulations, and pharmacists.

NC General Assembly

Visit 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.

Please don't forget to consider getting vaccinated. There are viruses and other illnesses plaguing our community that can be prevented by vaccines and proper handwashing.



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