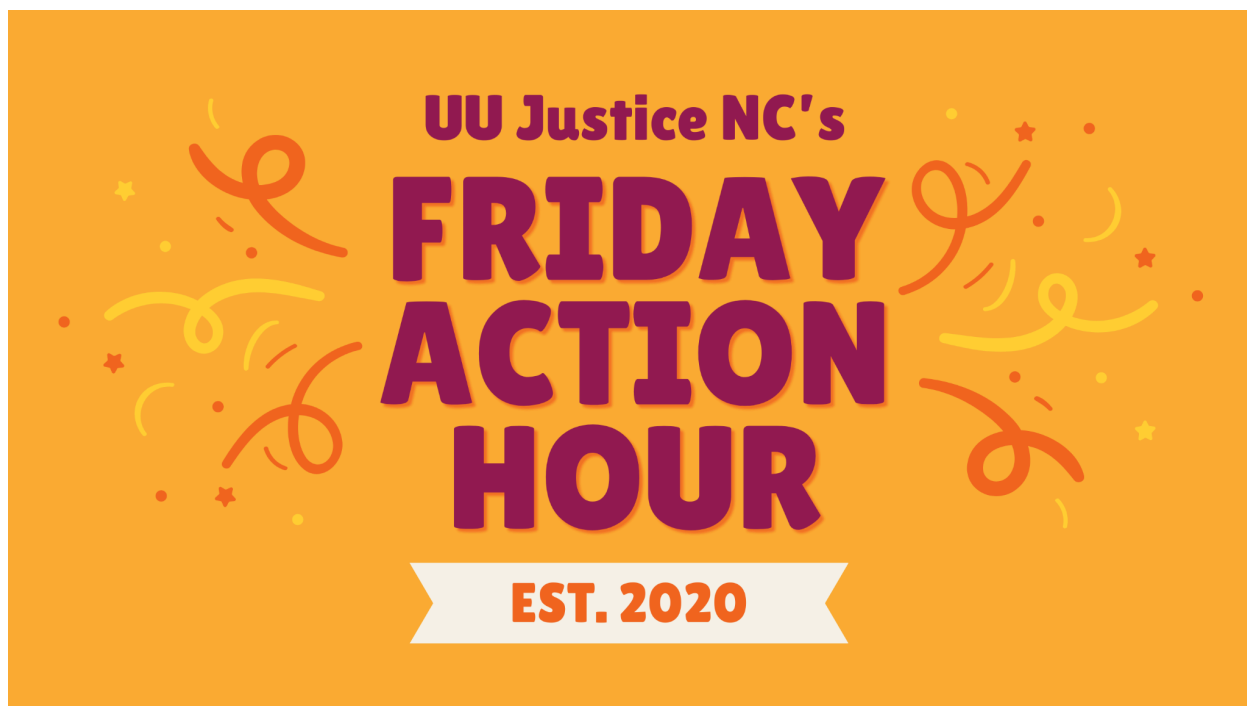




2024 UU Justice NC - Friday Action Hour Google Doc

We have a new 2025 Google Doc. [Click Here!](#)

The Links

- Join us Every Friday at 11am on Zoom ***NEW*** Zoom Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87452791684>
- [Google Doc](#)
- Receive our Weekly Friday Action Hour Promo Email *** New link coming soon
- For more information about UU Justice NC, visit our website uujusticenc.org

Our Story - Since May of 2020, North Carolina UUs and friends have gathered on Fridays to take action and experience the joy and power of community. Every Friday at 11:00am we recap the past week and take action on the issues impacting our state and country. And there is always great music to help us feel the justice movement in our bones!

ALL are welcome! We are also blessed to be joined by Unitarian Universalists, our beloved North Carolina justice partners, and dear friends from outside our state (shout out to WV)

Friday, March 14th, 2025 - #250!

The Weekly Round-Up

- Five years ago this week, Covid changed everything / shut down the country.
- This week, ICE agents arrested Mahmoud Khalil, an activist who helped lead pro-Palestinian student protests at Columbia University. ICE officers picked him up at his university apartment and told him his green card had been revoked. Trump has promised to deport students who protested against Israel during the war in Gaza.

- This week the Trump administration claimed that it will cancel 400 Million dollars in Gov. grants and contracts to Columbia, citing a failure to protect Jewish students. Using the power of government to punish enemies is textbook fascist autocratic behavior.
- Reported clash in a cabinet meeting between top cabinet officials (Rubio) & Musk.
- On Tuesday, the Trump administration [fired more than a thousand workers](#) at the Department of Education. Trump cannot completely eliminate the Dept. of Education - only Congress can abolish a cabinet-level agency, but he can severely weaken the department and direct remaining staff to weed out DEI - and to leave education policy to local governments and parents.
- Democratic Senate Leader, Chuck Schumer announced yesterday that he would back the Republican funding bill to avoid a government shutdown saying that a shutdown would cede too much power to President Trump and Elon Musk.

—> [Skip ahead to Today's Actions](#)

Celebrating our 250th Friday Action Hour!

2020

- Our first action hour was on May 8, 2020 – Our first and our first actions were about Medicaid Expansion, Covid relief funding, and Demanding Justice for Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, [Tony McDade](#).
- Three weeks later, On May 25 “George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, that Friday, we called Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman demanding justice.
- This led to a summer of uprising. Together we witnessed national protests, advocated for confederate statues to come down, and joined a national reckoning around police violence.
- Action Hour Culture – Music, Gratitude and Confetti. Average Attendance: 3-5 people. There was only 1 week in 2020 when no one showed up.
- In September, Ruth Bader Ginsberg died and we called on Sen. Tillis to not support Trump’s nomination of Amy Coney Barrett less than one month before the election.
- We Ended year with the 2020 Presidential Election of Joe Biden, the run-off election in Georgia and “Stop the Steal” events across the country.

2021

- 2021 began with Jan. 6th Insurrection on the US Capital.
- We took action calling out the seven NC Reps who voted against the certification.
- Jan 20th – The Biden / Harris administration began. The night before, DC mall is illuminated in memory of Americans who have died from Covid. The first authentic display of grief, compassion, and hope.
- The fight begins for passage of Progressing Policies - Raise the Wage Act, Equality Act, Green New Deal, Medicare for all, For the People Act - The most comprehensive voting rights legislation since 1965. There was hope in the air.
- March 11: President Biden signs a sweeping \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan

- We celebrated that many of us started getting Vaccines!
- Andrew Brown Jr was killed by the Sheriff's Dept. on April 21st in Elizabeth City, NC. We spent May calling for the Release of Body Camera Footage and for the passage of a state law that would make footage open to the public.
- Called for the UNC Board of Trustees to grant tenure to Nikole Hannah-Jones and advocated for the safety of UNC students of color.
- That summer we began our Action Hour collaborations with Carolina Jews for Justice, and the People's Budget Coalition.
- We fought for Medicaid Expansion and the Leandro Plan. And started writing LTEs!
- **And in December, we got our first win.** Governor Cooper Pardons Dontae Sharp
- The average attendance of Friday Action Hour was 10-15 people.

2022

Spring

- Push to reform the filibuster failed, dooming the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act.
- West Virginia Action Hour! in partnership with West Virginia's Faith Table of Faithful Democracy. Following a low point - when hope of a voting rights bill faded, we turned to gratitude (Thank you Marian!) and wrote Letters to the Editor lifting up excellent journalism around democracy in our communities.
- On January 8th, unarmed pedestrian Jason Walker was killed in Fayetteville by armed motorist Jeffrey Hash. Hash, an off-duty Cumberland County Sheriff's Deputy, was not arrested. We called on Kimberly Spahos to charge Jeffery Hash.
- In February Russia Invaded Ukraine
- CELEBRATION! - The Senate voted to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court.
- **WIN!** Special Texas & North Carolina UU Action Hour - Call on Texas Governor, District Attorney and Board of Pardons to STOP Melissa Lucio's Execution. Melissa Lucio was set to be executed on April 27th. Her execution was halted!
- Our 100th Friday Action Hour!!! And we Celebrated the Life of beloved Action Hour member - Barbara Gulick
- **WIN!** Fought against and defeated HB 755 North Carolina's Don't Say Gay Bill
- On June 24th, we found out minutes before the start of Action Hour that the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, eliminating the constitutional right to abortion.
- Passage of the Inflation Reduction Act - largest investment in climate justice in country's history, price reforms for certain prescription drugs, lower premiums under the Affordable Care Act, money for the IRS to enforce tax laws, a corporate minimum tax.
- We Kept Fighting for Leandro - Three straight weeks in September including our most successful Letter to the Editor Action Hour ever.
- In the fall, following the release of recordings where Columbus County Sheriff Jody Greene vowed to fire every black member of his department - we called and emailed every Columbus County Commissioner and the City Leaders in Columbus County and asked them to speak out against Greene. It was clear, they were not used to being held accountable. This also led to us developing an interfaith safety team with CJJ to support

the Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus county that Jody Greene and his Oath Keeper friends were intimidating.

- **BIG WIN!** In early November, the NC Supreme Court ruled that the state must fully fund years 2 and 3 of the Leandro Education Funding Plan.
- **WIN** - The Electoral Count Act was included in the omnibus bill passed! This reforms and modernizes the outdated 1887 Electoral Count Act to ensure that electoral votes tallied by Congress accurately reflect each state's public vote for President. Sen. Tillis was key. (We called, wrote and met with Tillis' Staff)
- **WIN** - Governor Cooper commuted the sentences of six people in North Carolina prisons and granted pardons of forgiveness to four others – and we kept fighting for Glen Edward Chapman who was not on the list.
- **WIN** - Columbus County Sheriff's Department was suspended from participation in the 1033 military surplus equipment program after using surplus military equipment to intimidate residents and eventually, Jody Greene was removed as Sheriff.
- The average attendance of Friday Action Hour was 20 people

2023

- Tricia Cotham party switch parties – giving republicans a Supermajority in the state legislature. This shifted power (Abortion Ban, Anti-LGBTQ Bills, etc.)
- We worked with Rick Iwanski in fighting for Justice for Jada who was shot 17 times and killed by police who were responding to a reported mental health crisis.
- **WIN** - Thanks to our phone calls and letters, the District Attorney finally released the name of the prosecutor to Jada's family.
- Monster 12-week abortion ban SB20 Passed which has had ripple effects across the south
- 3 anti-trans bills became law – including a don't say gay bill and ban on gender affirming care for minors.
- We witnessed the continued systematic dismantling of our public schools - through the expansion of our state's vouchers program, book banning, and hateful policies.
- And an elections omnibus bill enacted laws to further suppress our votes, on top of our severely gerrymandered maps.
- **But then, OUR BIGGEST WIN EVER!!!!!!** After over a decade of fighting, last year finally expanded Medicaid to over 600,000 people in our state. People said it was never going to happen, but we kept fighting – and UUs played a key role in that fight.
- October 7th - The start of the war between Israel and Hamas.
- Average Attendee 25-35 people.

2024

- February was a month of Action for the Leandro Plan culminating in a Leandro Day of Action for Education Rights/ Despite the landmark victory in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case.
- All year we fought against legislation to Expand NC School Vouchers and HB10 - The Anti-Immigrant bill.

- In March, [the Gazan health ministry has reported that the death toll in Gaza has surpassed 30,000 since the start of Israel's military offensive in October](#). We took action calling our U.S. Representatives and Senators to call for a Ceasefire.
- In May students on college campuses across the country protested the war in Gaza - causing major disruptions to college finals and graduation plans.
- Anti-Protest Bill [HB 237](#) claimed to be geared towards "Unmasking Mobs and Criminals" but in actuality, is part of a wave of new anti-protest bills sweeping the country in response to Pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses.
- May - the UNC System Board of Governors voted to repeal previous DEI requirements across all of the state's 17 public universities.
- **WIN** June - we partnered with Childcare Providers across the state on the looming childcare funding cliff. We were successful in winning 67.5 million dollars.
- **Win** - In July, the Governor's Office and the NC Department of Health and Human Services announced a groundbreaking, win-win initiative to relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians. We helped put pressure on hospital CEOs to sign on. By August, all 99 NC hospitals signed on!
- On July 13th, Donald Trump was shot in the ear during an assassination attempt at a rally in Butler Pennsylvania. (September - Second assassination attempt Florida by a man from Greensboro.
- July 21st, President Biden announced that he would not seek re-election and Kamala Harris became the Democratic Party's nominee for President.
- September 26th Hurricane Helene devastating Western North Carolina. In the weeks following, people across the WNC and the region worked around the clock to do rescue missions, get desperately needed water, food and supplies into the area. We supported Bernice through the loss of their home.
- Fall – our North Carolina UU the Vote campaign reached out to over 100,000 North Carolinians. Republicans won big at a federal level, Dems won big in NC.
- November 19 – SB 382 was introduced to the public as a hurricane relief bill, yet only 12 of 132 pages are related to recovery for Western NC. Massive changes are made to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and other sweeping changes to the Executive and Judicial branches. It passed two weeks ago after Governor Cooper vetoed the bill.
- On New Year's Eve, Governor Roy Cooper announced the commutation of 15 death sentences to life without parole. While this action is smaller than we asked for, it is still a historic step.
- Average Attendance 45 people.

2025

- Called on Jefferson Griffin to concede the State Supreme Court race after he baselessly challenged the votes of 60,000 North Carolinians.
- We have fought to protect Medicaid from Federal Budget cuts.
- In February, Kaleb offered a power two-part series on White Christian Nationalism and other ideological threats.

- We have witnessed a massive jump in attendance averaging 75 participants weekly!

Reflection Questions

- What are your most memorable moments from Friday Action Hour?
- What are the core values of the Friday Action Hour Community?
- What role has Friday Action hour played in your life? How has it changed you?

Today's Actions

Action 1 - Tell ICE to Free Mahmoud Khalil now. * Action Organized by the ACLU**

The Trump administration illegally arrested and detained Mahmoud Khalil, a lawful permanent resident and recent graduate of Columbia University, in direct retaliation for his advocacy in support of Palestinian rights. ICE then quickly moved him from New York to a detention facility in Louisiana without any notice to his pregnant wife or legal team. Since Mr. Khalil's arrest, the administration has affirmed its policy of revoking people's green cards and visas based on their political beliefs and advocacy.

To be clear: The First Amendment does not allow the government to retaliate against anyone for their speech. Ripping someone from their home, stripping them of their immigration status, and detaining them solely based on political viewpoint is a clear attempt by President Trump to silence dissent. And that's patently unconstitutional. Political speech – however controversial some may find it – may never be the basis for punishment, including deportation.

Take Action - [Send a letter to Todd Lyons, Acting Director of ICE.](#)

Action 2 - Tell our U.S. Senators and Representatives to Protect Medicaid

Congressional leaders in Washington are currently negotiating a budget resolution and are threatening to make cuts to Medicaid funding. Medicaid provides affordable coverage to 1 in 4 North Carolinians, and any cuts to it would be catastrophic for the people of NC and our state budget. Join people across the state in calling our congressional delegation to demand that they fight to protect medicaid.

- Sen. Thom Tillis: (202) 224-6342
- Sen. Ted Budd: (202) 224-3154
- Your U.S. Representative: [Find their contact info here.](#)

Basic Script

- Hello. My name is ____, I live in _____, and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I'm calling to urge Sen./ Rep. _ to fight to protect Medicaid funding in the federal budget.

- Medicaid is a lifeline - providing affordable health coverage to 1 in 4 North Carolinians including children, people in nursing homes and those living with a disability and chronic illness.
- Any cuts would be catastrophic to millions of people in our state, and would also destabilize hospitals and health care systems that we all rely on, especially in rural communities.
- Can we count on Sen./ Rep. _____ to vote NO on any cuts to Medicaid?

Finally, This Week's Act of Gratitude * In the Friday Action Hour Tradition**

Last week, a powerful speech by Montana State Representative, Zooey Zephyr helped flip 29 Republican votes to successfully defeat an anti-trans bill. Rep Zephyr is the first openly trans person to be elected to the Montana State Legislature.

Thank you to Kimberly Scholl from Winston-Salem for sharing this video with us last week.

[Watch video here.](#)

Let's tell Rep. Zephyr how inspired we are by her actions. You can email her at Zooey.Zephyr@legmt.gov or send her a card / letter at PO Box 5213 Missoula, MT 59806

Suggested Messages

- My name is _____, I live in _____ North Carolina, (and I am a person of faith)
- I am writing to thank you for your powerful work in the Montana state legislature fighting for the rights of LGBTQ people and all people in your state.
- Last week, I watched the video of your speech that changed the hearts and minds of many of your republican colleagues and helped defeat an anti-trans bill.
- People across our state are inspired by you. If you can do it in Montana, we can do it in North Carolina!

Friday, March 7th, 2025 - #249 - A lot of bad bills moving. Let's get briefed & get to work.

Today's Action Hour Sponsor is Eileen Hanson-Kelly in honor of International Women's Day.

The Weekly Round-Up

- Today marks the 60th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, when civil rights activists were brutally attacked by police while marching for voting rights in Selma, Alabama. The UU minister Rev. James Reeb was killed in Selma four days later.
- The SAVE Act is a bill currently being pushed by Republicans in Congress that would require proof of citizenship to vote, potentially blocking millions of eligible American voters—especially naturalized citizens, seniors, and low-income communities. It's a voter suppression tactic disguised as election security and it will be coming to a vote in the U.S. House soon.

- On Friday, Trump and JD Vance got into a heated argument with Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the oval office. They continually accused him of being ungrateful for US support. The meeting was intended to finalize a mineral resources agreement, but ended abruptly and led to the U.S. to suspend military aid to Ukraine. Recently, Trump has repeatedly attacked Zelenskyy, calling him a "dictator" and echoing Russian disinformation.
- Trump announced major Tariffs on Canada and Mexico this week, but then repealed that decision - at least temporarily.
- Yesterday, a judge blocked the Trump Administration's freeze on billions of dollars in congressionally approved state funds, saying the White House put itself 'above congress'
- In a 5-4 decision, the US Supreme Court ordered the Trump administration to comply with a US District court order to disburse \$2 billion in USAID grants. This is a significant victory because an opposite ruling would have granted Trump powers not found in the Constitution, and diminished the authority of Congress over funding. But it will likely be appealed.

State Legislative News:

- [House Bill 127](#) aims to criminalize individuals and organizations who are simply trying to help others participate in democracy through voter registration. Specifically, House Bill 127 would make it a Class 2 Misdemeanor to use the official voter registration form, potentially resulting in a jail sentence of up to 60 days.
- [Senate Bill 58](#) would unconstitutionally prohibit the Attorney General from taking legal action against any statute passed by the NC General Assembly or any executive order issued by the President. By removing the Attorney General's independent authority to act in defense of North Carolinians, this bill undermines the separation of powers, weakens the system of checks and balances, and leaves citizens vulnerable to executive overreach.
- The Senate [passed a bill on Tuesday](#) that would require state law enforcement to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The bill, sponsored by Berger, is similar to legislation focused on sheriffs' cooperation with ICE that was passed last year over Gov. Roy Cooper's veto.
- [Senate Bill 153](#) would transform state agencies from service providers into potential instruments of immigration enforcement, fundamentally undermining community trust, safety, and basic human rights.
- Senate leader Phil Berger introduced SB 227 this week which aims to prohibit Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs and related concepts in North Carolina's K-12 public schools. It broadly defines "divisive concepts" that could potentially restrict nuanced discussions of historical social issues. The bill will likely garner support in the Senate.
- [House Bill 171](#) seeks to ban state agencies from promoting or supporting DEI programs.

And Finally - Better News

- The NC State Senate unanimously approved the latest round of Helene recovery funding Wednesday. It's the first major relief bill to pass the legislature since October, and includes \$530 million for western NC. It's less than the billion-dollar package requested

by Gov. Josh Stein, and a major critique of the bill is that it doesn't include any grants for small businesses. The final vote is next week, and it's expected to pass.

- Yesterday, two powerful speeches by members of the Montana state legislature flipped 29 Republican votes to successfully defeat an anti-trans bill. [Watch video here.](#)

Action 1 - Contact your U.S. Senators

Background Info Medicaid is a lifeline for coverage and a foundational source of economic and health security for 80 million people. Yet, congressional Republicans plan to make massive cuts to our health care and Medicaid – as much as \$2.3 trillion in cuts – to pay for tax cuts for billionaires. Any of the changes being proposed will put stress on state budgets and lead to people losing access to this lifesaving comprehensive health coverage. North Carolina recently expanded our Medicaid program through bi-partisan legislative action, so both sides of the aisle understand the importance of this health coverage to people in every corner of our state, especially our rural areas.

Topline Points

Medicaid Cuts would:

- Take health care coverage away from millions of people, including children, people in nursing homes and those living with a disability and chronic illness;
- Make it harder for part-time workers with inconsistent hours, caregivers, and mothers to get health care;
- Increase health care costs for everyone, including medical debt for millions; and
- Destabilize hospitals and health care systems that we all rely on, especially in rural communities.

To influence discussions this week, we need to apply quick public and grassroots pressure to a select group of Senators opposing the House budget cuts. Therefore, we urge you to contact Rep. Tillis to ask him to strongly reject the Medicaid and SNAP cuts in the House budget. We need to make sure they hear from you about the catastrophic effects of ANY cuts to these benefits. *** KEEP A POSITIVE TONE WITH TILLIS'S OFFICE

Call

- [Senator Thom Tillis](#): (202) 224-6342
- [Senator Ted Budd](#): (202) 224-3154

Email Tillis's health legislative aides:

- cameron_morra@tillis.senate.gov
- garrett_daniel@tillis.senate.gov

Basic Script:

- Hello. My name is _____ and I live in _____], and I am a person of faith / conscience.

- I am calling because I know that Congressional leaders are currently negotiating the budget resolution, and I am worried about reports of deep cuts to Medicaid and other important services that help people in order to give tax cuts to the wealthy.
- **If you have a personal story, here is where you should talk about it.** I or family members have Medicaid coverage. Briefly describe the challenge you or your family have faced that was helped by having Medicaid coverage.
- I am calling to urge you to protect Medicaid and other programs that keep people healthy. Medicaid allows children, seniors, people with disabilities, pregnant people, and adults with low incomes to get the health care they need.
- In North Carolina, we have around 3 million people who rely on Medicaid, including over 1 million children.
- Over the last year, over 614,000 North Carolinians have been able to get comprehensive, life-changing coverage through Medicaid expansion, a bi-partisan effort that we should be proud of and protect. Medicaid is a popular program that plays a significant role in local and state economies by keeping rural hospitals open, supporting job growth, and ultimately saving taxpayer dollars.
- Will Rep / Sen. _____ vote “no” on cuts to Medicaid and other programs to make sure your constituents can stay healthy and get the care they need, when they need it?

[IF ANSWERING MACHINE]: Provide your phone number and ask them to call you back.

[IF YES]: Thank them for their support!

- Thank you for your support for Medicaid and the thousands of people like [me or my family] across our state who rely on this coverage to access care. I appreciate you taking this call and any actions you can take to protect Medicaid and other vital programs from cuts going forward.

[IF NOT SURE/NONCOMMITAL]Ask them what factors they are considering when thinking about the budget reconciliation process? What are their priorities? When do they expect to make a decision about whether or not they will vote to protect Medicaid?

- I appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you for taking this call and for any actions you can take to protect vital health care programs from cuts. I will follow up with your office to check on the status of this request. [Be sure to follow up with them]

[IF NO]: Ask them for specifics about how they reached their decision. Take notes. This information can be used later for accountability actions.

Additional Information/Resources:

- Medicaid is a lifeline for North Carolinians - [Fact Sheet](#)
- Medicaid in NC by the numbers - [NC Newsline](#)

Action 2 - Tell Congress - Vote NO on the SAVE Act

The [Safeguard American Voter Eligibility \(SAVE\) Act](#) would make it harder for millions of eligible Americans to register and vote by requiring strict proof of citizenship, such as a passport or birth certificate, and other documents. Many Americans lack these documents, can not easily or quickly obtain them, and cannot afford the fees for processing such documentation. The SAVE Act is a modern-day poll tax, and it is unnecessary and immoral.

The legislative branch has a constitutional responsibility to safeguard free and fair elections and ensure all American citizens can freely, securely, and easily exercise their right to vote. The SAVE Act would undermine easy access, making our elections less free and less fair. According to the Brennan Center, more than 21 million U.S. citizens don't have proof of citizenship readily available.

Here's some of what this bill would do in practice:

- Eliminate voter registration by mail, voter registration drives, and most forms of online registration.
- Unduly burden rural voters, who may have to drive long distances to reach board of elections offices where they can show documentation in person. Some voters in Alaska and Hawaii may even have to get on a plane just to register to vote.
- Disenfranchise many married women, many of whom do not have a passport or birth certificate that matches their current legal name.
- Make it harder for Black, low-income, and young voters to participate in our democracy, as they are less likely to have a valid passport.
- Burden military voters, who may not have access to in-person voter registration, and tribal voters who may not have the same documentation as other American citizens.
- Make it harder for survivors of natural disasters to register and vote, like those recently affected by Hurricane Helene.
- Force widespread and problematic purges of current voter rolls, as voters and states scramble to comply with these new regulations.
- Halt voter registration for months in many states, as they create new and costly systems to comply with this law--which would go into effect immediately if passed.
- Threaten election officials, who could be held civilly and criminally liable for registering someone who did not provide documentary proof of citizenship--even if the official made an honest mistake or if the person was, in fact, a citizen.

Take Action

Step 1 - Send a Letter to your Congressperson through [UUSJ's easy advocacy tool](#).

Step 2 - Call your U.S. Representative - [Click here](#) to find their contact information

Basic Script:

- Hi my name is ____, I am a person of faith and one of your constituents. I live in__

- I am calling to urge you to vote NO on the [Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act](#).
- The SAVE Act would make it harder for millions of eligible Americans to register and vote by requiring strict proof of citizenship, such as a passport or birth certificate, and other documents.
- Many Americans lack these documents, can not easily or quickly obtain them, and cannot afford the fees for processing such documentation. The SAVE Act is a modern-day poll tax, and it is unnecessary and immoral.
- The legislative branch has a constitutional responsibility to safeguard free and fair elections and ensure all American citizens can freely, securely, and easily exercise their right to vote. Do your duty to the people of NC and vote NO on the SAVE Act.
- ***Additionally, any cuts to Medicaid funding in the Federal Budget would be catastrophic to the people of North Carolina.

Action 3 - Tell the NCGA to [Protect the separation of powers & Oppose SB 58](#).

[Senate Bill 58](#) seeks to **strip the Attorney General's powers**, undermining the principle of separation of powers, eroding the system of checks and balances, and putting citizens at risk of unchecked executive authority and overreach. If passed, it would allow partisan influence over decisions to challenge executive orders, compromising the independence of the Attorney General's office and its ability to act quickly in times of crisis.

Take Action - Send a Letter to your State Legislators with Democracy NC's [easy advocacy tool](#).

Action 4 - Tell NCGA to Keep Voter Registration De-Criminalized - Vote NC on HB 127.

[House Bill 127](#) aims to criminalize individuals and organizations who are simply trying to help others participate in democracy through voter registration. Specifically, House Bill 127 would make it a **Class 2 Misdemeanor to use the official voter registration form**, potentially resulting in a jail sentence of up to 60 days. Criminalizing non-profits and individuals who assist with voter registration is not only an attack on our democratic values, but it also creates an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty for those simply trying to help others exercise their freedom to vote.

Take Action - Send a Letter to your State Legislators with Democracy NC's [easy advocacy tool](#).

Action 5 - Tell NC lawmakers: Oppose Griffin's baseless challenges

Jefferson Griffin continues to challenge 66,049 eligible North Carolina voters in court in his baseless efforts to reverse the outcome of his failed state Supreme Court race. Contact your state representative and state senator to pressure them into disavowing Jefferson Griffin's challenges.

Take Action - Send a message through Common Cause NC's [easy advocacy tool](#).

Announcements

- **Next Friday we'll celebrate our 250th Friday Action Hour. Get your Confetti Ready!**

Friday, February 28th, 2025 - #248 Beyond Christian Nationalism

The Weekly Round-Up

- UNC System approves new regulations intended to stifle freedom of speech after the Gaza encampment protests last May. These new regulations will include size limitations on protests and require more types of protests to gain permission from the school.
- The People's Union USA has called for a nationwide boycott of all products and services today. This effort is expected to be supported by several millions Americans
- I-40 between North Carolina and Tennessee will reopen tomorrow, a sign of the continuing recovery for Western NC after the devastation of Hurricane Helene. For now, the lanes are slow, and the speed limit is 35 MPH, but this will be a huge boost economically to the region
- A budget blueprint has been passed by the US House along party lines. This blueprint is the first step of the process intended to gut Medicaid at the federal level, which would affect state funding as well

Action One: Writing to UNC System President Peter Hans in support of freedom of speech and education

Rational: Especially since Lee Roberts became interim chancellor at UNC Chapel Hill, the culture and atmosphere of the UNC system has become less safe for marginalized people and less open to free speech. This month, anti-Muslim hate crime occurred at UNC-Chapel Hill, and Lee Roberts announced that he would allow ICE to raid his campus whenever they needed to. In 2024, the UNC System as a whole dismantled their entire DEI system and used the funding on the militarization of campus law enforcement. The attacks on protests in the UNC system is only the latest rendition of this movement.

President Peter Hans

Email: president@northcarolina.edu

Example email:

President Hans,

I am writing to express my concern about the direction of the UNC school system. Over the past year, the elimination of DEI programs, recent protest policy changes that will suppress student voices, and Lee Roberts' announcement that he will cooperate with ICE leads me to believe that the UNC School System is on the wrong track and no longer a healthy space for students. I hope that you will consider the cumulative implication of these policy changes, which could have long-term detrimental impacts on the university system.

Sincerely,

Announcement

- The Gender and LGBTQ work group is hosting a film screening of “Preconceived”, a documentary about the deceptive practices of Crisis Pregnancy Centers at 4:30pm Friday, Feb 28th. We will follow with a virtual panel, hosted by Tara Romano from Pro Choice NC from 6pm-7pm. People have the option to view the film at home from now til Feb 28th with this link: <https://www.filmplatform.net/events/preconceived-hopewell-fund/> (use the event code: **PHF-WDC**) [Register here](#).
- Stand Up for Science Rally Friday March 7th in Raleigh, NC - 12pm-4pm - Halifax Mall - 300 North Salisbury Str Raleigh, NC 27603 - [sign up here](#).

Friday, February 21th, 2025 - #247 Christian Nationalism and Counterindoctrination

The Weekly Round-Up

- Kash Patel was confirmed as the new Director of the FBI by the U.S. Senate on February 20 with a vote of 51-49. His past criticisms of the FBI led to doubts about the agency's independence under his leadership. Two Republican senators, Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski, voted against him, highlighting the polarized nature of the confirmation.
- Senator Mitch McConnell announced he will not seek re-election in 2026, concluding his tenure in the Senate after serving since 1985. At 83, McConnell has been a pivotal figure in shaping conservative policies and judicial appointments. His decision to retire has prompted several Republicans, including former Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron, to express interest in his Senate seat.
- The FBI carried out arrests on the Zizians, a political extremist cult-like group linked to multiple killings, including a U.S. Border Patrol agent. They had previously rented properties in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. On February 5, 2025, the FBI conducted a search in a Chapel Hill neighborhood where these individuals had resided, only announcing the connection in the past week. The group's affiliation with left-leaning ideas has led to far-right calls for FBI investigation of mainstream progressive groups.
- Trump's January 27th executive order banning transgender people in the military has been met with skepticism, even as its effects are felt. U.S. District Judge Ana Reyes expressed skepticism over its lawfulness and will rule in early March.

Education: Christian Nationalism and Deprogramming

UU Justice NC Congregational Organizer Kaleb Graves was raised as a White Christian Nationalist. In his teen years, he believed that the Department of Education should be disbanded, LGBTQ+ people should be imprisoned, and reproductive rights should be abolished. How did Kaleb move from Christian Nationalist to progressive Christian/interfaith minister and UU Justice Coordinator? And can this transformation happen to others?

Action One: Thank Mitch McConnell for voting against RFK Jr.

Rational: While many of us may disagree with Senator McConnell on a great number of issues, his vote against Robert F Kennedy Jr's confirmation as Secretary of Health and Human Services represents a key voice of dissent. Especially since he has announced the end of his political career, McConnell may be more open to voting against extremist positions in the future, especially if he receives gratitude for his actions.

DC Phone Number: (202) 224-2541

[Email](#)

Script:

Hello, this is [Your Name] from North Carolina calling to thank Senator Mitch McConnell for voting against the confirmation of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services. I truly appreciate his stand for America's health against vaccine conspiracy theories and misinformation. As Senator McConnell comes to the end of his tenure as senator, I hope that he chooses to take a strong stand against extremist positions that threaten our nation's health and security.

Action Two: Demand that Thom Tillis' actions match his rhetoric

Rational: Despite previous indication that he would vote against RFK Jr's confirmation because of vaccine conspiracy theories and misinformation, Tillis ended up voting for RFK Jr to be confirmed. Tillis has long portrayed himself as a "moderate" Republican, but he still votes with Trump 90% of the time. As his 2026 Senate primary approaches, Tillis will be pressed on his alleged moderate stance by self-described moderate challenger Andy Nilsson. This may be an opportunity to increase pressure to match his actions with "moderate" rhetoric.

Phone Number: [Office Numbers](#)

Script: Hello, this is [Your Name] from [Your Town] North Carolina. I'm calling to express my disappointment that Senator Tillis voted to confirm the nomination of both Kash Patel as FBI Director and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Republican Senators Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski both voted against Patel, and Senator Mitch McConnell voted against Kennedy. They did this because they recognized the importance of competence and fact-based leadership in the executive branch. As Senator Tillis approaches a new election season, I hope he stands with other lawmakers as a principled voice for truth, no matter the party line.

Friday, February 14th, 2025 - # 246 Loving Our Children through School Board Advocacy
***** This week's Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Peter Rawitsch!**

The Weekly Round-Up

- On Sunday, February 9th, movement leader Reverend Nelson Johnson passed away at the age of 81. Rev. Johnson was the founding pastor of Faith Community Church and Founding Co-Executive Director of The Beloved Community Center of Greensboro. A survivor of the 1979 Greensboro Massacre, and creator of the historic Greensboro Truth & Reconciliation Commission, Rev. Johnson taught about justice and love in action.
- On Tuesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israeli troops would resume "intense fighting" if Hamas did not release captives held in Gaza. But he did not say how many hostages needed to be released.
- This week, the U.S. Senate confirmed Robert F Kennedy Jr as Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tulsi Gabbard as National Intelligence Director, and Brooke [Rollins](#), former president of America First Policy Institute as Secretary of Agriculture.
- This week, people across the country have continued to call on Congress to protect medicaid expansion. See below for the call in script! Keep calling!!!
- Siembra NC is confirming that yesterday morning there was an Immigration & Customs Enforcement raid in Durham which resulted in three men being taken into custody.
- "A federal judge ordered the Trump administration on Thursday to keep federal funding in place for hospitals nationwide that offer gender-transition treatments for people under the age of 19." This is the result of a lawsuit brought by six transgender individuals between the ages of 12 and 18, along with parents and advocacy groups.
- This week, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) joined with a multifaith coalition and the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection to bring a lawsuit challenging Immigration and Custom Enforcement's (ICE) "sensitive locations policy."
- This holiday weekend, communities across the state will host The People v. Griffin NC Supreme Court Rallies. There are currently events being planned in Greensboro, Salisbury, Fayetteville, Asheville, Charlotte, Greenville, Hillsborough, Raleigh, New Bern, Wilmington, Rutherfordton, Boone, Outerbanks and more. [Click here](#) to find an event in your area.

Today's Focus - School Board Advocacy

In North Carolina and across the country, school boards make important decisions that are vital to the wellbeing of our children. Unfortunately, many school boards are advancing a White Christian Nationalist agenda by banning books, attacking trans youth, removing DEI from curricula, and passing harmful disciplinary policies. This morning, we'll be joined by Peter Rawitch, co-founder of Love Our Children, an education advocacy organization based in Wilmington, NC. Peter will equip us with the tools and knowledge to love our children through local school board advocacy. We'll also take action, submitting comments for the NC Department of Public Instruction's Strategic Plan to Mo Green, State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Action 1 – Use the “Know Your Local Board of Education” booklet to Learn about your School Board’s:

- Suspension and Seclusion policies
- Policy Committee members and meeting schedule
- Policy Development policy
- Public Participation at Board Meetings policy
- Agenda Review and monthly public meeting schedule

Contact Peter Rawitsch, Love Our Children NC, for assistance:

518-366-3522

rawitschp@mac.com

Action 2 – Submit comments for the NC Department of Public Instruction’s Strategic Plan to Mo Green, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Use this link:

<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/about-dpi/state-superintendent-public-instruction>

Select the Category: **Policy or Legislation**

Here are some suggested comments:

- End out of school suspensions for 4, 5, 6, and 7-year-olds because research shows suspensions harm children.
- Pay teachers and staff a living wage. Their last raise did not keep up with inflation.
- School meals should be free to all public school children. No child should go hungry.
- Reduce the number of required tests. Testing and preparing for tests take away from learning opportunities.
- The allotment formulas need to be updated. They do not meet the needs of our students.

Friday, February 7th, 2025 #245 - The Fight to Protect Medicaid Expansion in NC

***** This week’s Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Rev. John Saxon**

The Weekly Round-Up

- The Trump's administration is slashing nearly all US AID employees globally - less than 300 out of over 10,000 people globally. The U.S. Agency for International Development is our country’s primary humanitarian aid agency, and has been a target of the new Department of Government Efficiency led by Elon Musk.
- On Tuesday, at a news conference with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, President Trump proposed that the United States take charge of postwar Gaza and resettle its Palestinian residents. His staff is trying to walk back the comments.

- A Federal Judge's ruling has indefinitely blocks Trump's birthright citizenship order.
- Gov. Josh Stein is asking the N.C. General Assembly for \$1 billion in Helene storm recovery money this spring to help Western North Carolina address its "immediate needs." Stein stated that he wants a bill passed soon, instead of waiting for the state budget bill.
- On Wednesday, Trump signed an executive order Wednesday banning trans women and girls from participating in female sports in federally-funded schools.
- The Administration has also removed sites, primarily maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, that covered issues like [transgender](#) health, as well as contraception and climate change.
- Trump's Executive Orders have indefinitely suspended the U.S. The Refugee Admissions Program and targeting immigration Federal funding. This has severely impacted refugee resettlement groups in North Carolina. This week, the Church World Services announced that they need to furlough two-thirds of their staff, and the Lutheran Services Carolinas announced it would shut down its refugee resettlement efforts. Church World Services is in desperate need of funds to support refugees who have arrived in the last 90 days.
- This morning, A Wake County Superior Court judge will hear arguments in Republican Jefferson Griffin's attempt to throw out 65,000 ballots cast in November's Supreme Court election. Many turned out to pack the court room, including some of our Friday Action Hour participants.

Action 1 - Contact your U.S. Representative & Senators

Below you will find the numbers for our Senators and Representatives. There has been talk about also calling their district offices (click on the name to see all the office numbers including for their district offices):

[Senator Thom Tillis](#): (202) 224-6342

[Senator Ted Budd](#): (202) 224-3154

Representatives:

District 1	Don Davis	(202) 225-3101
District 2	Deborah Ross	(202) 225-3032
District 3	Greg Murphy	(202) 225-3415
District 4	Valerie Foushee	(202) 225-1784
District 5	Virginia Foxx	(202) 225-2071
District 6	Addison McDowell	(202) 225-3065
District 7	David Rouzer	(202) 225-2731
District 8	Mark Harris	(202) 225-1976
District 9	Richard Hudson	(202) 225-3715
District 10	Pat Harrigan	(202) 225-2576

District 11	Chuck Edwards	(202) 225-6401
District 12	Alma Adams	(202) 225-1510
District 13	Brad Knott	(202) 225-4531
District 14	Tim Moore	(202) 225-5634

Not sure who your Representative is? You can find out here:

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Background Info

Medicaid is a lifeline for coverage and a foundational source of economic and health security for 80 million people. Yet, congressional Republicans plan to make massive cuts to our health care and Medicaid – as much as \$2.3 trillion in cuts – to pay for tax cuts for billionaires. Any of the changes being proposed will put stress on state budgets and lead to people losing access to this lifesaving comprehensive health coverage. North Carolina recently expanded our Medicaid program through bi-partisan legislative action, so both sides of the aisle understand the importance of this health coverage to people in every corner of our state, especially our rural areas.

Topline Points

Medicaid cuts would:

- Take health care coverage away from millions of people, including children, people in nursing homes and those living with a disability and chronic illness;
- Make it harder for part-time workers with inconsistent hours, caregivers, and mothers to get health care;
- Increase health care costs for everyone, including medical debt for millions; and
- Destabilize hospitals and health care systems that we all rely on, especially in rural communities.

Note: If you have a personal story about how Medicaid has helped you or your family please share it. If you don't have a personal story you can use one of the topline talking points or talking points from the [Medicaid is a Lifeline for North Carolinians Fact sheet](#).

Basic Script

- Hello. My name is _____ and I live in _____], and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling because I know that Congressional leaders are currently negotiating the budget resolution, and I am worried about reports of deep cuts to Medicaid and other important services that help people in order to give tax cuts to the wealthy.

- **If you have a personal story, here is where you should talk about it** [I or family member(s)] have Medicaid coverage. [Briefly (1-3 sentences) describe the challenge you or your family have faced that was helped by having Medicaid coverage].
- I am calling to urge you to protect Medicaid and other programs that keep people healthy. Medicaid allows children, seniors, people with disabilities, pregnant people, and adults with low incomes to get the health care they need.
- In North Carolina, we have around 3 million people who rely on Medicaid, including over 1 million children.
- Over the last year, over 614,000 North Carolinians have been able to get comprehensive, life-changing coverage through Medicaid expansion, a bi-partisan effort that we should be proud of and protect. Medicaid is a popular program that plays a significant role in local and state economies by keeping rural hospitals open, supporting job growth, and ultimately saving taxpayer dollars.
- Will Rep / Sen. _____ vote “no” on cuts to Medicaid and other programs to make sure your constituents can stay healthy and get the care they need, when they need it?

[IF NO ANSWER/ANSWERING MACHINE]: Provide your contact phone number and ask them to call you back as soon as possible.

[IF YES]: Thank them for their support!

- Thank you for your support for Medicaid and the thousands of people like [me or my family] across our state who rely on this coverage to access care. I appreciate you taking this call and any actions you can take to protect Medicaid and other vital programs from cuts going forward.

[IF NOT SURE/NONCOMMITAL]Ask them what factors they are considering when thinking about the budget reconciliation process? What are their priorities? When do they expect to make a decision about whether or not they will vote to protect Medicaid?

- I appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you for taking this call and for any actions you can take to protect vital health care programs from cuts. I will follow up with your office to check on the status of this request. [Be sure to follow up with them]

[IF NO]: Ask them for specifics about how they reached their decision. Take notes. This information can be used later for accountability actions.

Additional Information/Resources:

- Medicaid is a lifeline for North Carolinians - [Fact Sheet](#)
- Medicaid in NC by the numbers - [NC Newsline](#)
- Here are some of the ways they are looking to cut/change the Medicaid program:
 - Impose per capita caps - [Read more here](#)

- Shift financing to block grants - [Read more here](#)
- Impose unnecessary and burdensome work reporting requirements - [Read more here](#)
- Lower the 90% federal match for Medicaid expansion - this would end the Medicaid expansion population in NC, as we have a trigger in our law that says if the federal match goes below 90%, then the Medicaid expansion program must end. Over 614,000 North Carolinians have been able to enroll in this healthcare in one year.
- Lower the federal match for traditional Medicaid, putting an undue burden on state

Social media toolkit if that is your thing!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KrQUMWDQL-YNyJypqFZ-83LoIBpF0I6F/view?usp=sharing>

Action 2 - Tell Congress - Protect Access to School Meals for NC Students

Action Organized by School Meals for All NC

The U.S. House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee is proposing \$3 billion in cuts to the federal school breakfast and lunch program, preventing 400,000 North Carolina school children from accessing free and reduced-price school meals. [Send a letter using this easy tool!](#)

Key Points and Impacts:

- Cuts would impact millions: Over 24,000 schools nationwide, serving more than 12 million children, would no longer qualify. In North Carolina alone, 794 schools and 408,887 students would lose access to no-cost meals.
- Raises eligibility threshold: Proposed legislation increasing the eligibility threshold from 25% to 60% would disqualify hundreds of NC schools.
- Increased hunger and stigma: These changes would increase hunger in classrooms, reintroduce unnecessary paperwork, bring back stigma for free and reduced-price meals, and cause a resurgence of school meal debt.
- Burden on families: New documentation requirements would potentially prevent eligible children from receiving meals.
- Threat to progress in NC: North Carolina's Meal Incentive Program has expanded school meal participation statewide, helping more NC schools provide no-cost meals. The proposed federal cuts would undermine these state efforts and harm students who rely on free school meals.

Why It Matters:

Ensuring students are well-nourished supports their health, learning, and our nation's future. School meal participation has grown over the past decade, but financial barriers still prevent many eligible schools from enrolling. Instead of limiting school meal programs, Congress should strengthen and expand it.

We must protect and expand school nutrition programs to ensure every child has access to the nutritious meals they need to thrive. Please take a few minutes to contact your members of Congress today and ask them to reject these harmful cuts and prioritize the health and learning of our children.

Action 3 - University of Miami: Reaffirm support for minority students after removing DEI resources

More than 50 student organizations have signed onto a petition demanding the University of Miami protect diversity, equity and inclusion programs amid changes brought about by the Trump Administration. We are all honorary Hurricanes thanks to Sam! So, [Sign On Here](#)

Friday, January 31st, 2024 #244 - ICE Watch Updates & NC Supreme Court State-Wide Day of Action

The Weekly Round-Up

- On Thursday, an Army helicopter collided with a passenger jet near Reagan National Airport in Washington DC, killing all 67 passengers.
- Hamas just announced that North Carolinian Keith Siegel will be among the hostages that will be released this weekend. A fragile ceasefire continues to hold between Israel & Hamas in the war that has claimed the lives of approximately 1,500 Israelis and 48,000 Palestinians since October 7th, 2023.
- Last Friday, Trump suggested the elimination of FEMA while speaking with North Carolinians impacted by Hurricane Helene.
- This week, Trump ordered a freeze on federal grants and loans, then a federal judge in the District of Columbia blocked the order, then Trump rescinded the order.
- Yesterday, Trump announced a plan to use a migrant holding facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, to house up to 30,000 deported immigrants.
- The Wake County Superior Court has just issued its scheduling order for the state proceedings of the case. There will be a hearing on Friday, February 7th at 10am at the Wake County Courthouse.
- On Saturday, over 700 people showed up for the two ICE watch trainings in the triangle!
- On Sunday FIVE Friday Action Hour participants' LTEs were published in the Sunday Raleigh News and Observer. Shout out to Lynn Holbein, Lonna Harkrader, Marilyn Clayton, Russell Outcalt, and Heather Gray (In addition to all those that were published last weekend - Eileen Hanson-Kelly, Pat Sledge, and more?!?)
- On Monday, a Federal appeals court will consider the NC GOP challenge of 60,000+ votes in the Supreme Court election - determining whether the case should be decided by state or federal courts.
- Just Announced - There will be a **State-Wide Day of Action on Monday, February 17th**. Communities across North Carolina will hold rallies to speak out against the attempt to silence 60,000 votes in the state Supreme Court election.

Welcome - Gino Nuzzolillo, Campaigns Manager at Common Cause NC. This week, a statewide coalition announced a **Day of Action Monday, February 17th**. Communities across North Carolina are invited to participate by organizing rallies in their own community.

Planned statewide **People v. Griffin rallies** can be found at [this link](#). Most rallies are taking place on **Monday, February 17** to coincide with the largest Raleigh rally. Rallies are also confirmed for Greenville, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Charlotte, Boone, Asheville, New Bern, Apex, and Elizabeth City!

If you / your congregation is interested in helping to organize an event in your area, you can email Gino at Gino@commoncause.org

Artie Hartsell, Director of Organizing at the ACLU of North Carolina. Artie and UU Justice NC staff will provide important updates around Siembra NC's work building systems of safety and care for those at risk of deportation.

Upcoming Siembra NC Immigrant Justice Trainings - Our movement in North Carolina is now in high gear preparing systems of safety and care for those at risk of deportation by the Trump administration. UUs across North Carolina can join in this sacred work by attending an upcoming virtual training session with our partners at [Siembra NC](#).

- Thursday, February 6th at 6:00pm - Siembra State-Wide "We Got Us" Zoom Call. tiny.cc/wegotuszoom
- Tuesday, February 11th at 7:00pm - Training: How We Used Trump's Threats to Recruit More People & Defend Our Communities - [Register Here](#)
- Tuesday, February 25th at 7:00pm - Training: How We Organized My Neighborhood After a Detention - [Register Here](#)
- Tuesday, March 4th at 7:00pm - Training: How to Start a Solidarity Fund to Fight ICE - [Register Here](#)
- Tuesday, March 18th at 7:00pm - Training: How Workers Can Fight Wage Theft & ICE Detentions - [Register Here](#)

Follow-Ups / Clarification from last week:

- The purpose of the Siembra Hotline - (336)-543-0353
- Follow the lead of partners - how widely they want information to be disseminated.
- Our responsibility to not contribute to the spreading of rumors about ICE raids amid many, many false reports that have created more fear in immigrant communities.

Action 1 - Spread the word about how we can contribute to the safety of Immigrant communities in NC.

See all the information above.

Action 2 - Write Letters to Jefferson Griffin - Calling on him to immediately withdraw your appeal and concede the election to Allison Riggs.

Talking Points

- I join people across our state in expressing my outrage over this blatant and shameful attempt to throw away the lawful votes of 60,000 North Carolinians and overturn the election.
- Multiple recounts and careful election audits confirmed that Justice Allison Riggs won. Throwing away these votes would set a dangerous precedent.
- The people of North Carolinians will not stand for this attack on our democracy.
- This month, North Carolinians are organizing rallies in Raleigh and across the state to call out this shameful behavior.
- You are a sore loser who is cheating to get your way. It's not gonna work.
- I join others across the state in calling on you to immediately withdraw your appeal and concede the election to Allison Riggs.
- Shame on you, Jefferson Griffin.

[Click here to add your voice](#) to the thousands of North Carolinians who are sending a clear message to Griffin and the State Supreme Court. And invite others to do the same.

Send a letter expressing your feelings and frustration to Jefferson Griffin himself

- Mail to: Jefferson Griffin, NC Court of Appeals: PO Box 888, Raleigh, NC, 27602
- Email him at: jefferson@jeffersongriffin.com.

Letter to the Editors - about Jefferson Griffin

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit (typically under 250 words). You can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.

1. Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- After losing last year's State Supreme Court race, Republican Jefferson Griffin is asking the State Supreme Court to throw away the lawful votes of 60,000 North Carolinians and overturn the election.
- Earlier this month, the NC Supreme Court blocked the state from certifying Democratic incumbent Allison Riggs' 734-vote victory over Republican Jefferson Griffin in the race

for a seat on the court. The Republican-majority court halted the State Board of Elections from finalizing the contest and agreed to hear Griffin's challenges to over 60,000 ballots.

- I join people across our state in expressing my outrage over this blatant and shameful attempt to silence the will of the people.

2. Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a North Carolina Voter I am outraged that the State Supreme Court has
- As a person whose vote has been challenged....

3. Talking Points / What's at Stake

- Multiple recounts and careful election audits confirmed that Justice Allison Riggs won. Throwing away these votes would set a dangerous precedent.
- The people of North Carolinians will not stand for this attack on our democracy.
- This week, North Carolinians stood in front of the State Supreme Court to read the names of every single one of the 60,000 voters who Griffin is attempting to silence.
- We are witnessing a dangerous pattern in NC, SB 382 and the State Supreme Court race and instances of sore losers cheating to get their way.

4. Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- I call on Jefferson Griffin to immediately withdraw his appeal and concede the election to Allison Riggs.
- Shame on you, Jefferson Griffin.

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).
- Please also send your letter to Gino@commoncause.org

Action 3 - Call your Federal Elected Officials - Protect Medicaid!

Call your U.S. Representative & Senators.

- Your U.S. Representative - Find their [contact info here](#).
- Sen. Ted Budd - 202-224-3154
- Sen. Thom Tillis - 202-224-6342

Hello [Representative OR Senator] [Last Name].

My name is [NAME] and I live in [Town/City], [State].

I am calling on behalf of [Organization Name] and our members because we know that

Congressional leaders are currently negotiating a budget resolution, and we're worried about reports of expected deep cuts to health care that are meant to offset big tax breaks for the Wealthy. In particular, we at [Organization Name] urge you to protect Medicaid and other health care program funding in the budget reconciliation process.

Medicaid, or what we call [your state Medicaid program name] in [State Name], allows children, seniors, people with disabilities, pregnant people, and adults with low incomes to get the health care they need. In [State], Medicaid is a vital connection to care for [number of people enrolled in Medicaid in your state] people, (FOR HOUSE DISTRICTS ONLY) including around [number of people enrolled in Medicaid in this House district] in District [District Number].

Nationally it provides health coverage for 36.8 million children, 60% of seniors in nursing homes, and 41% of births. It is a consistently popular program that plays a significant role in local and state economies by keeping rural hospitals open, supporting job growth, and ultimately saving taxpayer dollars.

Will you vote "no" on cuts to Medicaid and other health care programs to make sure your constituents can get the care they need, when they need it?

[IF NO ANSWER/ANSWERING MACHINE]: Provide your contact phone number and ask them to call you back as soon as possible.

[IF YES]: Thank them for their support and offer to provide them with factsheets and/or other materials they can use to help educate other members about the importance of Medicaid.

Thank you for your support for Medicaid and the thousands of people across our state who rely on this coverage to access care. I appreciate you taking this call and any actions you can take to protect vital health care programs from cuts going forward.

[IF NOT SURE/NONCOMMITAL] Ask them what factors they are considering when thinking about the budget reconciliation process? What are their priorities? When do they expect to make a decision about whether or not they will vote to protect Medicaid? Is there additional information/resources they need to make a commitment? If they ask for additional resources, follow up quickly with the information they request.

I appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you for taking this call and for any actions you can take to protect vital health care programs from cuts. I will follow up with your office to check on the status of this request. [Be sure to follow up with them]

[IF NO]: Ask them for specifics about how they reached their decision. Take notes. This information can be used later for accountability actions.

I am disappointed to learn of your decision and scared for the thousands of people in our state who stand to lose coverage if these cuts are implemented. These cuts are cruel and will have

devastating consequences for the individuals and families who need care most. A vote in favor of them is not a vote for your constituents

Announcements

Here is the toolkits for the Day of Action:

<https://communitycatalyst.canto.com/v/MedicaidDefense/landing?viewIndex=0>

Social Media toolkit:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNAfGrM-74A5Ju1ZcILNp8fqwNpKoEsVhkvITBNOFdE/edit?tab=t.0>

Friday, January 24th #243 - Fighting Against the Separation of Immigrant Families in NC

***** This week's Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Joy Blevins from Chapel Hill**

The Weekly Round-Up

- Last weekend, a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas began, with hostages being held by Hamas being exchanged for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.
- On Wednesday, the State Supreme Court [dismissed](#) GOP candidate Jefferson Griffin's [petition](#) challenging over 60,000 ballots in the 2024 Supreme Court race. The ruling does not end Griffin's challenge. It orders the Wake County Superior Court to first hear Griffin's case before the state's highest court will weigh in.
- On Monday Donald Trump was inaugurated as the 47th President of the United States and on the same weekend, large rallies and marches occurred across the country, and in Washington DC in resistance to the values & actions of the new administration.
- On Day 1, Trump signed over 20 executive orders, including the intention of mass deportation of immigrants, the suspension of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program [resettlements](#), and the end to birthright [citizenship](#) for those born to undocumented immigrants.
- Today, Trump is visiting those impacted by Hurricane Helene in Western NC and will then travel to southern California to witness the on-going devastation of the wildfires.
- This week Trump also declared a "national energy emergency," ordering expedited, deregulated drilling, and the US's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement.
- Groups including the ACLU and Common Cause are legally challenging many of these orders. Democracy Forward has launched a legal response center to provide ongoing updates and analysis of the executive orders of Trump. [Sign-Up for their Listserv Here.](#)
- Trump has pardoned, commuted the prison sentences or vowed to dismiss the cases of all of the 1,500-plus people charged with crimes in the January 6th riot on the U.S. Capitol, including approximately 50 North Carolinians who had been convicted or charged in the attack. [Read more here.](#)

- On Tuesday, Episcopal Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde offered the Sermon at the inaugural prayer service at the National Cathedral in Washington. At the close of her remarks, she directly confronted President Trump. [Watch here.](#)

This morning, we'll focus on the current work in our state to create networks of safety and care with immigrant communities. We are excited to be joined by [Siembra NC](#) super-volunteer and UUC Greensboro Minister, **Rev. Sadie Lansdale**, who will speak to us about Siembra's work to prevent the separation of immigrant families in North Carolina in the face of threats by the new administration. Their ICE Watch program recruits and trains volunteers to help observe when ICE (Immigration & Customs Enforcement) agents are present in immigrant communities. We'll also talk about the misinformation being spread about ICE raids in North Carolina.

Siembra ICE Watch Training - This Saturday, January 25th (Two Times & Locations) With the new administration in place, our movement is now in high gear preparing systems of safety and care to prevent the separation of families in North Carolina. Our Unitarian Universalist faith calls us to do this sacred and essential work. This weekend, our friends at [Siembra NC](#) will offer two volunteer training sessions in the Triangle for their ICE Watch Program. ICE Watch is a system through which volunteers help to observe when ICE (Immigration & Customs Enforcement) agents are present in immigrant communities. Join us! RALEIGH from 10:00am - Noon at 4 N. Blount St. Suite 100, Raleigh / DURHAM from 2:00 - 4:00 at 2823 N. Roxboro St., Durham.

Siembra NC Misinformation Graphic: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19n6ELKah7/>

Siembra NC Hotline Number: (336)-543-0353

Notes from Rev. Sadie's Siembra Presentation

- In-person ICE Watch Training - Saturday, January 25th - RALEIGH from 10:00am - Noon at 4 N. Blount St. Suite 100, Raleigh
- In-person ICE Watch Training - Saturday, January 25th - DURHAM from 2:00 - 4:00 at 2823 N. Roxboro St., Durham.
- State-Wide Siembra Call - February 6th at 6:00pm on Zoom

Friday, January 17th #242 - Jefferson Griffin's Campaign to Silence 60,000 NC Voters

***** This week's Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Lynn Holbein from Chapel Hill**

The Weekly Round-Up

- On Wednesday, a Ceasefire deal was finally reached between Israel and Hamas, hopefully ending the 15-month war which has killed an estimated 47,000 Palestinians, 18,000 children. Yesterday, Israel delayed the vote, but it's expected to occur today.
- Earlier this month, the NC Supreme Court blocked the state from certifying Democratic incumbent Allison Riggs' 734-vote victory over Republican Jefferson Griffin in the race

for a seat on the court. The Republican-majority court halted the State Board of Elections from finalizing the contest and agreed to hear Griffin's challenges to over 60,000 ballots. This week, the names of all 60,000 voters were read in front of the State Supreme Court, and next week (Thursday, 1/23 at 6:30) Common Cause NC will host a Supreme Court Virtual Town Hall to learn more about this case, hear from impacted voters, and find out what you can do next. [Register Here](#)

- On Thursday in Charlotte, Governor Josh Stein announced an Executive order to Protect Reproductive Freedoms. It orders state agencies to not cooperate with investigations into medical professionals who provide legal abortions. [N&O Article](#)
- On January 1, the corporate income tax rate dropped from 2.5 percent (lowest in the nation) to 2.25 percent and is scheduled to drop to zero by 2030. The [NC Budget & Tax Center](#) has calculated that the scheduled tax cuts will cost the state at least \$8 billion in revenue each year. Legislators have also committed [\\$675 million for the 2025-26](#) school year for NC's two voucher programs, tying up resources that could instead be spent on public school and community recovery efforts.
- "North Carolina leaders passed a law in 2021 that requires major utilities like NC-based Duke Energy to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by 70% below 2005 levels by 2030 and reach carbon neutrality by 2050... The company recently asked—and received permission from—the state's utility commission to extend that 2030 deadline to 2032. As they transition away from coal, Duke has also asked permission to use natural gas to meet energy demands. - [Read more at Cardinal and Pine](#)
- In one of the final acts of his presidency, this morning, Biden commuted sentences of nearly 2,500 drug offenders - the broadest commutation of individual sentences ever issued by a U.S. president.
- Monday is the Inauguration of Donald Trump. This weekend there will be a People's March in D.C. in resistance to the values & actions of the incoming administration.
- Monday 1/15 would have been Martin Luth King Jr's 96th birthday, and this coming Monday marks MLK Day. "A day on, not a day off" What will you do to honor him?

Today's Action - Jefferson Griffin's Campaign to Silence 60,000 NC Voters Letters to the Editor & Letters Directly to Jefferson Griffin

Step 1) Check to see if your vote has been challenged, and ask at least a dozen of your friends to do the same. [You can check here.](#)

If so, please have them connect Gino@commoncause.org if they want to write or record a testimonial with Common Cause NC, and 2) christine@downhomenc.org if they want to be considered to join a lawsuit with DownHome NC.

Step 2) add your voice to the thousands of North Carolinians who are sending a clear message to Griffin and the State Supreme Court. And invite others to do the same.

Step 3) Send a letter expressing your feelings and frustration to Jefferson Griffin himself

- Mail to: Jefferson Griffin, NC Court of Appeals: PO Box 888, Raleigh, NC, 27602

- Email him at: jefferson@jeffersongriffin.com.
- Send Common Cause a copy of what you write to: gino@commoncause.org. Want to record a video and post it on social media? Send it to us at gino@commoncause.org.

Step 4) Write a Letter to the Editor

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit (typically under 250 words). You can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.

1. Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- After losing last year's State Supreme Court race, Republican Jefferson Griffin is asking the State Supreme Court to throw away the lawful votes of 60,000 North Carolinians and overturn the election.
- Earlier this month, the NC Supreme Court blocked the state from certifying Democratic incumbent Allison Riggs' 734-vote victory over Republican Jefferson Griffin in the race for a seat on the court. The Republican-majority court halted the State Board of Elections from finalizing the contest and agreed to hear Griffin's challenges to over 60,000 ballots.
- I join people across our state in expressing my outrage over this blatant and shameful attempt to silence the will of the people.

2. Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a North Carolina Voter I am outraged that the State Supreme Court has
- As a person whose vote has been challenged....

3. Talking Points / What's at Stake

- Multiple recounts and careful election audits confirmed that Justice Allison Riggs won. Throwing away these votes would set a dangerous precedent.
- The people of North Carolinians will not stand for this attack on our democracy.
- This week, North Carolinians stood in front of the State Supreme Court to read the names of every single one of the 60,000 voters who Griffin is attempting to silence.
- We are witnessing a dangerous pattern in NC, SB 382 and the State Supreme Court race and instances of sore losers cheating to get their way.

4. Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- I call on Jefferson Griffin to immediately withdraw his appeal and concede the election to Allison Riggs.
- Shame on you, Jefferson Griffin.

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).
- Please also send your letter to Gino@commoncause.org

Announcements

- People's March in DC, and nationwide will mobilize on Saturday, January 18, 2025. Traveling to DC? Hooray! If so, join up with the many UUs already planning to attend: [RSVP with UUs now](#), for meet up details on Saturday, January 18th. Also, [RSVP directly](#) with the coalition, and use their tools to [plan your trip to DC](#)
- Pre-Innauguration Event - "Together, We Light the Way" hosted by the Workers Circle & The Center for Common Ground on January 19th, at 7:00 p.m. ET. [Register now!](#) Grassroots leaders, special celebrity guests, and musicians will join us as we reflect and rise together to light the way to the America we must become. Wherever you are, bring a candle to light at this national virtual gathering.
- MLK Day Events - check your local community calendars for an event near you.
- Common Cause Supreme Court Virtual Town Hall - Thursday, January 23rd at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom to learn more about this case, hear from impacted voters, and find out what you can do next. [Register Here](#)
- ProChoice NC Virtual Film Screening: Preconceived: The Unexpected World of Crisis Pregnancy Centers - Thursday January 23rd from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Preconceived tells the stories of Maleeha and Maria, two women who, while navigating unplanned pregnancies, inadvertently found themselves at facilities discouraging them from abortions. The film is a window into these enigmatic centers that some call "pregnancy resource centers" and others call "fake clinics." Shedding light on how many of these centers are a part of a movement striving to make abortion unthinkable and illegal, the documentary explores the complex role of deception, finances, faith, and privacy. [Registration Required](#) (Please use code PHF-WDC)

Friday, January 10th, 2025 - NC BIPOC Media & Community Action After Helene. #241

Weekly Round-Up

- Wild fires in California has taken the lives of 10 people, and blazes continue to cause mass destruction across southern California.
- The North Carolina Supreme Court on Tuesday [blocked the state from certifying](#) Democratic incumbent **Allison Riggs'** 734-vote victory over Republican **Jefferson Griffin** in the race for a seat on the court. The Republican-majority court halted the State

Board of Elections from finalizing the contest and agreed to hear Griffin's [challenges to over 60,000 ballots](#), which he said shouldn't have counted. - N&O

- On January 14th from 6:00am - 11:00pm there will be a vigil in front of the NC Supreme Court to lift up the names of each of the 60,000 voters who are being disenfranchised by Jefferson Griffin's challenge to the results of the State Supreme Court election.
- Trump has been sentenced in N.Y. Criminal Case and Will Avoid Jail. The president-elect received an unconditional discharge of his sentence, which formalizes his status as a felon and makes him the first to carry that distinction into the White House.
- President Carter's body was laid in state at the US Capitol on Tuesday, and yesterday was his memorial service. Many of his final wishes called for bipartisanship in the celebration of his life - with Hakeem Jeffries and Mike Johnson standing together.
- The NC General Assembly started its legislative session Wednesday in a mostly ceremonial opening day. All 170 members of the House and Senate were sworn in, and lawmakers elected their leaders. The House elected its first new speaker in over a decade. In a speech after he was sworn in, new House Speaker **Destin Hall** said fostering business expansion and investing in education are among his priorities. - N&O

This morning, we will be showcasing NC BIPOC media and community action following Hurricane Helene. We'll watch the [Laura Flanders Show Episode](#) showcasing two Western NC community media groups, Cherokee One Feather and JM Pro Community Media who are doing powerful storytelling and sharing essential news and information with local immigrant and indigenous communities. Afterwards, we'll discuss the ongoing rebuilding process in Western NC following Helene.

We will also hear about the important campaign to [Stand Up for Trans Women at Duke](#). Many don't know that Duke Law's Sports and Policy Center and their co-director Professor Doriane Coleman drive the research and writing that directly feeds trans sports bans being passed across the nation, including the [2023 ban in NC](#) which bans transgender girls and women from participating on girls' and women's sports teams. We'll have the opportunity to take action in this important issue.

Friday, January 3rd, 2025 - Goals for Growth in the New Year

Our 240th Action Hour, and first of 2025 is sponsored by an anonymous donor in honor of Friday Action Hour founding member Barbara Gulick who passed away on Easter 2022. Barbara and Sofia Gulick's New Year's Tradition - [Video](#)

Weekly Round-Up

- On Sunday, Jimmy Carter, the [39th president of the United States](#) died at age 100 at his home in Plains, Ga. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for work to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to

promote economic and social development. Through his organization, the Carter Center, he spent much of his time traveling to fight disease (such as the Guinea worm) and monitor elections. Champion of Habitat for Humanity.

- On New Year's Eve, Governor Roy Cooper announced the commutation of 15 death sentences to life without parole. While this action is smaller than we asked for, it is still a historic step. Until now, NC governors have commuted just five death sentences since the creation of our state's modern death penalty, and all previous commutations happened shortly before a scheduled execution.
- On Wednesday in New Orleans, a man drove a pickup truck at high speed into the crowds on Bourbon Street around 3:15 a.m., before crashing and opening fire. The attack that left 15 dead and about three dozen injured.
- Also on Wednesday, one person was killed and at least seven were injured after a Tesla Cybertruck exploded outside the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas.
- Monday will mark the four year anniversary of the January 6th terrorist attack on the U.S. Capital, and will also mark the day that the 2024 presidential election will be certified by congress. Note* Since 2021, the Electoral Count Act has clarified / reformed the certification process.
- Josh Stein officially became North Carolina's 76th governor on New Year's Day, in a small ceremony inside the Capitol building. As the state's first Jewish governor, Stein took the oath of office with a historic Tanakh (Hebrew bible). He'll deliver a public inaugural address on Jan. 11.
- This Wednesday, January 8th, both chambers of the NC General Assembly will be sworn in at Noon in Raleigh. The Republicans enter the "long session" having lost their veto proof super majority. Phil Berger will remain Senate Leader, and Rep. Destin Hall will become Speaker, as five-term GOP Speaker Tim Moore was elected to Congress.

New Year's Reflection - **What feedback do you have to make Friday Action Hour better?**

What issues, actions, or educational opportunities would you like us to cover in 2025?

Actions

Communications

Appreciation - Keep doing this! / Do this More!

Action 1 - Spread the Word about Cooper's Commutation of 15 Death Sentences

On New Year's Eve, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper announced the commutation of 15 death sentences to life without parole. While this action is smaller than we asked for, it is still a historic step. Until now, NC governors have commuted just five death sentences since the creation of our state's modern death penalty, and all previous commutations happened shortly before a scheduled execution. After a two-year commutation campaign, we are grateful the governor heard our calls for action and exercised his executive authority to diminish the harmful impact of our state's racist, ineffective, and expensive death penalty. 15 Lives are no longer at risk of execution!

Step 1 - Thank Gov. Cooper using [this link](#).

Step 2 - Please help share the news of this significant milestone in our movement to end the death penalty! Perhaps you might consider submitting this as a Joy in your church's Joys and Concerns and/or Post on your church and personal facebook page.

Resources / Messaging

- Governor Cooper's statement is [here](#)
- [NCCADP's media release](#).
- Other statements, graphics, and sample posts in [this toolkit](#).

Please tag @NCCADP in your social media. If you write your own statement in response to the Governor's please share it with the Director of the NCCADP Noel Nickel (noel@nccadp.org) so we can amplify that as well.

Friday, December 27, 2024

Our 239th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Marilyn and Thomas Clayton!

Today we will conclude our two-part [look back at 2024](#). Join us in reflecting on the events, the partnerships, the actions, and the growth that shaped this historic year. Then we will take action, sending messages of gratitude to those who led us, supported us, and inspired us in 2024.

Weekly Round-Up

- This week, [President Biden commuted 37 federal death sentences](#), including 3 people from North Carolina. While this falls short of commuting all 40 federal death sentences, it is historic.
- On Monday, Governor Cooper pardoned 9 people, and commuted sentences for 6, including a former NC teen convicted of murder. The Raleigh News and Observers reported on the NCCADP's campaign for Cooper to pardon the state's 136 remaining death row inmates in his final days as governor. On Monday, Cooper said he "plans more clemency announcements before the end of the year."
- The U.S. House passed a funding bill that will extend government funding until March 14th. It provides more than \$100 billion in disaster relief aid (North Carolina is estimated to receive around \$9 billion to rebuild from Hurricane Helene). Additionally it includes \$10 billion for farmers, but strips out President-elect Donald Trump's request to extend the debt limit.
- Raleigh News and Observer announced their Tarheels of the Year - Showcasing the bravery, compassion of Western North Carolinians post-helene. <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/state/north-carolina/article297023744.html>
- We are in the final days of the Cooper Administration. This week state and national press have reflected on his legacy and speculated on both a possible Senate run in 2026 or a Presidential run in 2028. His first term began with his effort to [undo the state's "bathroom ban"](#) for transgender people, Medicaid Expansion, Champion for public

education but didn't get Leandro Plan through. How will we remember Governor Cooper?

Today's Reflection - Part 2 of a 2024 Year in Review

- On July 6th, Sonya Massey, the 36-year-old Black woman who was murdered by the Illinois police after calling 911 for help. The sheriff's deputy who was charged with [fatally shooting](#) worked at six law enforcement agencies in four years.
- In July, the Governor's Office and the NC Department of Health and Human Services [announced a groundbreaking, win-win initiative](#) to relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians, cap interest rates on medical debt, provide generous discounts on hospital prices to families with certain incomes, automatically enroll people into charity care, and prohibit selling debt to collectors. We helped put pressure on hospital CEOs to sign on. By August, all 99 NC hospitals (Including Duke, UNC and Atrium Hospital Systems) signed on!
- On July 13th, Donald Trump was shot in the ear during an assassination attempt at a rally in Butler Pennsylvania.
- Later on that week, JD Vance was announced as Trump's running mate, Trump accepted the Republican Party's nomination for president, at the RNC in Milwaukee.
- July 21st, President Biden announced that he would not seek re-election and voiced his support for VP Kamala Harris to be the Democratic Party's nominee for President. Soon after, Vice President Harris declared her intention to "earn and win" the Democratic nomination. In the first 24 hours of her campaign she received a groundswell of donations, endorsements and secured nearly all the delegates needed to secure the nomination.
- August 4th - Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson changed his position on abortion law in a new commercial saying that he now "stands by our current law."
- August - Kamala Harris announced that Minnesota Governor Tim Walz is her pick to be the Democratic VP nominee and the The Democratic National Convention was held in Chicago.
- Republican gubernatorial candidate Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson and state superintendent hopeful Michele Morrow are both facing criticism after they voiced support for an idea that would take more than \$1.5 billion out of the state's education coffers. They also said they support the Project 2025 plan to abolish US Department of Education
- September 6th - The Start of Early Voting via Absentee Ballots was delayed because of RFK Jr. Ballot Challenge to have his name removed from the ballot. Absentee Ballots finally went out on 9/20.
- September 20-29th the [Beloved Community Center's](#) Long March for Unity & Justice. traverse North Carolina, from Cullowhee to Wilmington, aiming to amplify the voices of all North Carolinians through community organizing, voting initiatives, grassroots education, and art.
- August / September - after negotiations behind closed doors, the NC House and Senate passed a new version of HB 10 that would force NC sheriffs and local police departments to work with ICE agents AND includes a \$554 million expansion of private school vouchers.

- September - Second assassination attempt on Former President Donald Trump at his golf club in West Palm Beach, Florida. 58-year old Ryan Wesley Routh, from Greensboro, NC was armed with an AK-47-style rifle.
- September 19th, Kentucky District Judge Kevin Mullins was shot, killed in his chambers and a sheriff charged with murder.
- 9/19 - CNN broke the news that GOP Gubernatorial Candidate Mark Robinson posted on a porn site that 'slavery is not bad,' and called himself 'Black Nazi'. The next day, the NC GOP stated their continued support for Mark Robinson.
- September 26th Hurricane Helene made landfall in Florida - A category 4 storm with 140 mile-per-hour winds. Its path continued through Georgia, SC, and NC devastating Western North Carolina. In the weeks following, people across the WNC and the region worked around the clock to do rescue missions, get desperately needed water, food and supplies into the area.
- Hurricane Recovery officials in Western NC were relocated after reports of threats from an armed Militia Group. Extremist groups continue to do relief work in WNC while also spreading the narrative of Appalachia being a "white christian homeland" and the government ignoring white folks in favor of "illegal immigrants".
- October - Voting began in NC. We wrapped up our Phone Banking series in partnership with UU the Vote, Carolina Jews for Justice and Pro-Choice NC totalling over 60,000 calls.
- UUs from All Souls DC, Virginia and Maryland traveled to NC this weekend to canvas with UU Justice NC and NC Asian Americans Together! In total, we had 87 canvassers who knocked on 4,150 doors!
- Following repeated reports of intimidation and harassment at the polls targeting Asian Americans, we partners create a Joy to the Polls Choir that has been singing at the Cary Senior Center from October 26th through Election Day thanks to the leadership of Lucy Bradley and participation of UUs and people of faith & conscience across the triangle.
- UUs also UUd the Vote as Poll Working, giving rides to the polls, doing ballot curing, and serving on our movement's first ever Rapid Response Safety Network responding to threats at the polls state-wide throughout every day of early voting and election day.
- Trump was elected President with Republicans retaining power in the House of Representatives and regaining power in the Senate.
- State Election Results - Victories for Democrats: Josh Stein - Governor, Rachel Hunt for Lt. Governor, Jeff Jackson - Attorney General, Mo Green for State Superintendent. Democrats broke the Veto Proof Supermajority in the General Assembly. Allison Riggs ultimately defeated Jefferson Griffin for State Supreme Court. Presidential Election - Trump won NC 51% to Kamala Harris' 47.7% Turn-Out - 73.33% (5,692,796), Compared to 2020 - 75.35% (5,545,848) voters. Constitutional Amendment 1 - Require U.S. citizenship to vote? Passed with 77.6%
- November 19 – SB 382 was introduced to the public as a hurricane relief bill, yet only 12 of 132 pages are related to recovery for Western NC. Massive changes are made to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and other sweeping changes to the Executive and Judicial branches. It passed two weeks ago after Governor Cooper vetoed the bill.

National Election Results.

Friday, December 20, 2024

Our 238th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Sloan Alday

Today we begin to wrap up the year with Reflection & Gratitude. We will look back at the first half of 2024 and create space to think about the events, the partnerships, the actions, and the growth that shaped this historic year. Then we will take action, sending messages of gratitude to those who led us, supported us, and inspired us in 2024.

Weekly Round-Up

- Government Shutdown Looms as G.O.P. Rebels Against Trump. Speaker Mike Johnson is trying to find a spending plan that will satisfy both Republicans and Democrats. He has less than a day to do it.
- We are still awaiting Governor Cooper's response to last week's delivery by the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty of a petition (signed by thousands of North Carolinians) calling on him to commute all death sentences to prison terms before he leaves office. He has signaled that he has made a decision - and we have been instructed to NOT put additional pressure on him at this time.
- Congratulations to all the Letters to the Editor Writers who have been published in the last two weeks across the state about SB 382 and SB 920.
- Federal authorities filed a total of four counts against Luigi Mangione, who is accused of killing Brian Thompson, the chief executive of UnitedHealthcare.
- Yesterday in France, [Dominique Pelicot](#) and 50 other men were all found guilty of the rape or sexual assault of Gisèle Pelicot.

Today's Reflection - Part 1 of a 2024 Year in Review

- January 22nd marked the 51st Anniversary of Roe v Wade and people of faith turned out in big numbers for a rally and press conference in Raleigh. A bus load of UUs joined from the triangle.
- February was a month of Action for the Leandro Plan culminating in a Leandro Day of Action for Education Rights - on February 22nd in Raleigh when the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case.
- In March, [the Gazan health ministry has reported that the death toll in Gaza has surpassed 30,000 since the start of Israel's military offensive in October](#). And in the March Michigan Democratic primary, over 100,000 "Uncommitted" votes were cast - sending a message to the Biden campaign that voters will not ignore his support and funding of Israel. Michigan is a key swing state. "Michigan Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib pointed out, 74% of Democrats in Michigan support a ceasefire."
- On March 29th we celebrated our 200th Friday Action Hour.

- Other focus areas, White Christian Nationalism, Ending the Death Penalty in North Carolina,
- In April we focused on fighting the planned elimination of corporate income taxes in NC, and joined the NC Budget and Tax Center on MAY 2nd for their Our Dollars, Our Future Advocacy day at the General Assembly
- In May (and really, the whole year) we fought against legislation to Expand NC School Vouchers and HB10 - The Anti-Immigrant bill.
- In May students on college campuses across the country protested the war in Gaza - causing major disruptions to college finals and graduation plans. USC has canceled its main graduation ceremony, Columbia students camping out on the lawn where their graduation is supposed to take place, and students across the country have been arrested.
- On Friday, MAY 10th, Sam graduated from the University of Miami.
- Anti-Protest Bill [HB 237](#) claimed to be geared towards "Unmasking Mobs and Criminals" but in actuality, is part of a wave of new anti-protest bills sweeping the country in response to Pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses.
- May - the UNC System Board of Governors voted to repeal previous DEI requirements across all of the state's 17 public universities. This will likely lead to the elimination of diversity, equity and inclusion programs and jobs - which will impact a quarter of a million NC students. Only two board members, Joel Ford and Sonja Phillips Nichols, voted against the change.
- In June, we reached the mark of enrolling the 500,000th North Carolinians in Medicaid!!!!
- In June - the Supreme Court upheld access to abortion pills, overturned the Trump-era ban on gun bump stocks, Homelessness ruling, Chevron - overturning the Federal judiciary's forty-year-old practice of deferring to agencies' reasonable interpretations of ambiguous federal laws.
- June 27th, was the first Presidential Debate between Biden and Trump.
- June - we partnered with Childcare Providers across the state on the looming childcare funding cliff. If the NC General Assembly did not fund early childhood education next month, nearly 1/3 of childcare providers (an estimated 1,800 facilities) may have to shut down, leaving 100,000 kids without care and families without options. We were successful in winning 67.5 million dollars before the deadline!

Friday, December 13, 2024

Our 237th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Laura Ucik

This week, we are thrilled to be joined by **Pablo DeJesus, Executive Director of UUSJ - UUs for Social Justice**. Pablo will give us a briefing on the current state of Federal Legislation as we round out the year, and approach the start of the new administration and Congress.

Weekly Round-Up

- On Wednesday, the NC House voted to override Governor Cooper's Veto of SB 382 following the Senate's Vote earlier this month. SB 382 was presented as a "disaster relief package" but is in fact a massive power grab created behind closed doors to deliberately

undermine the results of the 2024 General Election. This includes massive changes to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and other sweeping changes to the Executive and Judicial branches. Over the past month, people across the state have descended on Raleigh and the People's House to shine a light on this shameful hypocrisy.

- Gov. Roy Cooper and Gov.-elect Josh Stein [filed a lawsuit](#) challenging the new law as unconstitutional.
- Thankfully, SB 920, the Tax Cap Amendment was not voted on this week. However, we fear that this will come up again in the 2025 "Long Session." This new Tax Cap would benefit the wealthiest households and profitable corporations and would lead to higher sales and property taxes for working class families.
- **Shout out to all those whose LTEs were published this week, including Pam Bloom, Eileen Hanson-Kelly, Sheila Womack, Jim Norris, Sam Alday, and Samantha Turner, Karen Bringle, Lynne Holbaein, Julia Welch**
- Yesterday, the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty delivered their petition (signed by thousands of North Carolinians) to Gov. Cooper, calling on him to commute all death sentences to prison terms before he leaves office. He has signaled that he has made a decision - and we have been instructed to NOT put additional pressure on him at this time.
- This week, a coalition including The [Farmworker Advocacy Network](#), the [Hispanic Federation](#), [Toxic Free NC](#), the [North Carolina Justice Center](#), [UE Local 150](#), a public service workers union, and the [AFL-CIO](#) rallied across North Carolina for support of what could be the first national heat standard. The push comes as the U.S. Department of Labor and its Occupational Safety and Health Administration [extended the public comment period](#) for weighing in on a proposed rule to better protect people from extreme heat in indoor and outdoor workplaces.

Today's Actions

Action 1 - Tell US Senators Upcoming Cabinet Nominees Must Adhere to the Constitution - In service to all Americans

Many Americans, UUs included, express concern that incoming executive Cabinet nominees are not qualified to perform their duties and, in particular, will not respect our Constitution nor their duty to uphold it. It is imperative that all government officials and employees who take an oath to defend the Constitution do so in service of all Americans.

[The Senate must confirm the men and women the President appoints before they can take office](#). There are two main checks on problematic appointees:

- [The first is the Advice and Consent clause](#) in the Constitution that specifies these nominees need Senate approval before they can take office.
- [The second is public opinion](#) that we can amplify by making calls to Senate offices and encouraging others to join us.

Basic Script

- Hi I'm a [constituent (if applicable)],... Or... Hi I'm a volunteer with [church] calling to let you know...
- I care passionately about our democracy and Constitution. As you consider incoming executive nominees, I urge Senator _____ to do his/her duty to ensure that every executive nominee is well-qualified for their role and committed to justice, fairness, and the essential functions of our democracy.
- The Senate is the first line of defense for our Constitution. I expect Senator _____ to work together with his/her fellow senators to uphold the normal operating procedures, decorum, and traditions that allow our government to function for all the people. Our communities are depending on him/her.
- Finally, we want a clean continuing resolution without any anti-immigration related policies and I also want to communicate my opposition to the anti-non-profit bill H.R.9495. This will have a chilling effect on the free speech of non-profits, and it will offer the incoming administration a new weapon to punish and silence political opponents.

Who are we calling?

1. **Thom Tillis [R-NC] – (202) 224-6342 / <https://www.tillis.senate.gov/>**
2. CASSIDY, Bill (R-LA) – (202) 224-5824
3. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME] – (202) 224-2523
4. CRAMER, Kevin (R-ND) – (202) 224-2043
5. CURTIS, John (R-UT) (202) 225-7751
6. ERNST, Joni (R-IA) – (202) 224-3254
7. McConnell, Mitch [R-KY] – (202) 224-2541
8. Murkowski, Lisa [R-AK] – (202) 224-6665
9. Romney, Mitt [R-UT] – (202) 224-5251 - retiring
10. Young, Todd [R-IN] – (202) 224-5623

Action 2 - Call your US Representative and Senators and ask when more Federal Disaster Relief is coming for North Carolina.

Find your Elected Officials Here: <https://ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>

Basic Script

- Hi my name is _____, I am a person of faith and one of your constituents. I live in _____
- I am calling what you and others NC representatives in Congress are doing to secure more Federal Relief Aid for those who have been affected by Hurricane Helene.
- With the winter months upon us, the need for shelter and other basic needs become more urgent.
- What are you doing to advocate for the people of Western North Carolina?

Action 3 - Write Public Comment to OSHA about Proposed Heat Protections

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is inviting the public to comment on its proposed heat protection standard, a critical step in the process of finalizing the Standard. This step took place with almost unprecedented speed because of the years of action, testimony, and demands from workers for comprehensive protection from exposure to excessive heat on the job. But our work is not done yet. While the proposed rule has many strong protections, it may not address all of the dangers that we have experienced working in heat. And already we have seen employers and their highly-paid lobbyists and media firms claim that common-sense protections will be too expensive and too difficult for them to put into place. We must make sure that OSHA is hearing from workers. We have the numbers and the lived experience to tell OSHA not to water down the rule and to finalize strong protections as quickly as possible.

Submit Public Comment: <https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/OSHA-2021-0009-4761>

What's in the proposed rule?

OSHA has provided a fact sheet in English and in Spanish explaining key provisions, which include:

- 1) Requiring employers to develop a heat injury and illness prevention plan;
- 2) Providing two levels of protection - for when temperatures reach 80 degrees, and when they reach 90 degrees:
 - When temperatures reach 80 degrees, some requirements include providing cool drinking water and acclimatization (time for workers to get used to the high temperature);
 - When temperatures reach 90 degrees, requirements include mandatory paid rest breaks.

How can workers tell OSHA to make the rule as strong as possible and to finish it as quickly as possible?

The federal government has made it easy to share your stories and experiences with heat in the workplace, and your thoughts about the proposed heat rule with an online portal. On, X OSHA began a 120-day period for the public to share reactions and comments to the rule. It is critically important for regulators to continue to hear from people who work in the heat, indoors and outdoors, and to be reminded that worker safety during heat waves is a human right. COSH will provide an easy way to submit comments.

Below are some things to consider as you prepare to submit your comment:

- Review OSHA's fact sheets (English/Spanish) or read the text of the rule.
- Ask yourself what parts of the rule are most helpful, and what is missing something?
- Draft a written comment sharing your experience and ideas. It does not have to be long or formal.

Share your thoughts as clearly and forcefully as you can.

- Your comments can be anonymous if you don't want to use your full name. They can also be in your native language if that is not English; OSHA will get them translated.

- Be sure to include that this is a comment for OSHA and that it is for the heat rule (Docket No. OSHA-2021-0009) in your comment. This will make sure that it is filed where OSHA will see it.

Example:

- “Thank you for the opportunity to provide a comment on OSHA’s draft heat protection rule, Docket No. OSHA-2021-0009. My name is _____ and I work in [your industry] in [your state].
- I appreciate that OSHA is proposing this rule because I think that it will make me and my co-workers safer as our jobs continue to get hotter. For example, [share your story about what it feels like to work in the heat, or what it feels like when you experience heat illness, or about a time that someone at your workplace got sick or maybe had to go to the emergency room due to heat].
- We have been waiting for years for rules that will give simple common-sense actions that our employers must take to ensure that at the end of a hot day we can go home to our families safe and healthy.
- Thank you for drafting this rule and I urge you to finalize and implement it as soon as possible before more workers get hurt.”

Announcements

Undivided: Thoughts about Faith, Race, and Politics After the Election. Tuesday, December 17th at 8:00pm ET join UUSJ for their special event with Hahrie Han, Ph.D., author of the book - Undivided: The Quest for Racial Solidarity in an American Church. Han speaks extensively on how some grassroots organizations translate the engagement of their people into political power and how people become motivated to participate in politics, looking particularly at the means of engaging underprivileged populations in political action. Her work and research includes people of faith. [Register Here](#)

The Longest Night - UU Solstice Service. Thursday, December 19th at 8:00pm ET. The longest night of the year is a time we drop into stillness, honor the dark, release the pain and struggle of life. We also embrace the light of strength and courage. This year, UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) partners with the UU Service Committee (UUSC) and UU College of Social Justice (UUCSJ) to bring you worship, artistic expression, and stories from partners in Kiribati where climate justice is culture justice and disability justice. Our guest speaker is Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti, UUSC Board of Trustees Co-Chair and Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan. [Click here to register.](#)

Friday, December 6, 2024

Our 236th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Nancy Pajewski

Moral Monday: Stop the Legislative Coup & Coverup! Start: Monday, December 09, 2024 • 5:30 PM - NC State Capitol• 1 S. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27601 - [Register Here](#)

Next week, SB 382 - the Republican power grab disguised as a Hurricane Relief bill will again come to a vote in the NC General Assembly. Over the last two weeks, our movement has powerfully mobilized in Raleigh to demand an end to the legislative coup and coverup. If the State Legislature successfully overrides Governor Cooper's veto, the bill will result in massive changes to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and the Executive and Judicial branches.

This morning we will work to flood Sunday newspapers across the state with Letters to the Editor encouraging our state legislators to vote NO on a veto override. We will also be joined by our friends at the NC Budget and Tax Center who will brief us on the legislature's looming vote on a Tax Cap Amendment.

Action 1 : Write a Letter to the Editor about SB 382

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit (typically under 250 words). You can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.

1. Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- SB 382 was presented as a “disaster relief package” but is in fact a massive power grab created behind closed doors to deliberately undermine the results of the 2024 General Election. This includes massive changes to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and other sweeping changes to the Executive and Judicial branches.
- The leadership of the state General Assembly have shamefully exploited those impacted by Hurricane Helene to push forward a bill that undermines the will of North Carolina voters and does nothing to actually aid Western North Carolinians.
- Over the past two weeks, people across the state have descended on Raleigh to demand an end to the legislative coup and coverup.

2. Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a North Carolina Voter I am outraged that the General Assembly's leadership have so blatantly undermined the democratic process, and will of the people of our state.

- As a person of faith...
- As someone deeply concerned about / is committed to the long-term recovery of Western North Carolina....

3. Talking Points / What's at Stake

- **The People** North Carolinians will not stand for this hypocrisy. For the past two weeks, people across the state have gathered in Raleigh to pack the General Assembly to demand an end to the legislative coup and coverup. Led by the Poor People's Campaign and Blueprint NC.
- **The Hypocrisy** -What does it say about the state of our democracy in North Carolina if one party completely ignores the democratic process to get what they want.
- **The Process** - I am particularly outraged by the process by which this conference report was passed. No amendments were allowed, and it was written by a few people in secret. No one (including both Democratic and Republican legislators) had access to it until an hour or two before they were expected to vote on all 131 pages, only 12 of which had anything to do with hurricane relief. (And even that woefully inadequate money can't be released until another vote.)
- **The Western NC Legislators** - The three Republican State Representatives from Western North Carolina, [Mike Clompitt](#), [Karl E. Gillespie](#), and [Mark Pless](#) should be applauded for putting the people of their district ahead of their party. If this bill were really out of concern for their districts, they would have been in the room helping to write the bill.

4. Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- If you really cared about Western North Carolina....
- SB 382 reflects the worst of us. Lies, deceitfulness, and disregard for the people of North Carolina.
- SB 382 can be summed up by this - sore losers cheating to get their way.
- I call on all of the state legislators from Western North Carolina to come together in a bipartisan effort to vote against the Veto override.
- This week, the people of NC need the state legislature to send a clear message that...

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).

Action 2 : Write a Letter to the Editor about Tax Cap Amendment.

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit (typically under 250 words). You can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.

1. Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- Right now, state lawmakers are considering Senate Bill 920, a new giveaway to the wealthiest households and profitable corporations; that would lead to higher sales and property taxes for working class families.
- A cap on income taxes might sound good, but it's actually harmful to working class North Carolinians who rely on public programs and services for our quality of life. First, they totally eliminated income taxes for big corporations and now this! It will leave people like us footing the bill for the billions of dollars lost in the form of higher sales taxes, property taxes, and even fees all while the wealthiest and corporations get a permanent tax break.

2. Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a person of faith, I believe....
- As a North Carolina Voter
- As a parent, teacher, etc.

3. Talking Points / What's at Stake

SB920 was filed, passed through Senate Rules with no vote, and immediately sent to the floor for a vote on Monday.

The change to the state Constitution being contemplated in SB 920 would bring the maximum allowable income tax rate to 5 percent.

The current personal income tax rate is at 4.5 percent and set to fall below 4 percent by 2030. The corporate income tax will be completely eliminated after 2030.

There is no reason that our Constitution has to reflect the policies passed by the legislature since it already provides a limit on income tax rates.

- It won't mean a tax cut. The income tax rate is already below 5 percent. *But this tax cap would immediately lock North Carolina into the status quo of a tax code designed to benefit the rich at the expense of funding essential services and increase the likelihood of future harm to the vast majority of North Carolinians.*
- When it comes to state and local taxes, North Carolina already has an upside-down tax code that asks the most from families with the least financial resources. The richest 1 percent of households in our state make well over a million dollars each year on average but pay just 6

percent of their annual income in state and local taxes. Meanwhile, the average household in the bottom 20 percent makes less than \$15,000, but still pays 11 percent in taxes — a portion almost twice as high as the millionaires.

- This amendment would prevent lawmakers from passing a graduated personal income tax that could restore a more equitable tax code by taxing people with very high incomes at a rate over 5 percent. When it comes to the corporate income tax, 90 percent of the financial benefit of blocking a tax rate over 5 percent would flow to people — primarily corporate shareholders — who don't live in North Carolina.
- Stricter limits on income taxes also mean a greater reliance on more regressive revenue sources like sales taxes, fines, and fees. People with lower incomes spend a far greater share of their earnings on purchases that are subject to sales tax than wealthy people, and these taxes are already a growing share of state revenue. A lower income tax cap will lock in these bad choices.

Problems with a Constitutional Amendment on Income Taxes:

- Proponents claim this is necessary to hold down taxes and spending, but ***this kind of tax limit isn't going to keep taxes low — sales and property taxes can still rise and are likely to do so. Sales and property taxes shift more of the tax burden to low- and middle-income taxpayers.***
- A maximum income tax rate set in the state Constitution cuts off the possibility of having the public money to fix our state's childcare crisis permanently or meet the requirements of delivering a sound, basic education for every child. The billions in lost revenue from not having that revenue source that grows better over time with the economy than other sources is just one cost. It will also block the responsiveness of our elected leaders to people's priorities by cutting off the ability to make different decisions than the bad ones being made today.
- By continuing to lock in tax cuts for millionaires and shifting the tax load to people who live in rural places and are not white and wealthy, it grows income and racial inequality. Rural, less wealthy counties that cannot make up for the lost revenue will be hardest hit.
- The impacts of SB920 will extend to our children's classrooms, our communities' readiness for economic opportunity and natural disaster, and the well-being and health of our families and neighbors.

Additional points from our analysis of the income tax cap:

- Millionaires are the primary beneficiaries when the income tax rate is not allowed.
- Fewer dollars are available to make critical, transformative investments in our state.
- Middle- and low-income taxpayers will see their tax load increase.
- Barriers to equitable outcomes will be worse, and reaching the full economic potential of the state will be blocked when the state underinvests in opportunity for all and delivers tax cuts to the wealthy few.
- Counties that rely on state revenue for more than one-tenth of their annual budget would be hard hit by limits on state dollars.

More info: <https://ncbudget.org/taxcap/>

Info on funding needed for Helene recovery: [Fact-Sheet-Helene-2024.pdf](#)

Note: Including SB382, the state commitment of funding will remain just 3 percent of the \$53.6 billion needs assessment while Federal funding will cover only 25 percent of the total cost to rebuild and recover, according to OSBM. Without a significant boost in state funds, Western NC will be left without a full, long-term recovery. We need a sustainable, equitable revenue source!

4. Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- NC leaders need to
- It's time to demand our leaders
- Don't cap our future!
- Future lawmakers deserve the opportunity to fund the issues of their time!
- We don't need permanent tax breaks for the wealthy, we need good schools, childcare centers, and clean air and water!
- We don't need permanent tax breaks for the wealthy, we need investments in the people of this state!

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).

Action 3 : Phone Calls to Key Legislators.

Script: I'm calling to ask Rep. ____ to vote NO on SB920. A tax cap amendment to the constitution will tie the hands of future lawmakers, and lock in tax breaks for the rich, while working class North Carolinians are likely to pay more in sales and property taxes, and maybe even fees, to make up for the billions in revenue we'd lose.

<u>Representative</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Email</u>
<u>Rep. Gillespie</u>	<u>Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>919-733-5859</u>	<u>Karl.Gillespie@ncleg.gov</u>
<u>Rep. Clampitt</u>	<u>Jackson, Swain, Transylvania</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>828-736-6222</u>	<u>Mike.Clampitt@ncleg.gov</u>

<u>Rep. Pless</u>	<u>Haywood, Madison</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>919-733-5 732</u>	<u>Mark.Pless@ncleg.gov</u>
<u>Rep. Wray</u>	<u>Halifax, Northampton, Warren</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>252-535-32 97</u>	<u>Michael.Wray@ncleg.gov</u>
<u>Rep. Brockman</u>	<u>Guilford</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>919-733-58 25</u>	<u>Cecil.Brockman@ncleg.gov</u>
<u>Rep. Cunningham</u>	<u>Mecklenburg</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>704-509-29 39</u> <u>919-733-58 07</u>	<u>Carla.Cunningham@ncleg.gov</u>
<u>Rep. Pierce</u>	<u>Hoke, Scotland</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>910-273-10 98</u>	<u>Garland.Pierce@ncleg.gov</u>
<u>Rep. Willingham</u>	<u>Bertie, Edgecombe, Martin</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>919-715-3 024</u>	<u>Shelly.Willingham@ncleg.gov</u>

Friday, November 29, 2024

Our 235th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Dorothy Hammett

SB 382 Timeline

- November 19 – SB 382 was introduced to the public as a hurricane relief bill, yet only 12 of 132 pages are related to recovery for Western NC. Massive changes are made to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and other sweeping changes to the Executive and Judicial branches.
- Because SB 382 is a “conference report,” it cannot receive public input or be changed by amendments introduced by legislators to make the bill better.
- Meaning it was created in secret, without any public understanding of how and who created SB 382.
- That same evening, the [House passed SB 382 by a 63-46 vote](#).
- November 20 – In less than 24 hours, the [Senate passes SB 382 by a 30-19 vote](#).
- During the debate, Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson demanded sergeant-at-arms to “clear the gallery,” called the people “immature,” and ordered a 10-minute recess after the gallery cheered for legislators calling out politicizing a natural disaster.
- SB 382 sent to Governor Cooper’s desk for him to either sign, veto, or, if the Governor takes no action, after 10 days, the bill becomes law.
- November 26 – Governor Cooper [vetoes SB 382!](#)
- December 2 – General Assembly reconvenes; possible date for veto override (House)
- December 9 – General Assembly reconvenes; possible date for veto override (Senate)
- December 11 – General Assembly reconvenes; possible date for veto override

How Many Votes Are Required to Override Gov. Cooper’s Veto?

- 30 votes in the Senate and 72 votes in the House
- In the House, 3 Representatives voted “no”: [Mike Clampitt](#) (HD 119 - Jackson, Swain, Transylvania), [Karl E. Gillespie](#) (HD 120 - Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon), [Mark Pless](#) (HD 118 - Haywood, Madison)
- The following 10 Representatives had an excused absence and did not vote:
 - [Cecil Brockman](#) (HD 60 – Guilford), 919-733-5825
 - [Joe John](#) (HD 40 – Wake) - 919-733-5530
 - [Abe Jones](#) (HD 38 – Wake) 919-733-5758
 - [James Roberson](#) (HD 39 – Wake) - 919-733-5974
 - [Jay Adams](#) (HD 96 – Catawba) - 919-733-5988
 - [Dean Arp](#) (HD 69 – Union) 704-282-0418
 - [George G. Cleveland](#) (HD 14 – Onslow) 919-715-6707 / 910-346-3866
 - [Phil Shepard](#) (HD 15 – Onslow) 919-715-9644 / 910-389-6392
 - [Sarah Stevens](#) (HD 90 – Surrey, Wilkes)
 - [Sam Watford](#) (HD 80 – Davidson) 919-715-2526
- In the Senate, one Senator had an excused absence: [Rachel Hunt](#) (SD 42 – Mecklenburg)

Summary / TalkingPoints - Power Grab & Undermining the People’s Will

SB 382 was negotiated behind closed doors, without public comment, and without any opportunity to make changes to the bill. Legislative leadership is, once again, putting their party's agenda over the will of voters immediately after the 2024 General Election.

If enacted, SB 382 will:

- Severely limits the time to research, contact voters, and fix issues with provisional and mail ballots within 3 days after Election Day. Currently, there are 9 days for counties to research and contact voters who need to provide a photo ID or cure certification for their ballot to count. Condensing canvass will disenfranchise thousands of voters and fails to account for the operational realities many election officials face when processing ballots.
- Requires all mail ballots received by Election Day to be continuously counted starting at 5:00 PM. On Election Day, almost 24,000 mail ballots were received, and, in total, over 4 million voted by mail. Changing the counting timeline will not provide more certainty or faster election results; instead, it will require election officials to work nonstop and jeopardize the accuracy of results.
- Provides voters with less time to request a mail ballot. Changes the deadline to request a mail-in ballot from the Tuesday before the election to the second Tuesday before the election – shortening the request timeline by one week– and ultimately enough time to vote.
- Creates a never-ending cycle of funding political partisan litigation schemes. In the 2024 General Election, the NC GOP filed 7 lawsuits that spread disinformation about the security of our elections and incited hateful rhetoric targeting immigrant communities.
- Provides the State Auditor, a partisan recently elected official, with oversight and appointment power to the State Board of Elections and County Boards. Legislative Leadership continues to move the State Board of Elections under partisan officials who meet their political agenda. Similar to [Senate Bill 749](#), which transferred the State Board to the Department of Secretary of State in 2023 and is currently being challenged in state court as an unconstitutional power grab. North Carolina would be the only state where elections are under the State Auditor.
- Prevents the Attorney General from acting on behalf of consumers and investigating deceptive or unfair practices by utility providers. Changes undermine the authority and independence of the recently elected Attorney General by requiring them to take the same position as Legislative Leadership in lawsuits and prevent any action that would result in overturning state law.
- Attacks judicial integrity and independence. Targets and removes two elected Superior Court Judges, Bryan Collins (Wake) and L. Todd Burke (Forsyth), who ruled against election law changes from the General Assembly. Creates two special Superior Court Judge positions controlled by the Legislative Leadership. And abolishes the Courts Commission, which studies and makes recommendations to improve issues in our court system, like eliminating racially disparate treatment.
- Fails to meet the priority needs, like rental assistance and small business grants, for Western North Carolinians to start long-term recovery and rebuilding. The two disaster packages before SB 382 provided less than 2% of the estimated \$954 million for Helene recovery. Just \$1 million was provided for rental assistance out of a \$25 million need.

Although an additional \$227 million has been appropriated, this funding cannot be immediately used and will remain unspent in the Helene Fund until December.

Video - [NC Poor People's Campaign Press Conference Vimeo 11.25.24](#)

Not Let's Take Action

Action 1 - Write and Call your Elected Officials

Step 1 - Use [Democracy NC's Tool](#) to Send Letter to your State Elected Officials.

Step 2 - Call Your State Representative and Senator. [Find your Legislators Here](#)

You can also Call NC General Assembly Leadership if you have time.

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov

Basic Script

- Hi my name is _____ and I am a person faith and resident of _____
- I'm also calling today in regards to SB 382.
- SB 382 is a massive power grab created behind closed doors to deliberately undermine the results of the 2024 General Election. This includes massive changes to the ballot counting timeline, State Board of Elections structure, and other sweeping changes to the Executive and Judicial branches.
- It was presented as a "disaster relief package" for Western NC. In reality, it postpones any meaningful funding until the General Assembly acts and fails to prioritize immediate action and full and inclusive recovery for Western North Carolinians.
- I urge you to vote against the Veto Override of SB 382.

Action 2 - Call Republicans Who Voted No - Urge them to Sustain Cooper's Veto

In the House, 3 Republicans State Representatives voted "no":

- [Mike Clampitt](#) (HD 119 - Jackson, Swain, Transylvania) - 828-736-6222
- [Karl E. Gillespie](#) (HD 120 - Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon) - 919-733-5859
- [Mark Pless](#) (HD 118 - Haywood, Madison) 919-733-5732

Basic Script

- Hi my name is _____ and I am a person faith and resident of _____

- First, I want to send my prayers to the people of your district who have been impacted by Hurricane Helene. And I join others across the state in expressing my commitment to supporting the region's long-term recovery.
- I'm also calling today to thank the Representative for voting No on SB 382.
- It was presented as a "disaster relief package" for Western NC. In reality, it postpones any meaningful funding until the General Assembly acts and fails to prioritize immediate action and full and inclusive recovery for Western North Carolinians.
- I urge you to vote against the Veto Override of SB 382.

Action 3 - Western NC needs real relief! Join the call for eviction protection & recovery funds >> [Just Economics](#)

Announcements

Pack the Galleries (excepted veto override in the House at 12:00 PM) When? Monday, December 2 at ~10:30-11:00 AM - 16 West Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27601

Friday, November 22, 2024

Our 234th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Doug Shier

This week, we will be discussing and taking action against H.R. 949, the "Non-Profit Killer." This bill has been passed by the US House and is being considered for the floor of the Senate. Joining our voices with other value-aligned organizations, we will be calling the office of Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to request that this bill not be introduced.

Weekly Round-Up

- The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former defense minister Yoav Gallant for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip. A warrant has also been issued for Muhammad Deif, Hamas' military chief, for the crimes against humanity committed on October 7th of last year.
- In response to mounting pressure, Matt Gaetz has withdrawn from consideration for US Attorney General in the Trump Administration. This pressure was bipartisan as concerns arose over investigations into allegations of human trafficking and abuse of minors. He will be replaced by Florida AG Pam Bondi
- The North Carolina Senate and House have approved SB 382. This bill is allegedly about hurricane relief and contains a few measures on that topic. However, it is an explicit power grab to strip the offices won by Democrats like the governor and attorney general of their power and give more power over the election process to GOP appointees.
- The US House passed H.R.9495, "Stop Terror-Financing and Tax Penalties on American Hostages Act." This bill will give unprecedented power to strip organizations of their non-profit status for allegedly supporting terrorist organizations. Under some interpretations of the law, this includes supportive speech, or providing advice and

expertise. Something as simple as raising money for Columbian or Peruvian farmers could lead to accusations. Little due process is given to evaluate accusations.

Action 1 - Call on Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to prevent H.R. 9495 from being introduced on the floor of the Senate

Call Schumer's D.C. Office at (202) 224-6542

- Hi my name is _____ and I am a person faith from _____, North Carolina
- I am concerned that the house has passed H.R.9495, the "Stop Terror-Financing and Tax Penalties on American Hostages Act."
- If this bill becomes law, it will have a chilling effect on the free speech of non-profits, and it will offer the incoming administration a new weapon to punish and silence political opponents.
- I am asking you//Senator Schumer to prevent H.R. 9495 from being presented on the floor of the Senate as an independent bill or as part of other legislation

Friday, November 15, 2024

Our 233rd Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by SisterScene Solidarity Community

Weekly Round-Up

- State Election Results - Victories for Democrats: Josh Stein - Governor, Rachel Hunt for Lt. Governor, Jeff Jackson - Attorney General, Mo Green for State Superintendent.
- Democrats broke the Veto Proof Supermajority in the General Assembly
- State Supreme Court - 50.0% / 50.0% Tie - between Allison Riggs, Jefferson Griffin
- Presidential Election - Trump won NC 51% to Kamala Harris' 47.7%
- Turn-Out - 73.33% (5,692,796), Compared to 2020 - 75.35% (5,545,848) voters.
- Constitutional Amendment 1 - Require U.S. citizenship to vote? Passed with 77.6%

National Election Results.

- Trump has been elected President
- Republicans have retained power in the House of Representatives
- Republicans regained power in the Senate.

Trump Administration announcement of Cabinet / Other Key Appointments

- Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy - new "Department of Government Efficiency
- Matt Gaetz for Attorney General
- Secretary of State: Marco Rubio
- Defense secretary: Pete Hegseth - currently a co-host for "Fox & Friends Weekend."

- Homeland Security secretary: Kristi Noem - South Dakota governor,
- Health and Human Services secretary: Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
- Director of national intelligence: Tulsi Gabbard,
- CIA director: John Ratcliffe - former head of national intelligence under Trump
- Interior secretary: Doug Burgum - The North Dakota governor

Action 1 - Tell Governor Cooper to commute the sentences of all 136 individuals on death row in North Carolina by the end of your term

Write to:

North Carolina Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Talking Points -

- Dear Governor Cooper,
- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____.
- I join others across the state in asking you to commute the sentences of all 136 individuals on death row in North Carolina by the end of your term.
- As I person of faith, I believe that _____

NC Death Penalty by the Numbers

- Fifth largest death row in the nation with 136 people
- 60% are people of color and nearly half were sentenced
- 2 times more likely to be sentenced to death if the victim of the murder is white
- 12 innocent people exonerated, 11 of them people of color
- 43 people executed since 1976
- 2006: the last year someone was executed
- 2023: the last year someone was sentenced to death.
- \$2.16 million average additional cost for each case resulting in execution vs. sentenced to life in prison.

Why Governor Cooper Must Commute

- The death penalty is rooted in racism
- The death penalty does not prevent violence or keep communities safe.
- Innocent people are sentenced to death.
- A majority of people now believe the death penalty is unfair.
- NC's death sentences are outdated, with two-thirds imposed during the 1990s under vastly different laws.
- Executions are cruel & inhuman and add more violence and grieving to the world.
- If Gov. Cooper does not act, executions could resume in NC.

Friday, November 8, 2024

Our 231st Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by

Our first ever field-trip to join the Blueprint NC Ecosystem's Post-Election In-Gathering

Friday, November 1, 2024

Our 231st Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by the UUA's Side With Love Organizing Strategy Team!

This week, in OUR FINAL ACTION HOUR BEFORE ELECTION DAY, we are thrilled to welcome the Director of the UUA's Side With Love Team, Nicole Pressley as our special guest. She will share what UUAs across the country have done in our 2024 UU the Vote Campaign, and how our faith calls us to show up in this moment - both in the final days of the election, and during the critical post-election certification process.

This will be a spacious action hour, with lots of time to ask questions, celebrate how we've shown up for democracy, and ground ourselves in our faith and values before the votes are counted.

North Carolina UU the Vote Pre-Election Event - Sunday, November 3rd at 7:00pm. Join UU Justice NC and UUs across North Carolina for this special pre-election day gathering. Together, we will celebrate NC UU the Vote - the largest activation of UUs in the history of our state! We will also get grounded in our faith and values as we prepare for election results.

[Register Here.](#)

Weekly Round-Up

- UUs from All Souls DC, Virginia and Maryland traveled to NC this weekend to canvass with UU Justice NC and NC Asian Americans Together! In total, we had 87 canvassers who knocked on 4,150 doors!
- Following repeated reports of intimidation and harassment at the polls targeting Asian Americans, we partners create a Joy to the Polls Choir that has been singing at the Cary Senior Center since Saturday!
-

Friday, October 25th, 2024

Our 230th Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by Beth Foreman from UUC Piedmont!

This week, we are thrilled to welcome the author, scholar and activist [Mab Segrest](#) to Friday Action Hour. We will watch the new 25-minute [Laura Flanders Show episode](#): What's on the Ballot in North Carolina? Autonomy & Democracy, featuring Mab and other members of our NC movement leadership. Then we will hear remarks from Mab on the stakes of the 2024 election. You won't want to miss this special pre-election gathering.

Friday, October 18th, 2024

Our 229th Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by The League of Women Voters!

This morning, we will be joined by Rebecca Trammel, Lead Advocate and Founder of Community Conversations. She will be talking with us about the ongoing #IamLeandro campaign and the current effort to get NC candidates to sign onto the Leandro Pledge. If we have time, we'll also continue to call on key elected officials in the General Assembly and urge them to sustain Governor Cooper's veto on the anti-immigrant and anti-public schools bill, HB10.

Weekly Round-Up

- In-person Early Voting began yesterday across North Carolina! The 888-OUR-VOTE hotline is in full swing, there are Blueprint Safe Sites encouraging voters across the state, Ride to the Polls are happening, ballots are already being cured, and Western NC has early voting sites up and running.
- If Western NC folks have questions about how to vote, they can call 888-OUR-VOTE. In Buncombe County Early voting will be held from Oct. 17 through Nov. 2, including weekends. Polling sites will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except for Nov. 2, when polls will close at 3 p.m. In Madison County Early voting will be held from Oct. 17 through Nov. 2, not including weekends. Polling sites will be open from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. every day except for Nov. 2, when polls will close at 3 p.m.
- This week Hurricane Recovery officials in Western NC were relocated after reports of threats from an armed Militia Group. Extremist groups continue to do relief work in WNC while also spreading the narrative of Appalachia being a “white christian homeland” and the government ignoring white folks in favor of “illegal immigrants”.
- In *Leandro v. The State of NC*, originally settled over twenty-five years ago, the court ruled that the state must guarantee every student access to a quality education and fully funded public schools. For decades, politicians have outright ignored this ruling and refused to fund our public schools. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. One of the key politicians who has violated court orders and refused to fund our schools is Senate leader Phil Berger. In a blatant conflict of interest, his son, Supreme Court judge Phil Berger Jr., refuses to recuse himself from a case centering on his own father's mistreatment of our state's children. On February 22nd, the North Carolina Supreme Court *again* heard oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. It is unlikely, but we COULD receive the ruling today. If not today, it is very likely that we will get it after the election and before the end of the year.

Action - Call on Legislature to Sustain HB 10 Veto

Basic Script

- Hi my name is _____ and I am a person faith

- Last month, Governor Cooper vetoed House Bill 10 because it would waste \$4 billion of the public's money over the next decade and hurt all public schools - especially rural ones.
- I join others across the state in supporting Governor Cooper's veto of House Bill 10.
- Now is not the time to TRIPLE tax payer spending on private schools giving hundreds of millions of dollars to wealthy families for private school vouchers. These are dollars that should stay in our public schools. I am asking that you commit to sustaining Governor Coopers veto of House Bill 10.
- The bill requires local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration policies that will force local governments to take on more costs. North Carolina's economy heavily relies on the contributions of immigrants, particularly in vital sectors like construction and agriculture. This bill threatens to exacerbate labor shortages, increase costs, and stunt economic growth, [potentially reducing our state's GDP by up to \\$750 million in its first year alone.](#)
- I am asking that you commit to sustaining Governor Coopers veto of House Bill 10.

Top Priorities

- Rep. Shelly Willingham - 252-442-8659, Shelly.Willingham@ncleg.gov (Bertie, Edgecombe, Martin) ** Edgecombe & Martin have zero v schools
- Rep. Michael Wray - 919-733-5662, Michael.Wray@ncleg.gov ([Halifax](#), [Northampton](#), [Warren](#))
- Ray Pickett - 919-733-7727, Ray.Pickett@ncleg.gov [Alleghany](#), [Ashe](#), [Watauga](#) *** Alleghany & Ashe have zero v schools
- Stephen Ross - 919-733-5820, Stephen.Ross@ncleg.gov, ([Alamance](#)) ***Needs more outreach
- Rep. Kevin Crutchfield - 919-715-2009, Kevin.Crutchfield@ncleg.gov ([Cabarrus](#), [Rowan](#)) *** Didn't show up for Vote. Needs more outreach
- Rep. Karl Gillespie - 919-733-5859, Karl.Gillespie@ncleg.gov, ([Cherokee](#), [Clay](#), [Graham](#), [Macon](#)) *** Needs more outreach
- Rep Mark Pless - 919-733-5732, Mark.Pless@ncleg.gov, ([Haywood](#), [Madison](#)) *** Needs more outreach
- Rep. Allen Chesser - 919-733-5802, Allen.Chesser@ncleg.gov (Nash) *** Needs more outreach

Friday, October 11th, 2024

Our 228th Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by Nan Lund

This week, we've continued to work in close relationship with our impacted UU congregations in the west and our movement partners who are getting aid into the region daily. Join us this morning for a briefing on Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief, including how we can support our beloved Friday Action Hour member, Bernise. We will also update you on specific actions that your congregations can take to offer support to other UUs and our larger community out west.

This week, we are also excited to be joined by the NC Budget & Tax Center. They will be sharing their new Election Guide!

EMPOWER TUTORIAL LINK

https://ncbtc-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/selene_ncbudget_org/EWmBTWuOk_tKub6sDyXVeIUB-JgVlq2vYAWtu8m5j29krg?rttime=brTI7Qrq3Eg

Please reach out to us if you have any questions! selene@ncbudget.org mel@ncbudget.org

Action 1: Share election information with the people of North Carolina

Method 1: Use the Empower app to text your networks

- Follow the QR code and download the Empower app on your phone.
[JoinEmpower.app/ncbtc](https://joinempower.app/ncbtc)



Or download from the links at the bottom of <https://web.empowerproject.us/empower-app> and use NCBTC as your code.

- You will see “Share the NC Budget & Tax Center voter guide” in big bold letters & right under that, a purple button that reads “reach out”. Click on that purple button. You may need to scroll past other actions.
- Your first and second screen after you click that “reach out” button will give you more info about why we’re sharing, etc. Click next for both.
- On the next screen you should be able to link your phone contacts. Choose 5 people in your phonebook here that you want to send the voter guide to!
- You will have a pre-populated message pop up. You are welcome to edit it before sending off or you can just hit the blue arrow and send what’s there to your selected contact!

Having fun with this method? [Register to text bank with us](#) over Zoom on Tuesday, Oct. 15

Method 2: Copy and paste this information to emails, social media, and anywhere else you know of to connect with people

Share our guide with at least 5 friends, family members, or people in your network.

Text for an email or social media post – feel free to personalize:

Hey [xxxx] – it's [xxxxx]. The general election and early voting are fast approaching, and I wanted to share this election guide with you before you head to the polls! This election gives us the opportunity to support public policies that will truly benefit North Carolina! Check out this Election Guide to learn about key budget and tax policies and questions to help you learn where candidates stand on the well-being issues that matter most to you.

<https://ncbudget.org/2024electionguide>

Other things you can share:

- <https://x.com/ncbudgetandtax/status/1838977541878538308>
- <https://x.com/ncbudgetandtax/status/1838192844873339299>
- NC State Board of Elections page with information for voters impacted by Hurricane Helene: [NCsbe.gov/Helene](https://ncsbe.gov/Helene)
- <https://www.facebook.com/ncbudget/posts/pfbid09xWw4TqVndyqxaEJ4VM4KMGAVgSYXZq5iqasujG2AGLz6uheavjCUUpQWTqiWrgd8l>

Method 3: Sign up to get physical copies of the Election Guide to distribute

- [Sign up to order printed copies of our Election Guide](#) to share with your communities

Action 2: Make a voting plan and share it with your friends and family

- Check your registration status and day of voting location: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegLkup/>
- Early voting location lookup county: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/EVSite/>
- Share your plan: I will vote on _____ at _____ am/pm at _____. I will get there by _____.
- Ask your people what their plan is.

Action 3: More resources around voting to share

- Watch our webinar in English or Spanish: <https://ncbudget.org/makingconnections/>

- Share with folks who need this information
- NC State Board of Elections page with information for voters impacted by Hurricane Helene: [NCsbe.gov/Helene](https://ncsbe.gov/Helene)
- DemNC: [Information for voters affected by a natural disaster](#)
- Voter plan:
 - Check your registration status and day of voting location: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegLkup/>
 - Early voting location lookup county: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/EVSite/>
- [DemNC Voter Guides](#) (in Spanish and English)
- [BTC election guide](#)
- [Resources for Western NC communities](#) from NC Inclusive Disaster Recovery Network (NCIDR)

Friday, October 4th, 2024

Our 227th Friday Action Hour is sponsored Mary Kleinz

As you know, we are dealing with a dire situation in Western NC. UU Justice NC is helping to coordinate aid into the region in partnership with our movement partners within Blueprint NC.

I've been in communication with all of our congregations in the directly impacted areas, as well as our community partners out west. We are also in very close communication with the UUA, Southern Region and UUSC who are providing support.

Our movement is having daily calls, tracking needs on the ground, and coordinating our efforts.

Specific ways that you can support.

1) Share the Plate - After speaking with several of the ministers of our directly impacted UU congregations, this is what has been requested for congregations who would like to directly support our UU neighbors who have been directly impacted in the West - that Share the Plate's can go through UU Justice NC and be split between our four directly impacted NC UU Congregations and our trusted community partners.

- Directly Impacted NC UU Congregations - The four ministers of the directly impacted congregations (Asheville, Swannanoa, Hendersonville and Transylvania County) will determine how to split up funds amongst their congregations based on greatest need.

This money will go into the minister's discretionary to support UUs who have been directly impacted, and may also help pay for damage to the congregation's building.

- Trusted Community Partners - This includes rapid response and mutual aid networks from trusted partners like [Beloved Asheville](#), and [Carolina Migrant Network](#) and partners who are leading work transporting aid into Western NC, like [SEAC Village](#).

Checks from the Share the Plate can be sent to UU Justice NC with the Following Info:

- Check made out to Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of NC
- In the Memo Line - "Helene Disaster Relief"
- Send to Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of NC, P.O. Box 61966, Durham, NC 27715
- Also, please notify me at lisa@uujusticenc.org as soon as you know how much money you have raised. We have enough liquid funds to move money immediately as long as you tell us that the check is in the mail.

**** Please note - You also have the opportunity to donate to the UUA's Disaster Relief Fund - but these donations will not directly go to our impacted congregations. This is the General fund for the UUA for Hurricane's, Wildfires, etc. Currently, all directly impacted congregations in the South are able to apply for these funds.

2) Collecting Water, Food, Supplies. As you know, there are dire needs including water, food and other supplies. If you have an existing relationship with trusted partners who can get the supplies into Asheville - go for it! If you don't, UU Justice NC is partnering with SEAC Village in Charlotte which is driving supplies into the impacted areas daily. In short, if your congregation can collect supplies and get them to Charlotte, SEAC Village will get it to the west. We will also be making financial donations to SEAC to help pay for the trucks and gas to transport supplies. Please [click on this list of drop-off locations in Charlotte](#) connected with SEAC Village.

There are many many lists of supplies out there. Please see the [Western NC Helene Response & Rebuild Google Document](#) for comprehensive lists of supplies that are constantly being updated. But here is a general, incomplete list of supplies that are needed.

- Five Gallon Water Jugs
- Water
- Baby Formula
- Non-Perishable Foods
- 25 pound bags of Rice
- Noodles (Mama, Shin Ramen)
- Tampons, Pads
- Adult & Childrens Diapers
- Gas Containers
- Wipes of all kinds
- Buckets
- Fire Starters

- Batteries
- Candles

3) Other Resources, Asks

- We need drivers to get supplies from the Triad and Triangle to Charlotte.
- The [Western NC Helene Response & Rebuild Google Document](#) is the most comprehensive document for people both seeking help, or looking to support ongoing rescue and relief efforts. It is constantly being updated by a dedicated team who is in direct communication with folks on the ground. Please continually look to this for information.

Announcements

Friday, September 27th, 2024

Our 226th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Joy Blevins

Weekly Round-Up

- Last night, Hurricane Helene made landfall in Florida - A category 4 storm with 140 mile-per-hour winds. Its path has continued through Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. So far, six people are reported dead, 4.4 million people are without power, and there is considerable damage due to flooding and high winds. Many of our friends in Western NC are without power and dealing with flooding this morning.
- This week, five individuals on death row have been executed in South Carolina, [Missouri](#) and Texas - including [Marcellus Williams](#) whose murder conviction was questioned by a prosecutor. The NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty's 136-mile walk for commutation kicked off yesterday in Winston-Salem.
- This week, the Beloved Community Center's Long March for Unity and Justice has been traveling across the state - from Western NC, to Charlotte, to the Triad, Triangle, Greenville and today Fayetteville. It will conclude in Wilmington on Sunday 9/29.
- Last week, Governor Cooper Vetoed HB 10 - a bill that would make our communities less safe, increase fear in immigrant communities and undermine democratically elected sheriffs. And, at a time when public schools in our state remain severely underfunded, HB 10 includes a \$554 million expansion of private school vouchers.

Today, our guest is **Maria Lopez Gonzalez, Public Policy Advocate at the NC Budget & Tax Center**. She will provide a briefing on HB 10, and then put us to work, calling key elected officials who could determine whether the General Assembly sustains the Governor's veto.

HB 10 Resources

- Carolina Migrant Network
- Muslim Women For

- Every Child NC

Today's Action - Call on Legislature to Sustain HB 10 Veto

- <https://secure.everyaction.com/LDI2xDLhAkm6yUvmgq7i4Q2>
- <https://governor.nc.gov/north-carolina-voucher-fact-sheet/open>

Basic Script

- Hi my name is _____ and I am a person faith
- Last week, Governor Cooper vetoed House Bill 10 because it would waste \$4 billion of the public's money over the next decade and hurt all public schools - especially rural ones.
- I join others across the state in supporting Governor Cooper's veto of House Bill 10.
- Now is not the time to TRIPLE tax payer spending on private schools giving hundreds of millions of dollars to wealthy families for private school vouchers. These are dollars that should stay in our public schools. I am asking that you commit to sustaining Governor Coopers veto of House Bill 10.
- The bill requires local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration policies that will force local governments to take on more costs. North Carolina's economy heavily relies on the contributions of immigrants, particularly in vital sectors like construction and agriculture. This bill threatens to exacerbate labor shortages, increase costs, and stunt economic growth, [potentially reducing our state's GDP by up to \\$750 million in its first year alone.](#)
- I am asking that you commit to sustaining Governor Coopers veto of House Bill 10.

Top Priorities

- **Rep. Shelly Willingham** - 252-442-8659, Shelly.Willingham@ncleg.gov (Bertie, Edgecombe, Martin) ** Edgecombe & Martin have zero v schools
- **Rep. Michael Wray** - 919-733-5662, Michael.Wray@ncleg.gov ([Halifax](#), [Northampton](#), [Warren](#))
- **Ray Pickett** - 919-733-7727, Ray.Pickett@ncleg.gov [Alleghany](#), [Ashe](#), [Watauga](#) *** Alleghany & Ashe have zero v schools
- **Stephen Ross** - 919-733-5820, Stephen.Ross@ncleg.gov, ([Alamance](#)) ***Needs more outreach
- **Rep. Kevin Crutchfield** - 919-715-2009, Kevin.Crutchfield@ncleg.gov ([Cabarrus](#), [Rowan](#)) *** Didn't show up for Vote. Needs more outreach
- **Rep. Karl Gillespie** - 919-733-5859, Karl.Gillespie@ncleg.gov, ([Cherokee](#), [Clay](#), [Graham](#), [Macon](#)) *** Needs more outreach
- **Rep Mark Pless** - 919-733-5732, Mark.Pless@ncleg.gov, ([Haywood](#), [Madison](#)) *** Needs more outreach
- **Rep. Allen Chesser** - 919-733-5802, Allen.Chesser@ncleg.gov (Nash) *** Needs more outreach

Second Tier - Priority

- Rep. John R. Bradford, III, 919-733-5828, John.Bradford@ncleg.gov ([Mecklenburg](#))

- ## Announcements

- Friday, September 20th, 2024**

Weekly Round-Up

- Today is the kickoff of the Beloved Community Center's Long March for Unity and Justice from Cullowhee (Western NC) concluding in Wilmington NC on Sunday 9/29.
- Last week, the body of 21-year-old truck driver Javion Magee was found Henderson, NC, leaning against a tree with a rope around his neck. This has drawn national attention and suspicions of lynching. Vance County Sheriff Department is calling it a suicide. Civil rights attorneys and Magee's family called suicide a premature judgment and vowed to press for full answers as the investigation continues.
- The FBI is investigating an alleged assassination attempt on Former President Donald Trump at his golf club in West Palm Beach, Florida. 58-year old Ryan Wesley Routh, from Greensboro, NC was armed with an AK-47-style rifle and was allegedly 300-500 yards away from Trump.
- Yesterday, Kentucky District Judge Kevin Mullins was shot, killed in his chambers and a sheriff charged with murder.
- Absentee Ballots start to go out in North Carolina Today after a two week delay because of a court ruling that RFK Jr. name had to be removed from the ballot and all ballots had to be reprinted.

- Yesterday, CNN broke the news that GOP Gubernatorial Candidate Mark Robinson posted on a porn site that 'slavery is not bad,' and called himself 'Black Nazi'.
- This morning in a social media post, The NC GOP stated their continued support for Mark Robinson.

NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty's [Commutation Campaign](#).

Today's Action - Writing Hand-Written Letters to Governor Cooper - Our Guest Speaker is Noel Nickle - Director of the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty. You can email her at noel@nccadp.org

Write to:

North Carolina Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Talking Points -

- Dear Governor Cooper,
- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____.
- I join others across the state in asking you to commute the sentences of all 136 individuals on death row in North Carolina by the end of your term.
- As I person of faith, I believe that _____

NC Death Penalty by the Numbers

- Fifth largest death row in the nation with 136 people
- 60% are people of color and nearly half were sentenced
- 2 times more likely to be sentenced to death if the victim of the murder is white
- 12 innocent people exonerated, 11 of them people of color
- 43 people executed since 1976
- 2006: the last year someone was executed
- 2023: the last year someone was sentenced to death.
- \$2.16 million average additional cost for each case resulting in execution vs. sentenced to life in prison.

Why Governor Cooper Must Commute

- The death penalty is rooted in racism
- The death penalty does not prevent violence or keep communities safe.
- Innocent people are sentenced to death.
- A majority of people now believe the death penalty is unfair.
- NC's death sentences are outdated, with two-thirds imposed during the 1990s under vastly different laws.
- Executions are cruel & inhuman and add more violence and grieving to the world.

- If Gov. Cooper does not act, executions could resume in NC.

Other ways you can support the NCCADP's Commutation Campaign

Postcard Campaign - You can also [go here](#) for the address and to request a postcard packet from Ricky. The fact sheet is there too and a link for people to let us know when they've sent a postcard/ letter so we can add it to our tally. [Email Ricky at ricky@nccadp.org](mailto:ricky@nccadp.org)

Walk for Commutation - especially highlighting the day and evening of October 10th. Here are several related links and I've attached both an overall walk graphic. I'll send you a basic graphic for 10/10 asap.

- [Landing page](#) for Walk for Commutation
- [Spreadsheet with details](#) for each day, including the route
- [Google form](#) to let Julia know you would like to walk or support in other ways
- [Our Events Page](#) with details about each of the evening programs (more updates coming soon)

You can [sign up for our email list](#) and follow us on our socials @NCCADP. That way they would have the latest. We'll also be doing a very short livestream each morning of the walk.

Announcements

- **North Carolina UU the Vote Pre-Election Event - Sunday, November 3rd at 7:00pm.** Join UU Justice NC and UUs across North Carolina for this special pre-election day gathering. Together, we will celebrate NC UU the Vote - the largest activation of UUs in the history of our state! We will also get grounded in our faith and values as we prepare for election results. [Register Here.](#)
- **North Carolina Abortion Rights Interfaith Phone Bank. Tuesday September 24th from 7:00 - 9:00** Join Side With Love, UU Justice NC, Pro-Choice North Carolina, and Carolina Jews for Justice for our second fall phonebank calling North Carolina voters. The future of abortion access in North Carolina is on the line this election! Even though there isn't a ballot initiative, abortion is absolutely on the ballot in NC, because those we elect will either defend and advance abortion access, or keep banning it. In August, 55 people across the country made 19,000 dials, and had 667 conversations! Help us surpass 20K dials this month! [Register Here](#)
- **Democracy NC Vote Protectors Trainings** - Vote Protectors will monitor polling places in their communities flagging, long lines, problems with curbside voting or accessibility, voter confusion, and misinformation or voter suppression. Sign up for one of four online training this month! You'll get a crash course in election law and best practices for voter engagement to ensure every voter that arrives at the polls this election is supported and their ballot is counted. Trainings will be offered on Tuesday, September 17th, Thursday, September 19th, Monday, September 23rd, and Wednesday, September 25th - all from 6:00 - 8:00pm. [Register Here.](#)

Friday, September 13th, 2024

Our 224th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Sugelema Lynch

Weekly Round-Up

- Southern California Fire has grown to over 50,000 acres and is 0% contained.
- On Monday, [Gazan authorities reported huge craters and entire families missing after Israel said it struck a humanitarian zone to target a militant center.](#)
- Wednesday marked the 23rd anniversary of 9/11 of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center Towers in NYC, the Pentagon and on Flight 93 which crashed in Shanksville, PA. 2,977 people died that day including the 343 NYC firefighters.
- This week Vice President Harris and Former President Trump faced off in a debate. Following the debate, Taylor Swift endorsed Kamala Harris in a social media post to her 283 million followers. Trump says he won't debate Harris again.
- The North Carolina Republican Party and the Republican National Committee filed a lawsuit Thursday against the State Board of Elections for allowing students at UNC-Chapel Hill to use digital IDs to vote. [Read More](#)
- On Friday, the NC Court of Appeals ordered NC election officials to remove Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s name from 2024 general election ballots and print new ones. The State Board of Elections has appealed that decision - As the Supreme Court considers the appeal, State Board staff is hard at work coding new ballots without Kennedy's name. More than 2.9 million ballots have already been printed.
- This week, after negotiations behind closed doors, the NC House and Senate passed a new version of HB 10 that will force NC sheriffs and local police departments to work with ICE agents AND includes a \$554 million expansion of private school vouchers. The bill also includes future funding increases until 2032-2033, when the voucher program will reach \$855 million per year. The governor has 9 days *from today* to veto the bill to prevent it from becoming law.

Action 1 - Ask Congregation to Sign On to Letter Calling on Gov. Cooper to Veto HB 10

Reach out to your congregation, neighboring congregations and organizations you are affiliated with to sign-on to this organizational letter requesting that Governor Cooper veto HB 10. The deadline to sign-on to the letter is Tuesday, September 17th EOD.

This week, after negotiations behind closed doors, the NC House and Senate passed a new version of HB 10 that will harm public schools and community safety.

HB 10 doubles down on funding private school tuition costs with a \$554 million expansion of private school vouchers, despite persistent questions around the program's [lack of proper financial oversight](#) and [potential for fraud](#). This funding would largely go to [wealthy families](#) who can already afford private school tuition. At the same time, this legislature fails to fund the many urgent priorities, such as our state's ongoing Leandro violations, a worsening mental health

crisis, and the looming early childhood education funding cliff. The bill also includes future funding increases until 2032-2033, when the program will reach \$855 million per year.

Furthermore, HB 10 would make our communities less safe, increase fear in immigrant communities and undermine democratically elected sheriffs. This deal requires local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration policies that will force local governments to take on more costs. North Carolina's economy heavily relies on the contributions of immigrants, particularly in vital sectors like construction and agriculture. This bill threatens to exacerbate labor shortages, increase costs, and stunt economic growth, [potentially reducing our state's GDP by up to \\$750 million in its first year alone.](#)

I am writing to ask _____ to sign-on to a joint letter to Governor Cooper asking him to veto the bill.

You can review the letter [here](#), and sign-on to the letter [here](#). The deadline to sign-on to the letter is Tuesday, September 17th EOD.

Action 2 - Tell Governor Cooper to Veto HB 10

Call Governor Roy Cooper - 919-814-2000 - Press Option 5 immediately

And email him- <https://governor.nc.gov/contact/contact-governor-cooper>

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I am calling on Governor Cooper to Veto HB 10, the bill requires local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration policies that will force local governments to take on more costs. North Carolina's economy heavily relies on the contributions of immigrants, particularly in vital sectors like construction and agriculture. This bill threatens to exacerbate labor shortages, increase costs, and stunt economic growth, [potentially reducing our state's GDP by up to \\$750 million in its first year alone.](#)
- HB 10 also includes a \$554 million expansion of private school vouchers. As a taxpayer of this state, I do not want our state to give hundreds of millions of dollars to expand funding for our state's private school vouchers program - especially because this money will disproportionately benefit wealthy families who are already sending their children to private schools.
- The money we do have should go to public schools! Our public schools face well-documented historic highs in teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, learning loss stemming from school closures during the pandemic, and shortages of nurses, counselors, and therapists in the face of unprecedented mental health challenges.

Action 3 - Call Possible Swing Votes

Jeffrey Elmore (Rep. Alexander, Wilkes) Retiring effective next week - 919-733-5935

Kristen Baker - (Rep. 82 [Cabarrus](#)) Decided not to run again, “burnt out” - 919-733-5861

Kevin Crutchfield ([Cabarrus](#), [Rowan](#)) lost primary to far right - 919-715-2009

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I am calling on _____, to vote no on a veto override of HB 10.
- This bill requires local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration policies that will force local governments to take on more costs. North Carolina's economy heavily relies on the contributions of immigrants, particularly in vital sectors like construction and agriculture. This bill threatens to exacerbate labor shortages, increase costs, and stunt economic growth, [potentially reducing our state's GDP by up to \\$750 million in its first year alone.](#)
- HB 10 also includes a \$554 million expansion of private school vouchers. As a taxpayer of this state, I do not want our state to give hundreds of millions of dollars to expand funding for our state's private school vouchers program - especially because this money will disproportionately benefit wealthy families who are already sending their children to private schools.
- The money we do have should go to public schools! Our public schools face well-documented historic highs in teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, learning loss stemming from school closures during the pandemic, and shortages of nurses, counselors, and therapists in the face of unprecedented mental health challenges.

Friday, September 6th 2024

Our 223rd Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Mary David

Weekly Round-Up

- This weekend was labor day - but it also kicked off a month of labor actions in NC!
- Civil Rights Groups Challenge RNC's, NC Republican Party's Voter Purge Request - The NC NAACP and individual voter Sailer Jones are requesting to intervene in a case to protect nearly a quarter of a million voters from the Republican National Committee's and NC Republican Party's attempt to force the State Board of Elections to remove them from the state's voter rolls on the eve of the 2024 presidential election.
- Election Season Starts Today?!? Start of Early Voting via Absentee Ballots may be delayed because of RFK Jr. Ballot Challenge to have his name removed from the ballot. Counties will begin to send out mail in ballots this afternoon unless the court of appeals intervenes.
- WRAL Report - The House and Senate are scheduled to reconvene next week. “While no agenda is set, Governor Cooper said he believes Republicans plan to expand the state's Opportunity Scholarship program. Republican lawmakers proposed a more than

\$460 million increase to funding for Opportunity Scholarships this spring, but failed to enact that proposal into law. The fact that Republicans are scheduled to return to Raleigh in the middle of campaign season could be a sign they've reached a deal on the voucher expansion, Democrats said." [Read more are WRAL.com](#)

- Mass protests continue in Israel against the war in Gaza - Thousands of Israelis have been in the streets calling on the Netanyahu government to agree to a ceasefire deal that would release the remaining hostages.
- On Wednesday, two students and two teachers at Apalachee High School in Georgia were killed in a mass school shooting. 14 year-old Christian Angulo, 14 year-old Mason Schermerhorn, 39 Richard Aspinwall, and 53 year old Christina Irimie. The shooter, 14-year old Colt Gray and his father Colin Gray are both in custody. Last night the father was charged with four counts of involuntary manslaughter, two counts of second-degree murder and eight counts of cruelty to children. Yesterday it was reported that he purchased the assault weapon for his son as a holiday gift following an incident last year when his son posted a threat online to "shoot up a middle school." This threat sparked an investigation and conversation with law enforcement, the teenager and his father.

Action 1 - Write Public Comment to OSHA about Proposed Heat Protections

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is inviting the public to comment on its proposed heat protection standard, a critical step in the process of finalizing the Standard. This step took place with almost unprecedented speed because of the years of action, testimony, and demands from workers for comprehensive protection from exposure to excessive heat on the job. But our work is not done yet. While the proposed rule has many strong protections, it may not address all of the dangers that we have experienced working in heat. And already we have seen employers and their highly-paid lobbyists and media firms claim that common-sense protections will be too expensive and too difficult for them to put into place. We must make sure that OSHA is hearing from workers. We have the numbers and the lived experience to tell OSHA not to water down the rule and to finalize strong protections as quickly as possible.

Submit Public Comment: <https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/OSHA-2021-0009-4761>

What's in the proposed rule?

OSHA has provided a fact sheet in English and in Spanish explaining key provisions, which include:

- 3) Requiring employers to develop a heat injury and illness prevention plan;
- 4) Providing two levels of protection - for when temperatures reach 80 degrees, and when they reach 90 degrees:
 - When temperatures reach 80 degrees, some requirements include providing cool drinking water and acclimatization (time for workers to get used to the high temperature);
 - When temperatures reach 90 degrees, requirements include mandatory paid rest breaks.

How can workers tell OSHA to make the rule as strong as possible and to finish it as quickly as possible?

The federal government has made it easy to share your stories and experiences with heat in the workplace, and your thoughts about the proposed heat rule with an online portal. On, X OSHA began a 120-day period for the public to share reactions and comments to the rule. It is critically important for regulators to continue to hear from people who work in the heat, indoors and outdoors, and to be reminded that worker safety during heat waves is a human right. COSH will provide an easy way to submit comments.

Below are some things to consider as you prepare to submit your comment:

- Review OSHA's fact sheets (English/Spanish) or read the text of the rule.
- Ask yourself what parts of the rule are most helpful, and what is missing something?
- Draft a written comment sharing your experience and ideas. It does not have to be long or formal.

Share your thoughts as clearly and forcefully as you can.

- Your comments can be anonymous if you don't want to use your full name. They can also be in your native language if that is not English; OSHA will get them translated.
- Be sure to include that this is a comment for OSHA and that it is for the heat rule (Docket No. OSHA-2021-0009) in your comment. This will make sure that it is filed where OSHA will see it.

Example:

- "Thank you for the opportunity to provide a comment on OSHA's draft heat protection rule, Docket No. OSHA-2021-0009. My name is _____ and I work in [your industry] in [your state].
- I appreciate that OSHA is proposing this rule because I think that it will make me and my co-workers safer as our jobs continue to get hotter. For example, [share your story about what it feels like to work in the heat, or what it feels like when you experience heat illness, or about a time that someone at your workplace got sick or maybe had to go to the emergency room due to heat].
- We have been waiting for years for rules that will give simple common-sense actions that our employers must take to ensure that at the end of a hot day we can go home to our families safe and healthy.
- Thank you for drafting this rule and I urge you to finalize and implement it as soon as possible before more workers get hurt."

Action 2 - Call Speaker Moore and Senate President Berger about School Vouchers

The House and Senate are scheduled to reconvene next week - and we need to send a loud and clear message that we do NOT want more money for private school vouchers.

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I join others across the state in urging you to not expand private school vouchers.
- As a taxpayer of this state, I do not want our state to give hundreds of millions of dollars to expand funding for our state's private school vouchers program - especially because this money will disproportionately benefit wealthy families who are already sending their children to private schools.
- Moreover *** Feel free to add a specific concern about private schools from [the list below](#).
- The money we do have should go to public schools! Our public schools face well-documented historic highs in teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, learning loss stemming from school closures during the pandemic, and shortages of nurses, counselors, and therapists in the face of unprecedented mental health challenges.

Vouchers - The Numbers *** Capitol Broadcasting Opinion

- Academic Standards - Only 8.5 percent of the private schools receiving vouchers report standardized testing scores on their websites. Only 2 percent of private schools require their teachers to be certified by the state
- Religious - 90 percent of the top voucher-receiving schools are religious / 68 percent have religious requirements for admission.
- LGBTQ - 41 percent of the top voucher-receiving schools have explicit exclusions for LGBTQ students. Many schools include a provision in their handbook that states that "the school reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to refuse admission to an applicant" who "practices or promotes a homosexual lifestyle or alternative gender identity, or otherwise has the inability to support the moral principles of the school."
- Students with Disabilities: 38 percent of these schools have exclusions for students with disabilities.

Action 3 - Call Senator Thom Tillis about Gun Violence Prevention.

Call Sen. Thom Tillis - 202-224-6342

Basic Script:

- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____ and a person of faith.
- I am calling because I am heartbroken by this week's mass school shooting in Georgia that killed four people.
- First, I want to thank Sen. Tillis for his leadership within the 20-person bi-partisan group of Senators that helped pass a law gun safety enhancing background checks in 2022. But, we have more work to do!
- I join others across the state in the country in calling on Congress to take further steps to prevent gun violence.
- May I ask when Sen. Tillis is doing to further advance gun safety?

Recent History - June 2022 - Federal Gun Safety Legislation - 20-person bi-partisan group of Senators (including NC's Senators Tillis and Burr) announced a deal on a narrow set of gun safety measures that "includes enhanced background checks to give authorities time to check the juvenile and mental health records of any prospective gun buyer under the age of 21 and a provision that would, for the first time, extend to dating partners a prohibition on domestic abusers having guns.

Red Wine and Blue - [Preventing Gun Violence](#) September 5, 2024

Every day, more than 120 Americans are killed with guns and more than 200 are shot and wounded.¹ **Guns are the leading cause of death for American children and teens.**² It's a shocking statistic and a uniquely American problem. How much of this can our hearts take? Most of us agree, we can't let this stand. The term "gun violence" quickly brings to mind the horrors of mass shootings in our communities and schools like Apalachee, but it also includes other violent crime, domestic violence, suicide, and unintentional shootings. Gun violence can impact any of us anywhere at any time. That's why the majority of Americans, regardless of political party or whether they own a gun or not, support policies that help reduce gun violence.³ We all want to keep our families and our communities safe.

To do so, **we need a wide range of solutions** to tackle every cause of gun violence. To that end, the Biden-Harris administration has invested \$30 billion in gun violence prevention efforts and have already:

- Passed the **Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA)**, the most significant gun violence prevention legislation in 30 years.
- Signed dozens of executive orders that address both the supply of guns and the behavioral causes of gun violence.
- Created the first ever **White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP)**, overseen by Vice President Kamala Harris.

The Suburban Women Problem podcast recently spoke with the OGVP's director, Stefanie Feldman, and deputy director, Greg Jackson, who told us just some of the things these historic efforts are accomplishing so far:

- **Promoting and incentivizing secure gun storage.** Secure storage is vital to protecting our families because:
 - 30 million children live in homes with firearms in the U.S. – nearly 5 million of those in homes where guns are loaded and unlocked.⁴
 - 76% of school shootings are committed with guns from the shooter's home.⁵
 - 80% of youth suicides by gun are committed using guns from the home.⁵
 - 76% of unintentional shootings of children are committed using unsecured guns found in homes.⁵
- **Providing resources and funding to schools for youth mental health initiatives** through the Stop School Violence Act, the American Rescue Plan and the BSCA.

- Expanding the federal definition of who is a gun dealer. Now, previously unlicensed private sellers (online and at gun shows) have to get licensed like traditional gun stores and conduct background checks on gun buyers. **This is the largest expansion of the background check system in 30 years and is keeping guns out of the hands of youth, felons, domestic abusers, and other people who may be a risk to themselves or others.**
- **Creating the Safer States Agenda** for state legislatures which outlines 15 different measures individual states can take to reduce gun violence — measures like Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPO), also known as “red flag” laws — and providing model legislation for states to use.

This is only the beginning of the bipartisan, common sense work that can be done to reduce gun violence. We obviously need more solutions to help make our kids, families, and communities safer. We owe it to the victims and survivors of yesterday’s horrific mass shooting at Apalachee High School to keep this momentum going to prevent future tragedies.

-
1. [Gun Violence in America](#), Everytown, May 7, 2024.
 2. [Firearms are the leading cause of death for American children and teens](#), Everytown, May 7, 2024.
 3. [National Survey of Gun Policy, 2023 Results](#), Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Center for Gun Violence Solutions, July 21, 2023.
 4. [Unintentional Firearm Injury Deaths Among Children and Adolescents Aged 0–17 Years — National Violent Death Reporting System, United States, 2003–2021](#), CDC, December 15, 2023.
 5. [White House Announces New Actions to Promote Safe Storage of Firearms](#), whitehouse.gov, January 25, 2024.

Announcements

- Canvass with North Carolina Asian Americans Together. Saturday, September 14th we will partner with NCAAT and the Charlotte Hornets! [Register here!](#)
- Abortion Rights Interfaith Phone Banks - Join Side With Love, UU Justice NC, Pro-Choice North Carolina, and Carolina Jews for Justice for this three-part phonebank series calling North Carolina voters. The future of abortion access in North Carolina is on the line this election, and people of faith are coming together to send a powerful message that reproductive rights are aligned with our values! Let’s get on the phones and turn-out pro abortion voters this fall!
- Democracy NC Vote Protectors - Vote Protectors are volunteers who will monitor polling places in their communities flagging, long lines, problems with curbside voting or accessibility, voter confusion, and misinformation or voter suppression. Tue, Sep 17, 6:00pm–8:00pm, Thur, Sep 19, 6:00pm–8:00, Mon, Sep 23, 6:00pm–8:00, Wed, Sep 25, 6:00pm–8:00pm. [Register Here](#)

- Election Rapid Response Safety Network - This election season, people of faith have the opportunity to contribute to a state-wide de-escalation network helping to ensure that every North Carolinian experiences safety at the polls. Volunteers will be trained to respond to reports of intimidation and harassment during early voting and on election day using de-escalation tactics. In short, when things get heated at the polls, we provide a calm and grounded presence to help bring down the temperature. [Register Here](#)
- Rides to the Polls - Details Coming Soon!
- Long March for Unity and Freedom - From September 20-29, we will traverse North Carolina, from Cullowhee to Wilmington, aiming to amplify the voices of all North Carolinians through community organizing, voting initiatives, grassroots education, and art. Co-Executive Directors Joyce Hobson Johnson and Rev. Nelson Johnson emphasizes our nation's crossroads: continue toward authoritarianism or expand democracy with greater freedom and wealth distribution. <https://belovedcommunitycenter.org/news/the-long-march/>
- Duke Respect Durham Event - September 14th
- Fellowship of Reconciliation Oct. 5 2024 Zoom A summit on guns, race and America's Love Affair with Killing.

Friday, August 30th 2024

Our 222nd Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Linda and Jack Smith!

Today we will hand write letters to Sen. Berger, Speaker Moore and our own State Representative & Senator - calling on them to allocate \$300 million in this year's state budget for Childcare Funding.

Weekly Round-Up

- Robert F. Kennedy Jr. suspended his presidential bid this week, and has joined the Trump campaign. He will remain on the ballot in North Carolina.
- With school back in session, pro-Palestinian student protests have begun again at UNC-Chapel Hill and other universities - calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and an end to U.S. support for Israel. Protests have remained peaceful, while concerns persist over potential provocations by counter-protesters.
- The Israeli military rescued a man taken hostage in the Hamas-led attacks on Oct. 7 during an operation in the Gaza Strip.
- Republican gubernatorial candidate Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson and state superintendent hopeful Michele Morrow are both facing criticism after they voiced support for an idea that would take more than \$1.5 billion out of the state's education coffers. They also said they support the Project 2025 plan to abolish US Department of Education
- This weekend marks Labor Day - but in NC it kicks off Labor Month!
- Shout out to the 78 people who joined us on Tuesday night for our first National Abortion Rights Interfaith Phone Bank in partnership with UU the Vote, Pro-Choice NC and

Carolina Jews for Justice. We made **19,000 dials, and had 667 conversations!** We have two more national phone banks scheduled for September 24th and October 8th.

Action 1 - Hand write letters to Sen. Berger, Speaker Moore and our own State Representative & Senator - calling on them to allocate \$300 million in this year's state budget for Childcare Funding.

Mail to-

(You can address your Letter - Dear Senate President Berger)
Senate President Pro Tempore - Phil Berger
16 West Jones Street, Rm. 2007
Raleigh, NC 27601

(You can address your Letter - Dear Speaker Moore)
Speaker of the House - Tim Moore
16 West Jones Street, Rm. 2304
Raleigh, NC 27601

Search for your State Rep & Senators Addresses [Here](#)

As it stands, both the NC House and Senate budgets reportedly have 135 million allocated in the budget for childcare stabilization grants. Additionally, we won 65.5 million in an emergency allocation before the funding cliff occurred at the end of June. But this is not enough. We need to continue to call on the leaders of the General Assembly to invest 300 million into the budget.

Talking Points -

- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____.
- Thank you for working to allocate 65.5 million in emergency funding before the end of June. But this is not enough.
- I join others across the state in calling on Senator Berger and Speaker Moore to invest at least 300 million dollars in the state budget.
- Childcare funding is good for North Carolina families and businesses and is essential for a thriving economy / Access to high-quality child care is essential for children's development and for the growth of a healthy, competitive workforce.
- If we fail to do this, it will have a massive impact on our state's economy that will far outweigh the cost of the investment. In short - We can afford to do this, but we can't afford not to do this!
- Please get this done for the people of North Carolina. We are counting on them!
- Thank you again for taking the time to listen to my concerns.
- This summer, the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation](#) released a report citing the economic impact of the lack of access to childcare in North Carolina. The report

estimates that breakdowns in the childcare system are costing North Carolina \$5.65 billion in lost economic activity every year.

- If the General Assembly fails to appropriate at least 300 million dollars in emergency it will have an astronomical impact on North Carolina families and business. For many, it will mean an increased cost of nearly \$100 a week for childcare and many families will simply not be able to afford that. What options does this leave for our children? Will the parents be able to work?"

Action 2 - Sign Petition to Increase the NC Teacher Pay Raise to 5% to keep up with inflation and truly give them a raise. ***

Tell the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) that you want at least a 5% pay raise for all North Carolina public school teachers and staff. It is critical to act NOW because the NCGA will meet for only a few days starting September 9th.

The League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg has advocated for ensuring that there is an effective teacher in every classroom. The responsibility to fund teacher's salaries rests with our state legislature, which has not done enough to support teachers. Compared to other states North Carolina currently ranks 38th in average teacher pay, 42nd for beginning teacher pay, and 49th in funding based on state wealth.

The current state budget includes an average raise for teachers and staff of 3.0% which falls below the North Carolina inflation rate of 3.8%. Effectively, this means that most teachers across the state will have a reduction in pay when accounting for inflation.

Sign Petition Here - <https://www.change.org/p/stop-the-north-carolina-teacher-pay-cut>

Action 3 - Help Fight Back Against a 340B 'Rebate Program'

The 340B drug discount program is crucial to Community Health Centers (CHCs) and our mission to provide affordable healthcare to underserved communities, but it has faced numerous attacks from drugmakers that have restricted access to affordable medications for patients in rural areas and chipped away at the savings that CHCs rely on to expand and sustain services in underserved communities.

Just last week, Johnson & Johnson announced a major policy shift, transforming the 340B program from a discount model to a rebate model for hospitals. If this change extends to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and is adopted by other manufacturers, it will severely impact our ability to provide comprehensive care. CHCs cannot afford to pay full price for medications upfront and wait for a rebate, which could lead to significant reductions in access to care.

The growing number and complexity of restrictions on the 340B program underscore the urgent need for Congressional intervention. We need Congress to enact bipartisan reform to protect access to affordable medications and sustain the vital funding that CHCs depend on.

Please [fill out this form - https://ncchca.quorum.us/campaign/69018/](https://ncchca.quorum.us/campaign/69018/) to contact your representatives today and ask for their leadership in securing comprehensive reform for the 340B program. Your voice is essential in ensuring that CHCs can continue to deliver the affordable, comprehensive care that our communities depend on.

Action 4 - Email local electeds about ARPA obligation funds (or Follow-Up)

***** Send Responses to Mel Umbarger (mel@ncbudget.org)**

We need help collecting data from our local government officials about how much ARPA money has been obligated, and how much counties stand to lose by Dec. 31 if they don't obligate the funds.

https://ncbudget.org/local_funding_action/

- Email your local elected officials using the link above
- Follow Up if you don't get a response
- Add any information you get to the Google form here:
<https://forms.gle/3xTna9pomqPSgPRk9> or forward to info@ncbudget.org

Counties we have:

- Chatham
- Dare
- Mecklenburg
- Rowan
- Henderson

Counties emailed but no response yet:

- Durham (tons)
- Wake (tons!)
- Alamance
- Brunswick
- Buncombe
- Catawba
- Cherokee
- Cumberland
- Edgecombe
- Forsyth
- Franklin
- Gaston

- Guilford
- Haywood
- Johnston
- Lenoir
- Lincoln
- Moore
- Nash
- New Hanover
- Orange County
- Person
- Randolph
- Stokes
- Transylvania
- Union

Blog where you can read more about this deadline and what it could mean for NC communities:
<https://ncbudget.org/critical-american-rescue-plan-funds-deadline-approaching-for-nc-local-governments/>

Last but not least, send some gratitude to someone in your life who is doing the work of creating more love, care and justice in the world. Send a text, make a phone call, send an email, etc. It's the best way to start your weekend! Never underestimate the power of gratitude!

Announcements

- **North Carolina UUA Climate Justice Pre-Revival Huddle with UUA's Rachel MsLivy** - Tuesday, September 3rd at 7:00pm. For Congregational Climate Justice Leaders who are participating in the UUA's Climate Justice Revival - Reimagine Together From an Extractive Age to a New Era - September 28th - 29th. [Register Here](#)
- **NC Healthcare Navigator Recruitment Session. Thursday, September 19th at 7:00pm.** With Medicaid Expansion finally rolling out this past December, more North Carolinians than ever before qualify for affordable health insurance. As a volunteer Health Insurance Navigator, you can help make sure that the promise of universal access to healthcare is fulfilled in our state. Attend this informational session to hear about the difference Navigators make and to learn how you can get involved in this meaningful work. [Register Here](#)
- Non-partisan door-to-door canvasses with North Carolina Asian Americans Together
- **Saturday, September 14th** we will partner with NCAAT and the Charlotte Hornets! [Register here!](#)
- **Long March for Unity and Freedom** - From September 20-29, we will traverse North Carolina, from Cullowhee to Wilmington, aiming to amplify the voices of all North Carolinians through community organizing, voting initiatives, grassroots education, and art. Co-Executive Directors Joyce Hobson Johnson and Rev. Nelson Johnson emphasize our nation's crossroads: continue toward authoritarianism or expand

democracy with greater freedom and wealth
distribution. <https://belovedcommunitycenter.org/news/the-long-march/>

Friday August 23 -

This morning, we will be joined by Mel Umbarger, Communications Manager of NC Budget & Tax Center. She will be giving a quick update on tax cuts and actions by the NC General Assembly this past session, as well as their upcoming election guide.

Weekly Round-Up

- The Democratic National Convention wrapped up last night in Chicago.
- Donald Trump and JD Vance were in Asheboro, NC for a rally on Wednesday,
- New NYTimes / Siena Poll shows that Kamala Harris has put Four Sun Belt States Back in Play including North Carolina.
- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Tuesday Israel has agreed to withdrawals of IDF forces from Gaza that are laid out in the [recent mediators' proposal](#) to get closer to a ceasefire agreement with Hamas.
- With the new academic year upon us pro-Palestinian student protester have begun again and at UNC-Chapel Hill.
- Back to School Season means back to Supplies-Drives! Of course we need to make sure our kids have what they need to succeed this year - but we must also talk about the state's failure to adequately fund public schools. School Supplies Drives, and fundraisers for teachers to buy basic classroom materials should not be necessary.

Today's Actions

1. Petition: Demand that the NC General Assembly choose our communities over corporations

<https://ncbudget.org/choosecommunities/>

- Sign the petition
- Share the petition with at least 10 people in your network
- Flyers to hand out with link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DB-J_8r_WaaZF6_vghuzoenIH_831L_H/view?usp=drive_link

2. Email local electeds about ARPA obligation funds

We need help collecting data from our local government officials about how much ARPA money has been obligated, and how much counties stand to lose by Dec. 31 if they don't obligate the funds.

https://ncbudget.org/local_funding_action/

- Email your local elected officials using the link above
- Follow Up if you don't get a response
- Add any information you get to the Google form here:
<https://forms.gle/3xTna9pomqPSgPRk9> or forward to info@ncbudget.org

Counties we have:

- Chatham
- Dare
- Mecklenberg

Counties emailed but no response yet:

- Durham (tons)
- Wake (tons!)
- Alamance
- Brunswick
- Buncombe
- Catawba
- Cherokee
- Cumberland
- Edgecombe
- Forsyth
- Franklin
- Gaston
- Guilford
- Haywood
- Henderson
- Johnston
- Lenoir
- Lincoln
- Moore
- Nash
- New Hanover
- Orange County
- Person
- Randolph
- Stokes
- Transylvania
- Union

Blog where you can read more about this deadline and what it could mean for NC communities:
<https://ncbudget.org/critical-american-rescue-plan-funds-deadline-approaching-for-nc-local-governments/>

3. Fill out and share Community Priority Survey

<https://ncbudget.org/2024-community-priority-survey/>

- Survey takes about 10 minutes to fully fill out
- Please share with your networks to make sure we capture data from your communities
- Printable surveys available:
 - Surveys to print:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/10j9yHKliqNiA7LWAEzXx1SJ2nGSwb5F3/view?usp=drive_link
 - Large print surveys to print:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FEy5RLkf5CzpolHQhz6wZpVwF7Fvdcir/view?usp=sharing>

More resources

- [Corporate tax cuts worsen racial inequality in North Carolina and US](#)
- [You're paying a lot more for diapers while NC leaders keep giving corporations a free ride](#)
- [Budget report: Locking in more tax cuts for the wealthy at the expense of everyday North Carolinians](#)
- [Lowering the income tax limit in the state constitution would lock future North Carolinians into today's bad tax policy](#)
- [For a lasting victory on child-care funding in NC, we need equitable tax policy](#)

If we have time! Continue to Call on General Assembly Leadership with budget at least 300 Million to Childcare Facilities

As it stands, both the NC House and Senate budgets reportedly have 135 million allocated in the budget for childcare stabilization grants. Additionally, we won 65.5 million in an emergency allocation before the funding cliff occurred at the end of June. But this is not enough. We need to continue to call on the leaders of the General Assembly to invest 300 million into the budget.

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative & Senator - [Find their Contact Info Here](#)

Basic Script:

- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____.
- I join others across the state in calling on Senator Berger and Speaker Moore to invest at least 300 million dollars in the state budget.

- Childcare funding is good for North Carolina families and businesses and is essential for a thriving economy.
- If we fail to do this, it will have a massive impact on our state's economy that will far outweigh the cost of the investment. In short - We can afford to do this, but we can't afford not to do this!
- Please get this done for the people of North Carolina. We are counting on them!
- Thank you again for taking the time to listen to my concerns.

Announcements

- **North Carolina UUA Climate Justice Pre-Revival Huddle with UUA's Rachel MsLivy** - Tuesday, September 3rd at 7:00pm. For Congregational Climate Justice Leaders who are participating in the UUA's Climate Justice Revival - Reimagine Together From an Extractive Age to a New Era - September 28th - 29th. [Register Here](#)
- **NC Healthcare Navigator Recruitment Session. Thursday, September 19th at 7:00pm.** With Medicaid Expansion finally rolling out this past December, more North Carolinians than ever before qualify for affordable health insurance. As a volunteer Health Insurance Navigator, you can help make sure that the promise of universal access to healthcare is fulfilled in our state. Attend this informational session to hear about the difference Navigators make and to learn how you can get involved in this meaningful work. [Register Here](#)
- **North Carolina Abortion Rights Interfaith Phone Bank.** Join Side With Love, UU Justice NC, Pro-Choice North Carolina, and Carolina Jews for Justice for this three-part phonebank series calling North Carolina voters.
 - Tuesday August 27th from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
 - Tuesday September 24th from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
 - Tuesday 10/8 from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)

Friday August 16th - You Can Vote & NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty

Weekly Round-Up

- A BIG WIN!!! All 99 NC hospitals (Including Duke, UNC and Atrium Hospital Systems) have signed on to Gov. Cooper's Medical Debt Relief Program! This initiative will relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians, cap interest rates on medical debt, provide generous discounts on hospital prices to families with certain incomes, automatically enroll people into charity care, and prohibit selling debt to collectors.
- This week, The News & Observer reported - "Newly released audio shows Michele Morrow, the Republican nominee to lead North Carolina's public schools, wants Bible classes offered in every middle school and high school in the state." [Read more here](#)
- "An Israeli airstrike early Saturday hit a school compound in northern Gaza where displaced Palestinians were sheltering, killing dozens of people, according to Gazan officials." - [NY Times](#)

- New NYTimes / Siena Poll shows that [Kamala Harris leads Donald Trump in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin](#).
- Democratic National Convention starts Monday.
- Trump was in Asheville on Wednesday to talk about the economy, Kamala Harris is in Raleigh today to do the same.

This morning, we will be joined by **Caitlin Metzguer, Deputy Director of [You Can Vote](#)**. She will be speaking about new voting resources available to distribute in your local community as well as some upcoming phone banks to North Carolinians who have pledged to vote!

Materials Caitlin Referenced!

- <https://www.youcanvote.org/handouts>
- <https://www.youcanvote.org/earlyvoting>
- <https://www.ncsbe.gov/voting/upcoming-election/judicial-voter-guide-2024-general-election>

We will also be joined by **Noel Nickle**, Executive Director of the [NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty](#). She will tell us about their event "Time's Running Out: Commute Death Row!" this Sunday, August 18th in downtown Raleigh. This annual event marks the anniversary of the last execution in NC, but it has even more significance this year as we're in the final months of the Commutation Campaign asking Gov. Cooper to commute all death sentences before he leaves office.

Register at bit.ly/NCCADPTimesRunningOut

Today's Action - Continue to Call on General Assembly Leadership with budget at least 300 Million to Childcare Facilities

As it stands, both the NC House and Senate budgets reportedly have 135 million allocated in the budget for childcare stabilization grants. Additionally, we won 65.5 million in an emergency allocation before the funding cliff occurred at the end of June. But this is not enough. We need to continue to call on the leaders of the General Assembly to invest 300 million into the budget.

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative & Senator - [Find their Contact Info Here](#)

Basic Script:

- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____.
- I join others across the state in calling on Senator Berger and Speaker Moore to invest at least 300 million dollars in the state budget.
- Childcare funding is good for North Carolina families and businesses and is essential for a thriving economy.

- If we fail to do this, it will have a massive impact on our state's economy that will far outweigh the cost of the investment. In short - We can afford to do this, but we can't afford not to do this!
- Please get this done for the people of North Carolina. We are counting on them!
- Thank you again for taking the time to listen to my concerns.

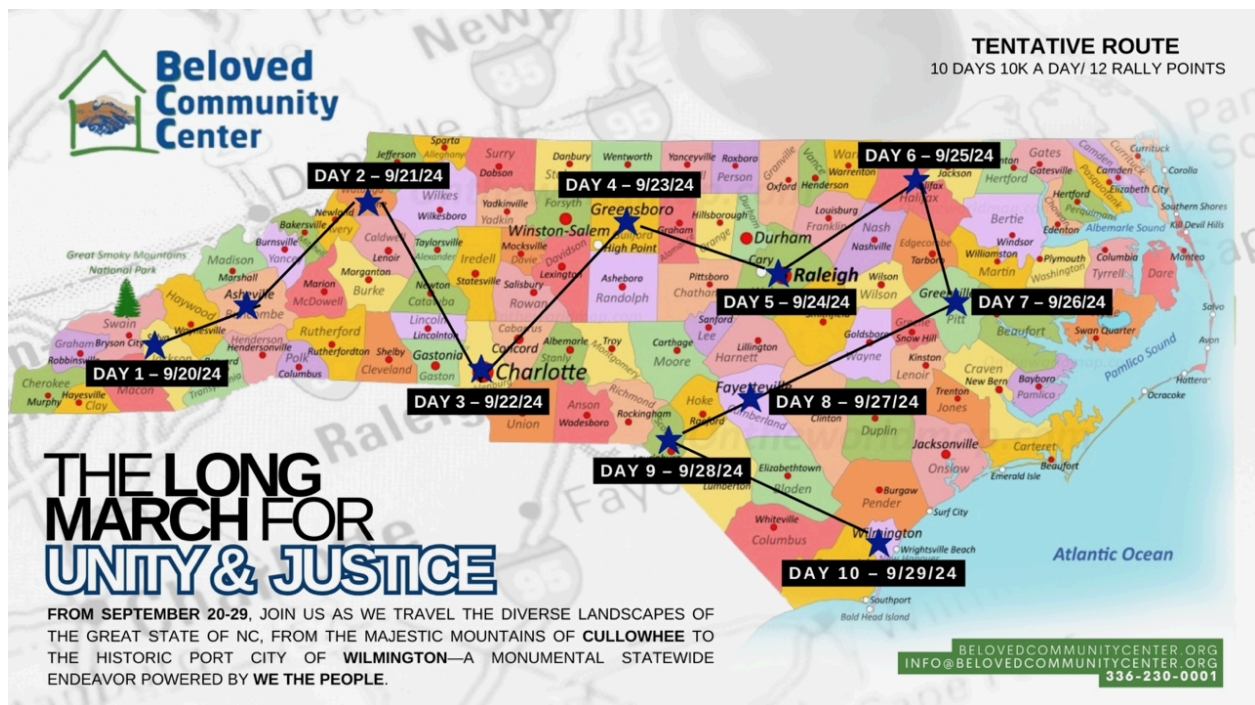
Announcements

- **This Sunday, August 18th at 3:30 in downtown Raleigh.** "Time's Running Out: Commute Death Row!" This annual event marks the anniversary of the last execution in NC, but it has even more significance this year as we're in the final months of the Commutation Campaign asking Gov. Cooper to commute all death sentences before he leaves office. Register at bit.ly/NCCADPTimesRunningOut
- **Not Another Bomb:** Sunday August 18th from 10:00am - 12:00pm at Durham Central Park 501 Foster St, Durham <https://www.mobilize.us/nab/event/652399/>
- **North Carolina UUA Climate Justice Pre-Revival Huddle with UUA's Rachel MsLivy** - Tuesday, September 3rd at 7:00pm. For Congregational Climate Justice Leaders who are participating in the UUA's Climate Justice Revival - Reimagine Together From an Extractive Age to a New Era - September 28th - 29th. [Register Here](#)
- **NC Healthcare Navigator Recruitment Session. Thursday, September 19th at 7:00pm.** With Medicaid Expansion finally rolling out this past December, more North Carolinians than ever before qualify for affordable health insurance. As a volunteer Health Insurance Navigator, you can help make sure that the promise of universal access to healthcare is fulfilled in our state. Attend this informational session to hear about the difference Navigators make and to learn how you can get involved in this meaningful work. [Register Here](#)
- **North Carolina Abortion Rights Interfaith Phone Bank.** Join Side With Love, UU Justice NC, Pro-Choice North Carolina, and Carolina Jews for Justice for this three-part phonebank series calling North Carolina voters.
 - Tuesday August 27th from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
 - Tuesday September 24th from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
 - Tuesday 10/8 from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
- Join Next Friday at 11:00 when our special guest will be the NC Budget & Tax Center

Friday August 9th - The Long March for Unity

***Our 219th gathering of Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by Rachel McManus

This morning, the [Beloved Community Center](#) will join us to talk about the Long March for Unity & Justice. From September 20-29, this march will traverse North Carolina, from Cullowhee to Wilmington, aiming to amplify the voices of all North Carolinians through community organizing, voting initiatives, grassroots education, and art. [Register Here!](#)



We will also be joined by our friends from the [NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty](#). They will be speaking to us about their event "Time's Running Out: Commute Death Row!" on Sunday, August 18th in downtown Raleigh. This is their annual event marking the anniversary of the last execution in NC, but it has even more significance this year as we're in the final months of the Commutation Campaign asking Gov. Cooper to commute all death sentences before he leaves office.

Weekly Round-Up

- 10 Year Anniversary of the Murder of Michael Brown. On August 9, 2014, 18-year-old Michael Brown was shot and killed by police officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri.
- Last weekend, Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson changed his position on abortion law in a new commercial saying that he now "stands by our current law, and it provides common-sense exceptions for the life of the mother, incest and rape. Which gives help to mothers and stops cruel late-term abortions." 🤔 Until now he has been a vocal supporter of a six-week "heart-beat bill" saying that abortion is "about killing the child because you weren't responsible enough to keep your skirt down."
- On Monday, Kamala Harris announced that Minnesota Governor Tim Walz is her pick to be the Democratic VP nominee.
- Vice President Harris and Former President Donald Trump have agreed to a debate on Sept. 10 on ABC.
- Following last week's assassination of Hamas' top leader in Iran there is fear of retaliation against Israel by Iran. There is also a ceasefire deal on the table.

Action 1 - Send Message to NC Hospital CEOs about Medical Debt!

Last month, the Governor's Office and the NC Department of Health and Human Services [announced a groundbreaking, win-win initiative](#) to relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians, cap interest rates on medical debt, provide generous discounts on hospital prices to families with certain incomes, automatically enroll people into charity care, and prohibit selling debt to collectors. But this plan can only move forward if hospitals agree to participate. By choosing to participate, hospitals could boost their bottom line by drawing down federal dollars while simultaneously protecting patients from medical debt.

Step 1 - [Use this NC Justice Center tool](#) to urge hospital CEOs to help North Carolinians with Medical Debt! TIME SENSITIVE - Deadline is Today.

Step 2 - Submit a public comment to the Consumer Protection Bureau about [their proposal](#) to take medical debt off of credit reports by August 12th. [Click on this link to submit comments](#) to the Consumer Protection Bureau:

Sample Language for Comment:

My name is _____ and I live in _____

I support the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau proposal to ban medical bills from credit reports, which will help the [millions of individuals who are](#) unfairly burdened by medical debt on their credit reports. According to the Urban Institute, 1 out of every 5 adults in North Carolina has medical debt in collections. In North Carolina's communities of color, this burden rises to 1 out of every 4 adults.

<https://apps.urban.org/features/debt-interactive-map/?type=medical&variable=medcoll&state=37>

The CFPB's proposed rule would have an enormous impact on individuals with low incomes in North Carolina and will particularly aid Black, Latino, and Native American households in the state who are disproportionately saddled with medical debt. These individuals and households should not be penalized with higher costs for credit—or being identified as a risk by lenders, landlords, and employers—simply because they experienced a health issue that resulted in medical debt they cannot afford.

Medical debt is also not predictive of creditworthiness. The CFPB's research in both the NPRM and [earlier reports](#) indicate that medical debt on credit reports does not provide added predictiveness for credit underwriting. That is why one of the two major credit scoring providers (VantageScore) stopped [considering medical debt](#) in its latest model, citing “minimal effects on predictive performance.”

<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/data-research/research-reports/data-point-medical-debt-and-credit-scores/>

<https://www.vantagescore.com/faq/what-was-the-rationale-for-removing-medical-debt-from-vantagescore-4-0/>

Step 3 - Sign up to help us send out our [Health Policy Candidate Questionnaire](#) to your congressional candidates. You [can sign up here](#) to send the email, and we will have a toolkit linked at the top of that page in the coming days.

Action 2 - Continue to Call on General Assembly Leadership with budget at least 300 Million to Childcare Facilities

As it stands, both the NC House and Senate budgets reportedly have 135 million allocated in the budget for childcare stabilization grants. Additionally, we won 65.5 million in an emergency allocation before the funding cliff occurred at the end of June. But this is not enough. We need to continue to call on the leaders of the General Assembly to invest 300 million into the budget.

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative & Senator - [Find their Contact Info Here](#)

Basic Script:

- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____.
- I join others across the state in calling on Senator Berger and Speaker Moore to invest at least 300 million dollars in the state budget.
- Childcare funding is good for North Carolina families and businesses and is essential for a thriving economy.
- If we fail to do this, it will have a massive impact on our state's economy that will far outweigh the cost of the investment. In short - We can afford to do this, but we can't afford not to do this!
- Please get this done for the people of North Carolina. We are counting on them!
- Thank you again for taking the time to listen to my concerns.

Announcements

This Sunday, August 11th at 10:00am. Rev. Lisa will be preaching at the Eno River UU Fellowship in Durham (4907 Garrett Rd, Durham, NC 27707)

[DownHome North Carolina's Revival](#)

- **Triangle - Saturday, August 10th** from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Monument of Faith Church in Durham (900 Simmons St) [Register Here](#). (Rev. Lisa and Abby Lublin from Carolina Jews for Justice will be speaking!)

- **Mecklenburg - Saturday, August 17th** from 10am – 2pm at C N Jenkins Memorial Presbyterian Church (1421 Statesville Ave) [Register Here](#)
- **Eastern NC Saturday, September 7th** from 10am – 2pm. Rocky Mount Area - Location TBD. [Register Here](#)

Friday August 2nd - North Carolina's Abortion Story.

This week, we will be joined by Samantha Salkin, Reproductive Freedom Advocacy Consultant with the ACLU of North Carolina. She will share the brand new short documentary, [North Carolina's Abortion Story](#), which explores the history of abortion in our state, the modern movement for reproductive justice, and the impact of abortion bans on patients and providers. We will also preview this fall's Abortion Rights Interfaith Phonebank in partnership with National UU the Vote, Pro-Choice NC and Carolina Jews for Justice.

The sign-up link for the film is <https://www.acluofnorthcarolina.org/film>. I've also attached a one-pager with more details on what hosting a screening could look like,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16bO-1tQUvpGM4L-MxDkLo9dIcd2RvXKo/view?usp=sharing>

You can contact either Sammy or me, a
Sammy jmatthews@acluofnc.org or ssalkin@acluofnc.org.

Weekly Round Up!

- Opening Video - [Simone Biles' Winning Floor Routine](#) - / [New Zealand Women's Rugby Sevens performs the Haka](#) after winning Olympic Gold Medal
- Yesterday, A multicountry prisoner swap freed the Wall Street Journal reporter and at least one other American, the former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan, in the most far-reaching exchange between Moscow and the West in decades.
- On Monday, President Biden outlined a proposal to reform the Supreme Court that included an 18-year term limit and an enforceable ethics code for the justices. The proposal would require congressional approval and faces an uphill battle.
- NC Gov. Roy Cooper takes himself out of the running for Harris. We expect Harris' VP announcement soon.
- On Wednesday, Donald Trump questioned Kamala Harris's racial identity during an appearance at the National Association of Black Journalists conference.
- A federal judge struck down a provision of North Carolina's new abortion law that had required physicians prescribing medication abortions to document the existence of a pregnancy within the uterus during the early stages of gestation. But Judge Eagles ruled to keep a second provision in place that required anyone trying to terminate their pregnancy after 12 weeks to have the procedure in a hospital. That provision addresses abortions taking place under one of the law's exceptions for rape and incest, fetal anomalies, or if "a qualified physician determines there exists a medical emergency."
[Read more here.](#)

The Majority of North Carolinians Want Abortion Rights! What Can We Do to Get Out the Pro-Abortion Vote?

North Carolina Abortion Rights Interfaith Phone Bank. Join Side With Love, UU Justice NC, Pro-Choice North Carolina, and Carolina Jews for Justice for this three-part phonebank series calling North Carolina voters. The future of abortion access in North Carolina is on the line this election! Even though there isn't a ballot initiative, abortion is *absolutely* on the ballot in NC, because those we elect will either defend and advance abortion access, or keep banning it. People of faith are coming together to send a powerful message that reproductive rights are aligned with our values, so let's get on the phones and turn-out pro abortion voters this fall!

- Tuesday August 27th from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
- Tuesday September 24th from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)
- Tuesday 10/8 from 7:00 - 9:00 - [Register Here](#)

DownHome North Carolina's Revival

- **Triad - Saturday, August 3rd** from 10am - 2pm at St. Stephen UCC Church in Greensboro. (1000 Gorrell St.) [Register Here.](#)
- **Triangle - Saturday, August 10th** from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Monument of Faith Church in Durham (900 Simmons St) [Register Here.](#)
- **Mecklenburg - Saturday, August 17th** from 10am – 2pm at C N Jenkins Memorial Presbyterian Church (1421 Statesville Ave) [Register Here](#)
- **Eastern NC Saturday, September 7th** from 10am – 2pm. Rocky Mount Area - Location TBD. [Register Here](#)

Other Announcements

- This Sunday, August 4th at 10:00am. Rev. Lisa will be preaching at the UU Community of Charlotte Sermon Title - Power & Prophecy – The Stories That Shape Our Movement.

Friday, July 26th - Understanding Project 2025

Our 217th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Beverly Wedda!

This morning, we will do a deep dive into Project 2025, a plan which could "destroy civil rights, reproductive freedom and turn our country towards extremist Christian Nationalism". We are excited to show and discuss Red Wine & Blue's recent webinar - [Heather Cox Richardson Talks Project 2025.](#)

Weekly Round Up!

- On Sunday, President Biden announced that he would not seek re-election and voiced his support for VP Kamala Harris to be the Democratic Party's nominee for President.

- Soon after, Vice President Kamala Harris declared her intention to “earn and win” the Democratic nomination. In the first 24 hours of her campaign she received a groundswell of donations, endorsements and secured nearly all the delegates needed to secure the nomination.
- On Wednesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was invited to speak to a joint meeting of Congress and forcefully defended Israel’s military campaign in Gaza. Top democrats boycotted the event and thousands protested in DC.
- In a statement this week, President Joe Biden called for justice for Sonya Massey, the 36-year-old Black woman who was murdered by the Illinois police earlier this month after calling 911 for help. The sheriff’s deputy who was charged with [fatally shooting](#) worked at six law enforcement agencies in four years. This has renewed the call from Biden and others for Congress to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act now.
- The Olympics begin today!

Red Wine & Blue’s Project 2025 Resources.

Project 2025 is the far-right extremists’ vision for America. It is frighteningly anti-democratic and goes against what the vast majority of Americans want for our country — so we are making sure you have everything you need to talk to family and friends and spread the word about it. Now is the time to start these conversations! Talk to your friends, bring it up at social gatherings, text your contacts and share on social media.

Red Wine & Blue’s Resources

- Webinar - [Heather Cox Richardson Talks Project 2025.](#)
- [Project 2025 Explainer](#)
- [Red Wine and Blue’s Project 2025 Website](#)
- [Powerpoint Slides that Explain Project 2025](#)
- [Spread the Word on Social Media](#)

Other Project 2025 Resources

- <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/aclu-releases-legal-legislative-and-advocacy-roadmap-to-fight-executive-power-abuses-in-a-second-trump-administration>
-

Announcements

- **National UU the Vote Gathering - Building a New Way. Tuesday, July 30th at 8pm ET.** This week’s campaign announcement comes after weeks of consequential political events, and we know more will follow. These moments challenge our justice movements and demand our collective resilience. And yet, we are fortified in the truth that when our movements face the winds of change, it is love and not fear that guides us toward a liberated future. Throughout our history, the people have always been the keepers and the architects of a future where there is truly freedom and justice for all. We come together, again and again, to take prophetic action declaring that all bodies are sacred, that climate justice is a moral mandate, and we will build a democracy of, by and for ALL

people. This election season is about us! Join UUs across the country next week for this special UU the Vote event where we will harness our power for what's next. [Register Here.](#)

- Join us Next Friday, August 2nd for a Special Reproductive Justice Action Hour. We will be joined by **Samantha Salkin, Reproductive Freedom Advocacy Consultant with the ACLU of North Carolina**. She will share the new short documentary, [North Carolina's Abortion Story](#), which explores the history of abortion in North Carolina, the modern movement for reproductive justice, and the impact of abortion bans on patients and providers. We will also preview this fall's Abortion Rights Interfaith Phonebank in partnership with National UU the Vote, Pro-Choice NC and Carolina Jews for Justice.

Friday, July 19th - The Trump Assassination Attempt & Where We Go From Here **Our 216th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Dennis McCracken**

Today, we will hold space to reflect on the Trump assassination attempt that occurred on Saturday in Pennsylvania, and the other new developments around the Presidential Election. And in this week when we could really use some good news, **Rebecca Cerese from the NC Justice Center** will also join us to celebrate a huge milestone in Medicaid Expansion enrollment, and talk about a new [groundbreaking state initiative](#) to relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians.

Weekly Round-Up

- A widespread global technology outage has taken down airlines, medical services, TV broadcasts, banks and scores of other businesses and services around the world.
- Judge Aileen Cannon dismissed the classified documents case against Donald Trump, saying the appointment of Jack Smith violated the Constitution.
- Donald Trump was shot in the ear during an assassination attempt at a rally in Butler Pennsylvania on Saturday. Rally attendee Corey Comperatore was killed.
- Ohio Senator JD Vance was announced as the Republican VP Candidate.
- Last night, Donald Trump officially accepted the Republican Party's nomination for president at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee.
- Both Mark Robinson and UNC Students spoke at the RNC this week.
- On Wednesday, President Biden tested positive for Covid.
- Pressure continues to mount on President Biden to step down as Democratic Candidate.

UUA Statement, Saturday July 13th

Unitarian Universalism believes in the right of free speech and the democratic process. Attacks like those at Saturday's political rally weaken democracy, and the Unitarian Universalist Association condemns this attack. At a time when democracy is already at risk, these events will only make our political environment more precarious.

As we prepare to meet this moment, we must return to our spiritual grounding and faithful practice. Take a breath, reflect together, wait for emerging truth over quick speculation. Anchor

yourself in communities and relationships that foster resilience, liberation, and strategy. Cultivate nuance and seek out deep wisdom, political analysis, and spiritual grounding, as misinformation will be rampant.

Our Unitarian Universalist tradition is rooted in the values of human dignity, justice, compassion and democratic principles. We will remain vigilant in our commitment to protecting our democracy and the integrity of its principles and the rights of all its people. Let us keep love at the center. We are in this together.

Action 1 - Call for Full Funding of the Greensboro's Interactive Resource Center

NANCY VAUGHAN (Mayor) nancy.vaughan@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-373-2396

YVONNE J. JOHNSON (Mayor Pro Tem) yvonne.johnson@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-255-3060

MARIKAY ABUZUAITER (At Large) marikay.abuzuaiter@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-373-2396, 336-601-0286

HUGH HOLSTON (At Large) hugh.holston@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-500-7331

SHARON HIGHTOWER (District 1) sharon.hightower@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-317-4953

GOLDIE F. WELLS (District 2) goldie.wells@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-317-4590

ZACK MATHENY (District 3) zack.matheny@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-908-2821

NANCY HOFFMANN (District 4) nancy.hoffmann@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-255-1306

TAMMI THURM (District 5) tammi.thurm@greensboro-nc.gov, 336-601-0435

Basic Script

- Hi, my name is _____, I am a person of faith, and I am calling to urge you to fulfill your promise to fully fund the Interactive Resource Center.
- The IRC is the state's FIRST low-barrier resource center and the ONLY resource center in Greensboro open 24/7.
- The IRC is experiencing a historical and unprecedented number of individuals accessing services. While the IRC's mission is not to solve homelessness, there is an urgent need for IRC continue operating at full capacity to link the City's most vulnerable communities to resources.
- The role of the faith community cannot be to divert resources from those best equipped to serve our unhoused neighbors. We support the IRC through volunteer efforts and financial contributions, not through patchwork attempts at replicating their expertise and services.

- Fully fund the IRC so that they can be open 24/7 while we all work to make housing more affordable in our city.

Action 2 - Send Message to NC Hospital CEOs about Medical Debt! This month, the Governor's Office and the NC Department of Health and Human Services [announced a groundbreaking, win-win initiative](#) to relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians, cap interest rates on medical debt, provide generous discounts on hospital prices to families with certain incomes, automatically enroll people into charity care, and prohibit selling debt to collectors. **But this plan can only move forward if hospitals agree to participate.** By choosing to participate, hospitals could boost their bottom line by drawing down federal dollars while simultaneously protecting patients from medical debt. [Use this NC Justice Center tool to urge hospital CEOs to help North Carolinians with Medical Debt!](#)

Friday, July 12th - Part 2 of The Politics of Polarization
Our 215th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Elizabeth Lindsey

This week, we will continue our Series on The Politics of Polarization, brought to us by The Carter Center and the North Carolina Center for Fair, Safe, and Secure Elections. If you missed Part 1 of the series, [you can view it here](#). We will also dive deeper into research through the [Spectrum Project](#) out of the Institute for the Bio-Cultural Study of Religion on the difference between the hardwiring of the Liberal and Conservative religious brain.

Weekly Round-Up

- We have just reached the mark of enrolling the 500,000th North Carolinians in Medicaid!!!! Today, there is a celebration at the Governor's Mansion!
- Last week, the Governor's Office and the NC Department of Health and Human Services [announced a groundbreaking, win-win initiative](#) to relieve medical debt for two million North Carolinians, cap interest rates on medical debt, provide generous discounts on hospital prices to families with certain incomes, automatically enroll people into charity care, and prohibit selling debt to collectors. **But this plan can only move forward if hospitals agree to participate.** By choosing to participate, hospitals could boost their bottom line by drawing down federal dollars while simultaneously protecting patients from medical debt. [Use this NC Justice Center tool to Urge Hospital CEOs to Help North Carolinians with Medical Debt!](#) And spread the word!
- Gov. Roy Cooper signed legislation into law Monday that formally authorized pay raises for the second year of the two-year budget enacted last year. While the money was allocated in the state budget, the language in the bill required the General Assembly to authorize it by June 30.
- Saturday, September 14th, Common Cause NC will host the [CAROLINADAZE](#), music & arts festival powered by young North Carolinians dreaming of better daze ahead. CAROLINADAZE features an all-star set list of homegrown and world-class musical talent, storytelling from NC organizers and activists; and collaborations with local artists, artisans, small businesses, and nonprofits. We'll also raise much-needed funds for

grassroots organizations focused on issues from abortion access to environmental justice to public schools. Tickets are on sale NOW. Go to www.carolinadaze.com to access the Ticketmaster link. Email info@carolinadaze.com if you have any questions!

Continuing our Series on The Politics of Polarization

Friday, July 5th, 2024 - The Politics of Polarization

Our 214th Action Hour is sponsored by an anonymous donor in honor of Rev. Claudia Jimenez

Today we will begin a two part series on [The Politics of Polarization](#), brought to us by **The Carter Center** and the North Carolina Center for Fair, Safe, and Secure Elections. We will watch a presentation by Nathan Stock who will discuss the increasing polarization in American society, its underlying causes, and the potential consequences, including the rise in political violence. He will also share his analysis of the US political system, and the effects of trauma on the brain and its influence on current society polarization. **We ended at 41:15**

Friday, June 28th 2024 - Final Days before July Legislative Break

*** Our 213th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Pat Butler from the UU Fellowship of Raleigh!

This morning, **Stefanía Arteaga, Co-founder & Co-Executive Director of the Carolina Migrant Network** will share some important updates on HB 10, the anti-immigration bill that would require NC Sheriffs to cooperate with ICE agents. And we will lean into gratitude for one individual leading the fight for Childcare Funding in NC.

Resources

- <https://carolinamigrantnetwork.org/>
- <https://carolinamigrantnetwork.org/2024/04/26/proposed-house-bill-10-hb-10/>
- https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oj2L3UstLpS_ZaKxv8tVkOrSZfQ0szfUNhdE8pPIgBE/edit

Weekly Round-Up

- Last night was the first Presidential Debate between Biden and Trump. Oof.
- SCOTUS Rulings - Chevron, Homelessness ruling.
- The State Legislature is now adjourned until July 10th. They have scheduled the following days through the end of the year to return to Raleigh to conduct business. July 10, July 29-Aug 1, Sept. 9-11, Oct. 9, Nov. 19-22, Dec. 11-13.
- On the eve of the July legislative break, the General Assembly passed a provision allocating \$67.5 million in funding for child care centers through the end of the year, and authorized pay raises for teachers and other school employees. *This week, Advocates, clergy were arrested at the General Assembly while demanding child care funding.

- The General Assembly voted to successfully override Gov. Cooper's vetoes of 1) the anti-masking / campaign finance bill, 2) A bill to require teens facing some serious criminal charges [to be tried initially as adults](#), and 3) A bill [allowing billboard companies to cut down more trees](#).
- NC voters will be asked to approve at least one constitutional amendment when they go to the polls this fall — to reaffirm the state's citizen-only voting rules — after state lawmakers approved the proposal yesterday.
- Another proposed amendment that has not yet passed would set the maximum state income tax rate at 5% even though the current tax rate is 4.5%. The current limit of 7% was written into the State Constitution, with voter approval, just six years ago. This proposed income tax cap is a political move that would lower the cap on income tax rates to 5 percent and spell even more trouble for our public schools, child care centers, and local governments.
- On Wednesday, the Senate passed SB 88 - "Election Integrity Bill" that includes the establishment of 10 pilot program county boards to conduct signature matching for mail-in ballots at absentee review meetings and makes permanent signature matching in 2025, regardless of the impact on voters.
- The NC Senate voted Wednesday to remove an archaeological provision in House Bill 385, even after the provision had already been modified so it no longer would have allowed developers to "incidentally" [disturb archaeological sites](#). This month we have been following the lead to Seven Directions of Service in speaking out against this bill.

Action 1 - Tell NCGA - Vote NO on SB630 (Tax Income Cap Constitutional Amendment)

We are trying to target Senate democrats about limiting the tax income cap because we are hearing that they're not understanding how it will harm public funding and communities. Send a message to your elected officials through this [The NC Budget & Tax Center action alert](#).

More information about the impact of the proposed income tax cap:

- <https://ncbudget.org/taxcapactionlocal/>
- <https://ncbudget.org/statement-on-income-tax-cap-amendment/>

Action 2 - Tell NCGA to Fund Elections!

Right now, the NCGA leadership is moving forward a budget proposal - that would [fail to adequately fund election administration in North Carolina](#). Among various provisions, HB 317 and HB 263 fail to provide additional funds for the State and County Boards of Elections.

The NCSBE has consistently requested funding for permanent staff, such as two campaign finance auditors and a Chief Cyber Officer, and to modernize its election infrastructure software, which manages all aspects of elections. [Send a message to your elected officials through Democracy NC's action alert](#).

Action 3 - Reject "election integrity" bill that undermines voter protections

Lawmakers are currently pushing forward a bill that pretends to “strengthen election integrity” in our state but really is about changing election law based on unfounded claims of voter fraud while undermining the safeguards that ensure every voter has an equal opportunity to make their voice heard. **Send a message to your elected officials through Democracy NC’s action alert.**

Senate Bill 88 makes several changes to election laws through the following:

- “Challenges to Certain Ballots Cast” requires county boards of elections to accelerate the process of removing votes cast by ineligible voters due to death or active felony sentences. North Carolina conducts a weekly list maintenance process, removing voters who are ineligible due to death, conviction of a felony, or change of address, making this unnecessarily burdensome on election officials.
- “Use of Artificial Intelligence in Political Ads” requires print, radio, or television political advertisements to disclose the use of artificial intelligence (AI) when it's used to provide voters with mis- or disinformation, among other rules. Although this is a step in the right direction and helps to safeguard the integrity of the electoral process, this law should be expanded to include digital ads.
- “Signature Verification for Absentee Ballots” requires the 10 pilot program county boards to conduct signature matching for mail-in ballots at absentee review meetings and makes permanent signature matching in 2025, regardless of the impact on voters. Requiring signature verification is redundant and may disenfranchise voters, without due process, at no fault of their own.
- “Limits on Alterations to Form of Government” limits the counties' and municipalities' control over deciding the structure of their elections, like voting districts and terms of office, by allowing the NC General Assembly to preempt authority through a local act. Local governments and voters are best equipped to decide how and when to change their election structure.

Action 3 - Last but not least, we turn to gratitude. Let’s send some love today to Emma Biggs, who has been leading the charge to get Childcare Funded in the midst of the funding cliff. **Send Emma an email at eluvjazz2@gmail.com**

Sample Language:

- Thank you for all that you have done to organize and empower people across the state to fight for child care funding. We are proud to be fighting alongside you!
- Thank you for your deep commitment to the children and families of our state / and your fellow childcare providers who deserve compensation that reflects your essential work.
- Thank you for your courage during Wednesday’s direct action at the General Assembly.

Friday, June 21st 2024 - Childcare Funding Cliff Letters to the Editor
Our 212th Friday Action Hour is Sponsored by Beth Andrachick. Thanks!

If the NC General Assembly doesn't fund early childhood education by the end of June, nearly 1/3 of childcare providers may have to shut down, leaving 100,000 kids without care and

families without options. Last week, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation released a report estimating that breakdowns in the childcare system are costing North Carolina \$5.65 billion in lost economic activity every year. This Friday, we will be writing Letters to the Editor sounding the alarm about this crisis.

Weekly Round-Up

- This week we celebrate [Juneteenth](#) which commemorates the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. Go support a local black business this weekend!
- Last Friday, the Supreme Court upheld access to abortion pills, but overturned the Trump-era ban on gun bump stocks. We'll see what they do today....
- On 12th anniversary of the establishment of DACA, the Biden Admin. announced that they would establish legal protections of Undocumented Spouses of U.S. Citizens.
- Louisiana has passed a law requiring that the Ten Commandments be displayed in every public school classroom in the state.
- This week, Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong-un signed a pact saying that Russia and North Korea will aid each other in case of "aggression" against them.
- [NC House budget targets prosecutors who let protesters off 'civil disorder' charges](#) (N.C. McClatchy) -- A provision tucked into the House's budget proposal would target prosecutors who dismiss criminal charges against protesters or allow them to plead guilty to lesser charges.
- There have been reports that that threat policy to allow for bulldozing of Native burial sites has been removed from House Bill 385. Still Confirming this, but fingers crossed.

House and Senate at odds over budget process

- Childcare - [House budget calls for \\$135 million in childcare stabilization grants – half of what's needed](#) (N.C. Newsline) --The House released a proposed budget that allocates \$135 million for childcare stabilization grants to help soften the landing for childcare centers as federal COVID-pandemic money runs out. The House's proposal, however, is \$165 million short of the \$300 million emergency allocation childcare advocates requested. The Senate budget has a reported 50 million allocated.
- Teachers Raises - House budget proposal - would give state employees an additional 1% raise, raise the starting salary for teachers to \$44,000
- Vouchers - House budget allocates \$250 million for private school vouchers - regardless of the income level of the family requesting them. The plan would fully fund the waiting list of 55,000 students seeking a private school voucher.

Vouchers - The Numbers * Capitol Broadcasting Opinion**

- Academic Standards - Only 8.5 percent of the private schools receiving vouchers report standardized testing scores on their websites. Only 2 percent of private schools require their teachers to be certified by the state
- Religious - 90 percent of the top voucher-receiving schools are religious / 68 percent have religious requirements for admission.
- LGBTQ - 41 percent of the top voucher-receiving schools have explicit exclusions for LGBTQ students. Many schools include a provision in their handbook that states that

“the school reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to refuse admission to an applicant” who “practices or promotes a homosexual lifestyle or alternative gender identity, or otherwise has the inability to support the moral principles of the school.”

- Students with Disabilities: 38 percent of these schools have exclusions for students with disabilities.

Childcare Funding Cliff Letters to the Editor

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- Remember to keep your Letter under 250 words. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit. And you can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts.

Messaging and Tone:

- Urgency / Focus on the crisis for families, businesses and the economy. *** Cite the Chamber of Commerce report.

Recommended Basic Structure & Sample Talking Points

Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- If the NC General Assembly doesn't fund early childhood education by June 30th, nearly 1/3 of childcare providers (an estimated 1,800 facilities) may have to shut down, leaving 100,000 kids without care and families without options.
- I join others across the state in calling on NC Senate President Pro Tempore, Phill Berger and Speaker Tim Moore to appropriate at least 300 million dollars in emergency funding before June 30th.
- Childcare funding is good for North Carolina families and businesses, and is essential for a thriving economy in our state.

The Current State-Wide Call for Funding

- Right now we are witnessing a massive movement of people from across the state, and across political ideologies who are united in their call for childcare funding.
- Over the last month, people from across the state have descended on Raleigh to send a loud and clear message about the urgent need for childcare funding.
- Last week, I was proud to participate in a coordinated state-wide action where Sen. President Berger and Speaker Moore received a phone call every three minutes for forty straight business hours about the childcare funding crisis. The calls came from parents,

childcare staff, people of faith, and other concerned individuals from across the state, and across political ideology.

Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a person of faith, I believe....
- As a parent / grandparent, our family relies on affordable childcare. This poses a threat to my ability to work and make enough money to _____
- I am a business owner in _____ and I have lost staff / am concerned that I will lose staff due to the lack of affordable childcare.

Facts about the Economic Impact

- This summer, the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation](#) released a report citing the economic impact of the lack of access to childcare in North Carolina. The report estimates that breakdowns in the childcare system are costing North Carolina \$5.65 billion in lost economic activity every year.
- If the General Assembly fails to appropriate at least 300 million dollars in emergency funding before June 30th, it will have an astronomical impact on North Carolina families and business. For many, it will mean an increased cost of nearly \$100 a week for childcare and many families will simply not be able to afford that.
- What options does this leave for our children? Will the parents be able to work?"
- Access to high-quality child care is essential for children's development and for the growth of a healthy, competitive workforce. But right now, as federal relief dollars come to an end, our child care system is at the edge of a funding cliff.

Money on Vouchers instead of Childcare

- The state house and senate proposed budgets have included only a fraction of the funding needed to avoid this crisis, and yet both chambers agree that the state should spend hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on private school vouchers for families who can already afford private schools. This is an outrage.
- How can you choose vouchers for wealthy private school families over basic childcare for hundreds of thousands of children in our state?

Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- Our families and businesses need Senator Berger and Speaker Moore to recognize the urgency of this moment and take immediate action. Morally and economically, it is the right thing to do.
- The state can afford to make this investment, but we can't afford not to.
- Childcare funding is good for North Carolina families and businesses, and is essential for a thriving economy in our state.
- Berger and Moore, if you really care about NC families and businesses, you need to come together to get this done. If they fail to act, there will be catastrophic consequences for North Carolina businesses and families.

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).

Announcements

- Deadline for Daycare Day of Action Wednesday, June 26th / Prep Meeting - Sunday <https://actionnetwork.org/events/deadline-for-day-care/>
- Poor People's Campaign: Moral March on Washington - Saturday, June 29th from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Eastern. The UUA President, Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt will speak! Buses are available (for free) to the event in many places in NC. [Here is the link](#) to sign up for a seat on the bus. If you cannot travel to DC, [join UUSJ's watch party](#).
- **Save the Date - September 28-29, 2024 UU Climate Justice Revival "Reimagine Together: From an Extractive Age to a New Era.** The UU Climate Justice Revival will equip UU congregations to enter into a new era of climate action faithfully dismantling silos and transforming our congregations through inspiring collective worship, creative learning, and new frameworks at the intersection of climate and justice. Join kindred congregations across the land for two days of collectively recommitting to climate justice. The Revival events will be held in your congregational setting. Gather your justice teams, problem solvers, and dreamers. The Revival planning team will provide everything needed: facilitation toolkits, training, music, projects, coordinated justice action focused on the election and climate justice, and more. No matter your congregation's size or resources, you can join and together we will enter a new era of climate action. Let's go—appoint two volunteer facilitators who will be trained to participate. Registration fee goes from \$50 to \$100 on July 1, 2024. (Scholarships available.) Register: <https://www.uuclimatejustice.org>

Friday, June 14th 2024 - State Legislative Threat to Native Burial Sites in NC Our 211th Action Hour is sponsored by John & Rita Singer

This morning, Aminah Ghaffar, Policy Director for [Seven Directions of Service](#) will speak with us about House Bill 385 which threatens to make it easier for developers to bulldoze Native burial sites in North Carolina. We will also get an update on HB 237 the anti-masking / campaign finance bill and we'll continue to advocate for emergency appropriations of \$300 million for childcare facilities.

We will also get you caught up on what has happened this week at the General Assembly. And finally, we'll celebrate this week's Childcare Funding Cliff Week of Action and take part in the final day of our state-wide phone call blitz.

Weekly Round-Up

- SCOTUS has ruled to maintain the status quo on mifepristone, leaving the current regulations and legal status intact (for now). North Carolinians, this means we maintain our (very limited) access to the pills that constitute a medication abortion—both Mifepristone and Misoprostol.
- Supreme Court Rejects Trump-Era Ban on Gun Bump StocksThe devices allow semiautomatic guns to fire more rapidly. They were banned after one of the deadliest mass shootings in modern U.S. history, at a Las Vegas concert in 2017.
- **Anniversaries** - June 12th marks three significant anniversaries - the Murder of Medgar Evers in Mississippi in 1963, the Loving vs. Virginia Supreme Court Case allowing interracial marriage in 1967, and Pulse Nightclub Shooting which killed 49 people and wounded another 53 in 2016.
- On June 15, 2012, [President Obama announced DACA](#) (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), an executive action to lift the shadow of deportation for young people and other qualified recipients who came to the United States as undocumented immigrants.

Action 1 Protect Native burial sites, NO HB385!

Just days after our historic Indigenous-led Rights of Nature Tribunal, we learned that **HB385**, a new bill making its way through the North Carolina General Assembly aims to make it easier for housing developers to bulldoze Native burial sites.

Overview:

This amendment (HB 385-ARI-77) will be very destructive to cultural resources along the North Carolina coast, and will set a dangerous precedent by weakening protections for heritage and Native American burial sites across the state. It will also jeopardize more recent archeological resources such as Civil War battlefields. We demand protections for Native burial grounds, cemeteries and irreplaceable cultural resources - NO HB385!

Resources:

- Check out this [news article about HB385](#)
- Check out the current bill draft

Here are 3 key sections of HB385 we're worried about:

Section 8(b): Restricting the definition of historic places to those listed or determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This covers only a small fraction of the archaeological sites in the state. It ignores all sites that have not been professionally assessed for NRHP eligibility and all undiscovered sites. That's tens of thousands of sites along the NC coast alone. Whether they have been listed or assessed has nothing to do with their significance. Sites are no less significant just because they haven't been studied adequately. This change will cause the destruction of the majority of archaeological resources in the path of development and their data will be lost forever. It would also cause the destruction of sites that contain human burials. Native American burials are already covered under the Native American

Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and NC's unmarked burial law (GS 70). This amendment will likely conflict with those statutes.

Section 8(e): This alters the definition of "major and irreversible damage" to cultural resources to exclude inadvertent discoveries. This is how many archaeological sites are discovered, when they are impacted by development. The very act of discovering them is irreversible damage. Combining this with the previous section, this would allow developers to obtain building permits in Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) areas with no archaeological survey to identify sites. And when they impact a site they won't have to cease construction or do any archaeological recovery or assessment.

Section 8(f): In the narrow circumstance that archaeological work is required under the law, this last change will force the state to cover the cost of the work. This change forces taxpayers to cover the bill to do archaeological recovery work that benefits the individual developers. At the same time it incentivizes developers to ignore the potential effects of their construction on archaeological resources. Not only would this cost the state millions, but the state government doesn't have the required resources or qualified personnel to carry out such work on that scale. Though these changes only cover CAMA areas, it would set a dangerous precedent. This amendment will result in the destruction of cultural resources along NC's coast. It won't just affect Native American sites but all archaeological resources, even more recent sites like Civil War battlefields or cemeteries.

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I join others across our state in voicing my deep concern about **HB385**
- This bill aims to make it easier for housing developers to bulldoze Native burial sites, and this is morally reprehensible.
- I am particularly concerned that the bill Restricts the definition of historic places to those listed or determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This covers only a small fraction of the archaeological sites in the state. It ignores all sites that have not been professionally assessed for NRHP eligibility and all undiscovered sites. That's tens of thousands of sites along the NC coast alone.
- It also alters the definition of "major and irreversible damage" to cultural resources to exclude inadvertent discoveries.
- Land use doesn't have to be destructive, we can benefit from preserving the history of our state.
- Please help protect burial grounds and irreplaceable cultural resources by stopping HB385.

SENATOR DANNY EARL BRITT, JR. (REP)
(919) 733-5651
DANNY.BRITT@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR WARREN DANIEL (REP)
(919) 715-7823
WARREN.DANIEL@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR BUCK NEWTON (REP)
(919) 733-5878
BUCK.NEWTON@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR SYDNEY BATCH (DEM)
(919) 733-5653
SYDNEY.BATCH@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR DAN BLUE (DEM)
(919) 733-5752
DAN.BLUE@NCLEG.GOV

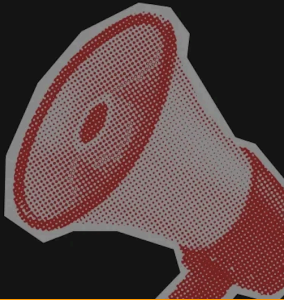
SENATOR AMY S. GALEY (REP)
(919) 301-1446
AMY.GALEY@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR LISA GRAFSTEIN (DEM)
(919) 733-9349
LISA.GRAFSTEIN@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR RACHEL HUNT (DEM)
(919) 715-8331
RACHEL.HUNT@NCLEG.GOV

NO HB385!

**CONTACT
THESE
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS!**



SENATOR MICHAEL A. LAZZARA (REP)
(919) 715-3034
MICHAEL.LAZZARA@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR MICHAEL V. LEE (REP)
(919) 715-2525
MICHAEL.LEE@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR NATASHA R. MARCUS (DEM)
(919) 715-3050
NATASHA.MARCUS@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR MUJTABA A. MOHAMMED (DEM)
(919) 733-5955
MUJTABA.MOHAMMED@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR BRAD OVERCASH (REP)
(919) 733-5734
BRAD.OVERCASH@NCLEG.GOV

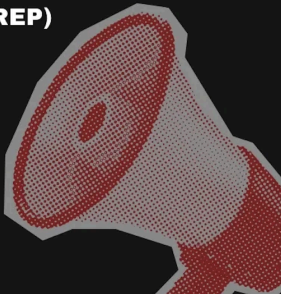
SENATOR NORMAN W. SANDERSON (REP)
(919) 733-5706
NORMAN.SANDERSON@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR PAUL NEWTON (REP)
(919) 733-7223
PAUL.NEWTON@NCLEG.GOV

SENATOR BENTON G. SAWREY (REP)
(919) 715-3040
BENTON.SAWREY@NCLEG.GOV

NO HB385!

**CONTACT
THESE
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS!**



Announcements

- Poor People's Campaign (PPC) March On Washington D.C. Legislative Mall to speak truth to power on Saturday 6/29/24 - bus's are available (for free) to the event in many places in N.C. - a link to sign up to ride a bus is: Here is the form for signing up for a seat on the bus: <https://forms.gle/tdUgqqe4D9NBgjFq6> Please feel free to contact me via phone/txt is 3364808172 - or email: norris@wfu.edu
- **Pro-Choice NC Quarterly Update with Tara Romano Tuesday, June 18th at 12:30**
Pro-Choice NC's Executive Director Tara Romano will provide a briefing on the current legislative session in North Carolina. Tara will also discuss the ongoing abortion access cases at the U.S. Supreme Court and the important work that PCNC will be doing leading up to the 2024 elections. We will hold time at the end of the event for Q&A. You may submit your questions in advance to info@prochoicenc.org. Register Here! https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7N_Rf1ZuDS8R5GyVsIFsyyh2w...

Friday, June 7th 2024 - Emergency Pivot HB 237 Unmasking Mobs and Criminals.

Weekly Round-Up (Sort Of)

Status: Passed Senate but Dems walked out in protest; Conference report out on 6-5-24 adds campaign finance money laundering; Failed house concurrence; [PCS to HB 237 Unmasking Mobs and Criminals](#). - in Senate Judiciary; [Passed the House in a different form 93-24](#)

[Bill Fact Sheet](#)

Action 1 - Call House Republicans- HB 237 New Conference Report

Start with these folks and keep calling - Republican State Representatives

- Rep. John A. Torbett (R - Gaston) 919-733-5868, John.Torbett@ncleg.gov
- Rep. Erin Paré (Rep - Wake) - 919-733-2962, Erin.Pare@ncleg.gov
- Rep. Sarah Stevens (Rep - Surry & Wilkes) 919-715-1883, Sarah.Stevens@ncleg.gov
- Rep. Brian Biggs (Rep - Randolph) - 919-733-5865, Brian.Biggs@ncleg.gov
- Rep. Destin Hall (Rep - Caldwell) 919-733-5931

And EVERY OTHER REPUBLICAN in the HOUSE - <https://ncleg.gov/Members/MemberList/H>
<https://ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I join others across our state in voicing my deep concern about HB 237.
- First, this will disproportionately impact immunocompromised individuals who need to wear masks for their safety. Moreover, it relies on police discretion to distinguish

between those who are wearing a mask to protect their identities and those who are wearing one to protect themselves against disease. That ambiguity opens up even more space for discretionary and selective enforcement which will disproportionately impact black and brown communities.

- The new conference report permits millionaires to hide in secret and flood the state with unhealthy money. HB237 - removes limitations put in place to ensure fairness when it comes to super pacs. It would also give SuperPACS from outside NC the ability to funnel \$ to political committees without immediate and transparent reporting.
- People across the state are united in being against this bill.

What else can we do?

- Letters to the Editor - THIS WEEKEND.
- Democracy NC Action Alert - Will be out by the end of the day. We will send it to you. AMPLIFY THIS TO YOUR COMMUNITIES
- Tuesday, June 11th at 9:00am - Press Conference - Join us and WEAR MASK

Action 2 - Childcare Funding Cliff Phone Call Blitz - Will you Sponsor a Half Hour?

State-Wide Childcare Funding Cliff - Week of Action! Together, we are creating a continuous chain of phone calls to Senate President Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore every three minutes for 40 straight business hours. That's 80 groups coming together to make 1,600 calls during this urgent moment!

If you sign up for your group's captain, you are responsible for recruiting 10 individuals to make their phone calls to Berger and Moore during the exact time that they have been assigned.

Announcements

- Tuesday, June 11th at 9:00am - Press Conference - Join us and WEAR MASK
- Wednesday, June 12th - Day of Advocacy at the General Assembly for Childcare Funding. Equality NC is also doing a lobby day. And Moms for Liberty :/
- **Thursday, June 13th from 7:00 - 8:30 - LGBTQ Legislation & Advocacy Briefing with Artie Hartsell.** As we begin Pride month, Join UU Justice NC for this in-depth presentation on the history and present moment of LGBTQ legislation in North Carolina. State LGBTQ rights advocate Artie Hartsell will also help us discern how our congregations can help advance LGBTQ rights and safety at a state and local level. [Register Here.](#)
- Friday, June 14th - Childcare Funding Cliff

Friday, May 31st - The Looming Childcare Funding Cliff
Our 209th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by Melanie Mottershead

If the NC General Assembly doesn't fund early childhood education next month, nearly 1/3 of childcare providers (an estimated 1,800 facilities) may have to shut down, leaving 100,000 kids

without care and families without options. But instead, the leadership of the NCGA is campaigning on spending hundreds of millions of dollars on private school vouchers for families who can already afford private schools. Today, we will receive an important briefing from **Rob Stephens of the NC Poor People's Campaign / Repairers of the Breach, as well as Nancy Rogers and Emma Talbert**, two childcare providers who are directly impacted by the child care funding cliff.

Weekly Round-Up

- Yesterday, Former President Trump was found guilty of all 34 counts in hush-money case, making him the first American president to become a felon. He will be sentenced on July 11th, days before the Republican National Convention.
- This week, NC House paused business this week following the death of Speaker Tim Moore's father, Rick Keith Moore. No movement on HB 10.
- "Israel has advanced into central Rafah despite concerns from close allies like the United States over the safety of displaced Palestinians and other civilians sheltering there." - [NY Times](#)
- This week marked the four year anniversary of the death of George Floyd. George Floyd was born in Fayetteville, NC and on May 25th, 2020 was murdered by a white Minneapolis police officer.
- The NC State Board of Elections is still taking public comments on non-unanimous county early voting plans for the general election. We have until 5pm today (May 31) to Ask the NCSBE to support expanded access to early voting in Brunswick, Chatham, Columbus, Davidson, Gates, Guilford, Martin, New Hanover, Pasquotank, Randolph, Rockingham, and Union Counties! The "majority plan" in each of these counties provides more access to early voting for a larger portion of the population.
- This week marks the 103rd anniversary of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

Action 1 - Call Key Committee / Chamber Leaders about Childcare Funding Cliff

*** Organized by the [North Carolina Early Education Coalition](#)

Member	Role	Counties	Email	Phone Number
Rep. Kristin Baker	House HHS Chair	Cabarrus	kristin.baker@ncleg.gov	919-733-5861
Rep. Larry Potts	House HHS Chair	Davidson	Larry.Potts@ncleg.gov	919-715-0873
Rep. Donna White	House HHS Chair	Johnston	Donna.White@ncleg.gov	919-733-5605

Rep. Erin Paré	House HHS Vice Chair	Wake	Erin.Pare@ncleg.gov	919-733-2962
Rep. Donny Lambeth	House HHS Vice Chair	Forsyth	Donny.Lambeth@ncleg.gov	919-733-5747
Rep. Wayne Sasser	House HHS Vice Chair	Montgomery Stanly	Wayne.Sasser@ncleg.gov	919-733-5908
Sen. Jim Burgin	Senate HHS Chair	Harnett, Lee, Sampson	Jim.Burgin@ncleg.gov	(919) 733-5748
Sen. Kevin Corbin	Senate HHS Chair	Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Transylvania	Kevin.Corbin@ncleg.gov	(919) 733-5875
Sen. Joyce Krawiec	Senate HHS Chair	Forsyth, Stokes	Joyce.Krawiec@ncleg.gov	(919) 733-7850
<i>Rep. Tim Moore (Don't call)</i>	Speaker of House	Cleveland, Rutherford	Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov	919-733-3451
Rep. Dean Arp	Appropriations Chair	Union	Dean.Arp@ncleg.gov	919-715-3007
<i>Rep. Donny Lambeth (Don't call)</i>	Appropriations Chair	Forsyth	Donny.Lambeth@ncleg.gov	919-733-5747
Rep. Jason Saine	Appropriations Chair, House Conf. Chair	Lincoln	Jason.Saine@ncleg.gov	919-733-5782
Sen. Phil Berger	Senate President	Guilford, Rockingham	Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov	(919) 733-5708

Want to call more elected officials? [Here's the full list!](#)

These templates are offered as a guide to communicate with your own legislators and other [key legislators](#) in the NC General Assembly. Please edit this to personalize it, and feel free to use

additional [talking points](#) in the Advocacy Toolkit. Remember, sharing your own personal story about how this is impacting you and your community is always the most effective way to communicate with policymakers!

Sample Email

Items that are highlighted are where you should add in your own information and must be changed.

Dear Rep. [OR] Sen. [INSERT CORRECT TITLE AND NAME],

Access to high-quality child care is essential for children's development and for the growth of a healthy, competitive workforce. But right now, as federal relief dollars come to an end, our child care system is at the edge of a funding cliff. If Child Care Compensation Grants aren't extended by June 30th there will be catastrophic consequences for North Carolina businesses and families.

[SAY WHO YOU ARE, WHERE YOU LIVE, AND/OR WHAT YOU DO].

For example:

- *I am an early childhood teacher in [TOWN/COUNTY] and I love my job but I can't support my family on my child care salary.*
- *I am a child care center director in [TOWN/COUNTY] and I'm struggling to find staff and keep my program open.*
- *I am a parent of a toddler in [TOWN/COUNTY] and I can't find or afford high-quality child care.*
- *I own a business in [TOWN/COUNTY] and I have lost staff because they can't find or afford reliable child care.*

I am very concerned about what will happen when federal relief funding ends next month. Everyone knows someone who depends on child care, but we can't depend on our child care system to survive under these conditions any longer.

[INSERT STORY OR DETAILS ABOUT YOUR CONCERN]

Child care teachers are the workforce behind the workforce. This funding cliff puts families, businesses, and the state's economy at risk. I strongly urge you to support a one-time investment to extend the Child Care Compensation Grants, which will help teachers stay in the classroom, child care programs stay open, parents find care for their children, and businesses keep employees.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[TITLE/ORGANIZATION NAME]

[ADDRESS]

Sample Phone Script

- Hi, my name is [NAME] and I live in [YOUR TOWN/COUNTY].
- I'm calling to ask you to support extending the Child Care Compensation Grants.
- Our child care system is at the edge of a funding cliff. If Child Care Compensation Grants aren't extended by June 30th there will be catastrophic consequences for North Carolina businesses and families.
- Without child care, parents can't work and children miss out on important early educational experiences. Additionally, businesses in nearly every sector have identified child care as a critical factor in their workforce challenges.

[INSERT QUICK DETAIL ABOUT YOUR CONCERN FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE AS A TEACHER, PROVIDER, PARENT, BUSINESS OWNER, OR COMMUNITY MEMBER]

- This funding cliff puts families, businesses, and the state's economy at risk. I strongly urge you to support a one-time investment to extend the Child Care Compensation Grants.
- [If negative reaction] I hope you reconsider. Everyone knows someone who depends on child care, but we can't depend on our current system to survive under these conditions any longer. Your constituents are counting on you to make sure that young children, families, and businesses have the support they need to thrive.
- [If positive reaction] Thank you for listening and for your support. I hope you'll continue pushing for increased funding for child care this session.

Action 2 - Organized by You Can Vote

The NC State Board of Elections is taking public comments on non-unanimous county early voting plans for the general election. We have until 5pm today (May 31) to Ask the NCSBE to support expanded access to early voting in Brunswick, Chatham, Columbus, Davidson, Gates, Guilford, Martin, New Hanover, Pasquotank, Randolph, Rockingham, and Union Counties! The "majority plan" in each of these counties provides more access to early voting for a larger portion of the population. [Click Here to Leave Public Comment](#)

Sample Language

Dear State Board of Elections Members,

As a resident of _____ County, I urge you to support the Early Voting Plan that was passed by the majority of my local Board of Elections. Since the Plan calls for the full 17-day schedule, including Saturdays and Sundays, it will significantly reduce Election Day congestion, which will allow election officials more time to fix glitches, lead to shorter lines, and enhance poll-worker performance. Also, the plan will make it much more convenient for everyone to exercise their right to vote, including full-time workers, parents, students, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those who traditionally vote on Sundays.

Action 3 - Continue to Call Primary State Rep Targets for HB10

The NC legislature is moving an anti-immigrant bill, **HB 10**, that would mandate collaboration between federal immigration officials and local sheriff departments to hold and **detain** undocumented people arrested under their jurisdiction regardless of the charge. If you'd like to learn more about the harmful impacts of this bill, check our

Call the following key State Representatives as identified by Carolina Immigrant Network

1. Rep. Frank Sossamon (R - Vance, Greenville) - 919-733-5824, Frank.Sossamon@ncleg.gov
2. Rep. Cecil Brockman (D - Guilford) - 919-733-5825, Cecil.Brockman@ncleg.gov
3. Rep. John Bradford III (R – Mecklenburg) - 919-733-5828, John.Bradford@ncleg.gov
4. Rep. Tricia Cotham (R - Mecklenburg) - 919-733-5749, Tricia.Coatham@ncleg.gov
5. Rep. Ted Davis (R - New Hanover) - 919-733-5786, Ted.Davis@ncleg.gov

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I join others across the state in voicing my deep concern about HB 10.
- Sheriffs from across the state are speaking out in opposition to this bill - saying that immigration is a federal issue.
- The sheriffs want to provide safety and protection to all local residents, and we know that when ICE and Local law enforcement collaborate our communities are less safe.
- Thank you for your time.

Announcements

- **Thursday, June 13th from 7:00 - 8:30 - LGBTQ Legislation & Advocacy Briefing with Artie Hartsell.** As we begin Pride month, Join UU Justice NC for this in-depth presentation on the history and present moment of LGTBQ legislation in North Carolina. State LGBTQ rights advocate Artie Hartsell will also help us discern how our congregations can help advance LGBTQ rights and safety at a state and local level. [Register Here.](#)
- **This Sunday, June 2, 2024 | 1:00 - 6:00 pm at the [The Avila Center](#), Durham, NC - Let My People Sing!** day long regional gatherings, will foster the magic of Jewish communal singing. Featured Teachers: Anthony Russell & Eliana Light. Register here. with LMPS Team Members Batya Levine, Marques Hollie & Margot Seigle
- Next week, we'll be joined by the NC Budget & Tax Center - they'll be talking about analyzing and advocating around local budgets and the distinction between what state and local budgets generally fund.
- **June 12th** at 11:00am Childcare Funding Cliff Rally in Raleigh
- **June 29th** - Poor People's Campaign Mass March in Washington D.C.

Friday, May 24th

***** Our 208th Friday Action Hour is sponsored by The North Carolina Justice Center!**

Weekly Round-Up

- Tomorrow, marks the four year anniversary of the death of George Floyd. George Floyd was born in Fayetteville, NC and on May 25th, 2020 a white Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for 8 minutes 46 - asphyxiating and killing him. Joe Williams from Word in Black writes that, "The uprising that ensued at the corner of E. 38th Street and Chicago Avenue raced like lightning around the nation and the world. Finally, it seemed, America would account for 245 years of Black oppression in a so-called racial reckoning. Overnight, diversity, equity, and inclusion programs sprang up and Confederate statues fell."
- Yesterday, the UNC System Board of Governors voted to repeal previous DEI requirements across all of the state's 17 public universities. This will likely lead to the elimination of diversity, equity and inclusion programs and jobs - which will impact a quarter of a million NC students. Only two board members, Joel Ford and Sonja Phillips Nichols, voted against the change.
- State Budget Update - The NC House and Senate are in a public disagreement about spending amounts related to the state budget. Senate leader Phil Berger said the House wants to spend both the 1 Billion in surplus plus money from reserves. (This is one billion less revenue than anticipated)
- Update on School Vouchers Bill - Still in committee On Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House. It's possible that it's on hold because of the state's lower revenue for 2024. It could pass in the budget or as a separate bill. Would need to happen in June in time to be implemented for this school year.
- Update on HB10 - May 15th, the NC House floor **did not** vote in favor of a concurrence vote. This meant that the house **did not** approve the Senate's amendments and opted to create a conference committee. A conference committee brings together house and senate members to discuss the bill and amend it. We have heard that the reason the bill was sent to committee is because sheriffs from across the aisle are in opposition to portions of the bill. There was no movement on the bill this week. Today, we will be calling the five state reps who have been identified as our primary targets - using that message that Sheriffs don't want this.
- Update on HB 237 "Unmasking Mobs and Criminals" (part of a wave of new anti-protest bills sweeping the country in response to Pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses) This week the House rejected Senate's proposed mask restriction bill (WUNC-FM) The they "rejected controversial Senate amendments to a bill that would, among other things, ban wearing masks in public, even for health reasons. The bill now goes to a conference committee for possible changes." - Capitol Broadcasting Opinion Editor

Every Child NC - Bills to support:

- House Bill 342 – Extend Child Care Compensation Grants (\$300 million) – This is a bipartisan bill that would help avoid the pending fiscal cliff in our early childhood system that is projected to result in the closure of about 1/3 of childcare centers in the state, leaving thousands of families without care and likely increasing the cost of childcare for all families. This bill has the strongest chance to be successful/included in the budget.

- [HB 1027](#) – Revise Suspension & Parental Notice Policies – This bill, worked on by EJA and other partners who work on limiting the use of exclusionary discipline, limits the use of exclusionary school discipline, creates more appeals and due process rights for parents, improves reporting requirements, and requires disciplinary actions in early childhood settings to be reported.
- [HB 960](#) – Sound Basic Education for Every Child- Fully funds Year Five of Leandro Plan
- [HB 993](#) – OPS Moratorium Places a moratorium on future expansion of the school voucher program, including the recent attempt to fund the “waitlist” of wealthy families who overwhelmingly already had their children in private school and improves/creates oversight of the program.

Every Child NC - Bills to Oppose: [HB 823](#) – Eliminate School Choice Program Waitlist - [Read more here and contact lawmakers](#)

Action 1 - Call Primary State Rep Targets for HB10

The NC legislature is moving an anti-immigrant bill, **HB 10**, that would mandate collaboration between federal immigration officials and local sheriff departments to hold and **detain** undocumented people arrested under their jurisdiction regardless of the charge. If you'd like to learn more about the harmful impacts of this bill, check our

Call the following key State Representatives as identified by Carolina Immigrant Network

1. Rep. Frank Sossamon (R - Vance, Greenville) - 919-733-5824, Frank.Sossamon@ncleg.gov
2. Rep. Cecil Brockman (D - Guilford) - 919-733-5825, Cecil.Brockman@ncleg.gov
3. Rep. John Bradford III (R – Mecklenburg) - 919-733-5828, John.Bradford@ncleg.gov
4. Rep. Tricia Cotham (R - Mecklenburg) - 919-733-5749, Tricia.Coatham@ncleg.gov
5. Rep. Ted Davis (R - New Hanover) - 919-733-5786, Ted.Davis@ncleg.gov

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I join others across the state in voicing my deep concern about HB 10.
- Sheriffs from across the state are speaking out in opposition to this bill - saying that immigration is a federal issue.
- The sheriffs want to provide safety and protection to all local residents, and we know that when ICE and Local law enforcement collaborate our communities are less safe.
- Thank you for your time.

Action 2 - Tell Gov. Cooper to Veto HB10 if it comes to his desk

Call Governor Roy Cooper - 919-814-2000 - Press Option 5 immediately

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.

- I am calling in regards to SB 10 - the bill that would require all NC sheriffs to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. I join others across the state in urging the Governor to Veto Senate Bill 10 when it eventually comes to his desk in the coming weeks.
- This bill is the latest iteration of laws across the country known as “show me your papers” attacking immigrant communities. We know that when ICE and Local law enforcement collaborate our communities are less safe.
- Thank you for your time.

Action 3 - Tell Your State Representative to Vote No on [HB 237](#).

Call 4 Members of Conference Committee

1. Chair Rep. John A. Torbett (R - Gaston) 919-733-5868, John.Torbett@ncleg.gov
2. Rep. Erin Paré (Rep - Wake) - 919-733-2962, Erin.Pare@ncleg.gov
3. Rep. Sarah Stevens (Rep - Surry & Wilkes) 919-715-1883, Sarah.Stevens@ncleg.gov
4. Representative Brian Biggs (Rep - Randolph) - 919-733-5865, Brian.Biggs@ncleg.gov

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I join others across our state in voicing my deep concern about HB 237, the quote “Unmasking Mobs and Criminals” bill.
- This will disproportionately impact immunocompromised individuals who need to wear masks for their safety.
- Moreover, it relies on police discretion to distinguish between those who are wearing a mask to protect their identities and those who are wearing one to protect themselves against disease. That ambiguity opens up even more space for discretionary and selective enforcement which will disproportionately impact black and brown communities.
- Please protect the rights of North Carolinians - and don't let HB 237 move out of your Conference Committee.

Action 4 - Fighting against HB823 - The Vouchers bill that would siphon a projected \$400+ million from our public schools – to put into the private school voucher program. Today we will tell our lawmakers to not prioritize a giveaway of taxpayer funding to wealthy families attending private schools over the needs of the 1.5 million children attending local public and charter schools. (NC Justice Center, Every Child NC)

Take Action - Send a letter to your elected officials through [Every Child NC's easy sign-on tool](#).

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative & Senator - [Find their Contact Info Here](#)

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling today to express my deep concern about **HB823**.
- As a taxpayer of this state, I do not want our state to give \$526 million to fund a private school vouchers program - especially now that the state has 1 billion dollars less revenue than anticipated for this year.
- And the money we do have should go to public schools. Our public schools face well-documented historic highs in teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, learning loss stemming from school closures during the pandemic, and shortages of nurses, counselors, and therapists in the face of unprecedented mental health challenges.

Announcements

Coming Soon - The Politics of Polarization - [Part 1](#) & 2 - Nathan Stock discussed the increasing polarization in American society, its underlying causes, and the potential consequences, including the rise in political violence. He also presented an analysis of the US political system and its majoritarian tendencies, minoritarian institutions, and their impact on democracy. The team also explored the effects of trauma on the brain and its influence on current society polarization, with a focus on the need for empathy and understanding, and the potential of conflict intervention and mediation.

Friday, May 17th - 207th

*** Today's sponsor is Joseph Spencer

Weekly Round-Up

- This week, Rev. Billy Graham's statue was unveiled in the US Capitol's [Statuary Hall Collection](#), replacing white supremacist [Charles Aycock](#) Reconstruction era politician who was the mastermind of the 1898 Red Shirt campaign that included the Wilmington Massacre. Congressman **Patrick McHenry**, (Rep. Lincoln County) is credited with calling for the Aycock statue to be removed. [N&O Article](#)
- UNC System's Proposed Rollback of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies will be voted on by the UNC Board of Governors at its May 22-23 meeting. This week write public comments to the BOG.
- **Update on Medical Debt Bill SB 321** - It will not move this session but has bi-partisan support and we will be all in on getting it passed in the 2025 long-session.
- This week, Senator Julie von Haefen filed [House Bill 958](#) - **the Workers Rights Act** that would significantly expand workers rights. It doesn't have a chance of moving - but it is a blueprint for what we need to build. It includes, End at-will employment, Eliminate sub-minimum wage for tipped employees, End retaliation for wage disclosure, Repeal the ban on public sector collective bargaining, Create an Ombuds office to allow state employees somewhere to report workplace conditions, and more.

- **Update on SB10** - “On Wednesday, the North Carolina House rejected [the Senate version of House Bill 10](#), a controversial measure that requires cooperation between all North Carolina sheriffs and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The House took issue with an amendment on the proposed bill that would have allowed anyone to file a complaint with the state attorney general if a sheriff fails to comply with the potential law.” - [NC Newsline](#) *** But we know it will eventually pass. After the commencement vote the bill will make its way to Governor Cooper’s desk where Gov. Cooper will have 10 days, including weekends to veto the bill - so we’ll be calling on Gov. Cooper to veto the bill this week.
- Today marks the 70th Anniversary of Brown v. Education. In related news - Racial segregation in North Carolina schools roars back - [Read Article](#)

Today’s Focus - New Anti-Protest Bill [HB 237](#). This bill claims to be geared towards “Unmasking Mobs and Criminals” but in actuality, is part of a wave of new anti-protest bills sweeping the country in response to Pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses.

HB 237 would

- Amend North Carolina’s existing ban on wearing masks in public to remove the exemption for masks worn “to ensure the physical health or safety of the wearer or others,” and provide for enhanced sentencing of someone convicted of any offense if they were wearing a mask or other device that concealed their identity at the time.
- Increase penalties for protesters who block traffic and for masked protesters who break any law. The bill would make it a Class A1 misdemeanor, punishable by up to 150 days in jail and a fine, to willfully impede traffic while participating in a demonstration intended to impede block traffic on a street or highway. Second and subsequent offenses would be a Class H felony, punishable by up to three years in prison.

The bill’s sponsor Rep. Newton [cited](#) recent protests on college campuses against Israel’s military campaign in Gaza, where some protesters have worn masks. The part of the bill that creates a new crime specifically for protests that block roads is in response to a tactic recent Black Lives Matter and pro-Palestinian protests have engaged in during demonstrations in Durham, Raleigh, and across the nation.

Politics behind the bill. There have been a rash of new anti-protest bills—nearly all introduced explicitly in response to the campus and street protests for Palestinian human rights. There are now 28 state and 4 congressional anti-protest bills pending on ICNL’s [Tracker](#).

Resources / Articles

- [States Dust Off Obscure Anti-Mask Laws to Target Pro-Palestine Protesters - ACLU](#)
- [America’s Ban on Masks in the Age of Facial Recognition Software - ACLU](#)
- <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/other/protesters-who-wear-masks-or-block-traffic-shou-ld-face-harsher-penalties-nc-lawmakers/ar-BB1IZbZc>

Action 1 - Tell Your State Representative to Vote No on [HB 237](#).

Find your State Representatives [Contact Information Here](#)

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I join others across our district and state in voicing my deep concern about HB 237, the quote “Unmasking Mobs and Criminals” bill.
- This bill is part of a wave of new anti-protest bills sweeping the country in response to Pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses.
- This will disproportionately impact immunocompromised individuals who need to wear masks for their safety.
- Moreover, it relies on police discretion to distinguish between those who are wearing a mask to protect their identities and those who are wearing one to protect themselves against disease. That ambiguity opens up even more space for discretionary and selective enforcement which will disproportionately impact black and brown communities.
- Please protect the rights of North Carolinians and vote no on HB 237.

Action 2 - Tell Governor Cooper to Veto HB10

The NC legislature is moving an anti-immigrant bill, **HB 10**, that would mandate collaboration between federal immigration officials and local sheriff departments to hold and **detain** undocumented people arrested under their jurisdiction regardless of the charge. If you’d like to learn more about the harmful impacts of this bill, check our

[Call Governor Roy Cooper](#) - 919-814-2000 - Press Option 5 immediately

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.
- I am calling in regards to SB 10 - the bill that would require all NC sheriffs to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. I join others across the state in urging the Governor to Veto Senate Bill 10 when it eventually comes to his desk in the coming weeks.
- This bill is the latest iteration of laws across the country known as “show me your papers” attacking immigrant communities. We know that when ICE and Local law enforcement collaborate our communities are less safe.
- Thank you for your time.

*** Bonus Action - If you’re on Twitter - you can use these sample tweets provided in this [No to SB10 Digital Toolkit](#) provided by the Carolina Migrant Network.

Action 3 - Submit Public Comment to UNC Board of Governors about the importance of DEI in UNC System before their big vote on May 23rd. * Action through NC Justice Center**

The UNC Board of Governors has proposed a policy that would roll back diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the UNC system, and we need your help. [Submit a comment to the Board of Governors by May 23](#) and tell them that DEI benefits all students

“All students—Black, Brown, and white students, disabled students, LGBTQ+ students, students from rural communities, students of all religions, and English language learners—should have access to safe, supportive, and well-resourced educational environments. A recent proposal from the UNC Board of Governors' (BOG) Committee on University Governance would eliminate the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policy adopted in 2017, jeopardizing the progress made in addressing systemic issues impacting the most marginalized communities in our state....” Read the [NC Justice Centers Full Statement Here](#).

Action 4 - Tell lawmakers to Vote No on HB 834 which threatens to undo recent progress in juvenile justice reform. * Action Organized by the NC Justice Center**

North Carolina took a significant step forward in 2019 by raising the age for most criminal cases involving 16 and 17-year-olds to be heard in Juvenile Court. This decision was based on the understanding that **the adult system is ill-equipped to address the unique needs of young people**. However, House Bill 834 aims to send more young people into the adult court system, putting their well-being and futures at risk. [House Bill 834](#) threatens to undo the progress we've made in juvenile justice reform.

Take Action through the NC Justice Centers easy Tool. [Click Here to Contact your Lawmaker](#).

Friday, May 10th, 2024 - Legislative Briefing on [HB 942](#) with Carolina Jews for Justice

Friday Action Hour #206 is Sponsored By Laurie Prentice-Dunn

And **Congratulations to Sam** who graduated from the University of Miami this morning! Let's take a picture to send him to him and his mom Sloan!

Weekly Round-Up

- On Wednesday, the NC House voted to pass HB 942 - a bill that would target people speaking out against Israeli policies and military conduct for hate speech, using a highly contested and problematic definition of antisemitism adopted by the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#). It now goes to the State Senate.
- UNC System's Proposed Rollback of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies will be voted on by the UNC Board of Governors at its May 22-23 meeting. Next week, we will write public comments to the BOG.
- On Monday, Israel warned thousands in Rafah to evacuate. On Wednesday "President Biden said the U.S. would not supply Israel with certain weapons if it moved forward with a major ground offensive in southern Gaza." - NYT
- Speaker Mike Johnson avoided an attempt to be removed as Speaker by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene. Democrats voted to keep him in the speakership.

This week, **Abby Lublin, Executive Director of [Carolina Jews for Justice](#)** will provide a Legislative Briefing on [HB 942 - the "SHALOM" Act](#). HB 942 is a bill quickly moving through the state legislature that would potentially harm people speaking out against Israeli policies and military conduct, using a highly contested and problematic definition of antisemitism adopted by the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#). Today, we'll unpack this bill and explain why it attacks free speech (the ACLU agrees!) and does not make the Jewish community safer.

Resources to Better Understand HB 942

- [New York Times Article: How Republicans Echo Antisemitic Tropes Despite Declaring Support for Israel](#)
- [New York Time Article: Paging Senator Schumer](#)
- [Rep. Jamie Raskin Statement on H.R. 6090, the Antisemitism Awareness Act](#)
- Hate Crimes Prevention Act (This is actually a good bill that will make us safer) <https://www.ncleg.gov/BillLookUp/2023/S437>

Action 1 - Fighting Against HB10 - The Anti-Immigrant bill would require NC sheriffs' to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. This bill has already passed in the Senate, and is now in the house. (Partnership - Muslim Women For, Comite de Accion Popular, El Pueblo)

Step 1 - Send a Letter to your House Rep with Muslim Women For - [Click Here](#) (and share!)

Step 2 - Call your NC House Rep. [Find their contact information here.](#)

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling to ask you to STOP the anti-immigrant bill, HB10. This bill will make immigrants in our community feel unsafe and cause detrimental economic impacts on our state.

- Our representatives should not waste community resources to take away power from local sheriffs we elected into office. We know that when ICE and local law enforcement collaborate, our communities are less safe.
- Vote NO on this bill. Thank you!

Action 2 - Thank 4 Reps for Voting Against HB 942.

"This bill will harm people speaking out against Israeli policies and military conduct, using a highly contested and problematic definition of antisemitism adopted by the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#). The "SHALOM" bill does not make us safer. It is an authoritarian tool that conflates free speech and hate crimes, producing a chilling effect on dissent overall." - CJJ (Partnership -Carolina Jews for Justice, ACLU). Next week, Abby Lublin from CJJ will be here to do a deeper dive into this bill.

Email the Four Representatives who Voted Against HB 942

Rep. Marcia Morey - Marcia.Morey@ncleg.gov

Rep. Renee Price - Renee.Price@ncleg.gov

Rep Nasif Majeed - Nasif.Majeed@ncleg.gov

Rep. Pricey Harrison - Pricey.Harrison@ncleg.gov

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I join others across the state, including Carolina Jews for Justice, and the North Carolina ACLU in thanking you for voting against HB 942, the "SHALOM" bill on Wednesday.
- This bill is intended to suppress constitutionally protected speech by using a definition of antisemitism that conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Political speech, including criticism of any government, is a core First Amendment protection.
- We look forward to working with you on the true work of advancing safety for Jewish people, and all people in North Carolina safer.

"Thank you so much for your commitment to the safety of every community, for standing up for democracy, and for voting NO on HB 942. I hope that your vote and ongoing conversations will educate other legislators that this bill is harmful to Jewish and non-Jewish communities who are critical of the Israeli government."

Action 3 - Consider signing on to UUA's Side With Love & The UU College for Social Justice's Statement supporting Student Activism on Gaza.

[Read Statement and sign-on Here.](#)

Statement supporting student activism on Gaza

Side With Love in collaboration with the Youth and Emerging Adult team of Lifespan Faith Engagement office, and the UU College of Social Justice, join in solidarity with Unitarian Universalist young adults and students across the globe, who are protesting the ongoing assault in Gaza. These protests are a response to the moral urgency of this moment. The assault on Gaza, sponsored by the United States, has killed more than 32,000 Palestinians. We cannot turn away. [We join the chorus of faith and progressive organizations calling for an immediate and lasting ceasefire and the protection of student activists.](#)

In the face of dehumanization, devastation, and death, human beings have always gathered to create life-affirming communities of resistance. Rooted in a strong lineage of student movements, this generation - like those protesting the Vietnam War, calling for the racial integration of their campuses, and for the end of apartheid in South Africa - are, again, asking this nation to embody its highest ideals of liberty and justice for all. Our values call on every generation to listen with care and compassion to the prophetic witness of these courageous students and offer faithful solidarity. We too must rise to meet the highest aspirations of our faith that rejects the disposability of any human being and proclaims all are worthy of love and belonging.

This generation of students has endured the trauma of COVID-19, school shootings, a climate crisis, and the brutality of U.S. police forces on their campuses and in their communities. It is time to turn around the question, "Where are the young people in our faith movement?" and instead ask, "Where are all of us, as people of faith, when our young people are showing up?" We must not turn away.

Side With Love proclaims the transformative power of love to build vibrant and liberated communities. This dangerous assault on civil liberties on college campuses and human rights at home and globally are connected. Too many of our justice movements (labor movement, Civil Rights, Gay liberation) have been met with sanctioned police brutality, imprisonment, and worse. We must not fail our students with our silence. We will not betray our faith with our complicity.

We call on university administrations and public officials to remove police from campuses, end the militarized response to student activism, and come to the table in good-faith negotiations with student demands. We call on our community to show up in solidarity. We welcome all, in this pivotal movement, to Side With Love.

Action 4 - Fighting against HB823 - The Vouchers bill that would siphon a projected \$400+ million from our public schools – to put into the private school voucher program. Today we will tell our lawmakers to not prioritize a giveaway of taxpayer funding to wealthy families attending private schools over the needs of the 1.5 million children attending local public and charter schools. (NC Justice Center, Every Child NC)

Take Action - Send a letter to your elected officials through [Every Child NC's easy sign-on tool.](#)

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative - [Find their Contact Info Here](#)

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling today to express my deep concern about **HB823**.
- As a taxpayer of this state, I do not want our state to give \$526 million to fund a private school vouchers program.
- It is morally irresponsible that you want to prioritize funding wealthy families attending private schools over the needs of the 1.5 million children attending local public and charter schools.
- Our public schools face well-documented historic highs in teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, learning loss stemming from school closures during the pandemic, and shortages of nurses, counselors, and therapists in the face of unprecedented mental health challenges.
- Legislators should prioritize funding for these critical resources that provide educational opportunities for the overwhelming majority of North Carolina families instead of giving away taxpayer money to the wealthiest North Carolina families, including those who already attend private schools.
- Hear us loud and clear, the people of this state will not let you dismantle our public school system.

Announcements -

- **North Carolina UU the Vote Launch - Tuesday, May 14th at 7:00pm.** Join UU Justice NC and UU's across the state for the official kick-off of our 2024 UU the Vote Campaign. We will be joined by National UU the Vote Organizer, Nora Rasman, Carolina Jews for Justice Executive Director Abby Lublin, and other guests from our partner organizations across NC. This year, our moral legacy is on the line. Together, we can organize the largest activation of UUs in our state's history. Let's get ready to UU the Vote!

Friday, May 3rd, 2024 - Legislative Session is in Full Swing!

Today's Action Hour is sponsored by Patricia Sledge!!!



Congratulations Sam!!!

Weekly Round-Up

- On Tuesday, Chapel Hill Police raided the student encampment at UNC protesting the war in Gaza. Six students were arrested and students suffered injuries. Town officials have condemned the 'aggressive police tactics' at UNC, and are calling for the charges to be dropped. This was a part of a week where law enforcement was called in to raid student Anti-War protest encampments across the country including at Columbia University, where overwhelming police presence and force was used. We will create more space to talk about this in the weeks ahead.
- On Wednesday, Arizona Lawmakers voted to Repeal the 1864 Abortion Ban. The vote passed with two republican lawmakers breaking with their party.
- The Office of State Budget and Management reported last week that the state will have [more than \\$1 billion in surplus money](#) for the 24-25 budget because revenue came out to \$34.4 billion instead of the \$33.4 billion they planned for. So they've got \$ to spend.
- "A new report shows North Carolina is making gains on starting pay for teachers, but the state still ranks near the bottom nationally in salaries for both new and experienced educators." [News & Observer Article](#). Projected to be 42nd in teachers pay - below neighboring states like Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia.
- Biden was in NC yesterday. In [Wilmington](#), he [touted a \\$3 billion federal program](#) to help water utilities nationwide replace outdated lead service lines. He also visited the families of four officers who were killed this week.
- Yesterday, people from across the state gathered in Raleigh for the Our Dollars, Our Future advocacy day. Shout out to the bus-load of UU's from Wilmington who had several productive meetings with their elected officials from New Hanover County.
- This week, in Charlotte, the United Methodist Church reversed a ban on gay clergy and voted to also allow same-sex marriages!
- This week, the NC legislative session is in full swing and we have a number of harmful bills that we believe will be voted on next Wednesday. Let's get to work.

Here's What's Moving in the General Assembly

Action 1 - Fighting Against HB10 - The Anti-Immigrant bill would require NC sheriffs' to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. This bill has already passed in the Senate, and is now in the house. (Partnership - Muslim Women For, Comite de Accion Popular, El Pueblo)

Step 1 - Send a Letter to your House Rep with Muslim Women For - [Click Here](#) (and share!)

Step 2 - Call your NC House Rep. [Find their contact information here.](#)

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling to ask you to STOP the anti-immigrant bill, HB10. This bill will make immigrants in our community feel unsafe and cause detrimental economic impacts on our state.
- Our representatives should not waste community resources to take away power from local sheriffs we elected into office. We know that when ICE and local law enforcement collaborate, our communities are less safe.
- Vote NO on this bill. Thank you!

Action 2 - Thank 4 Reps for Voting Against HB 942.

"This bill would criminalize speaking out against Israeli policies and military conduct, using a highly contested and problematic definition of antisemitism adopted by the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#). The "SHALOM" bill does not make us safer. It is an authoritarian tool that conflates free speech and hate crimes, producing a chilling effect on dissent overall." - CJJ (Partnership -Carolina Jews for Justice, ACLU). Next week, Abby Lublin from CJJ will be here to do a deeper dive into this bill.

Email the Four Representatives who Voted Against HB 942

Rep. Marcia Morey - Marcia.Morey@ncleg.gov

Rep. Renee Price - Renee.Price@ncleg.gov

Rep Nasif Majeed - Nasif.Majeed@ncleg.gov

Rep. Pricey Harrison - Pricey.Harrison@ncleg.gov

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I join others across the state, including Carolina Jews for Justice, and the North Carolina ACLU in thanking you for voting against HB 942, the "SHALOM" bill on Wednesday.

- This bill is intended to suppress constitutionally protected speech by using a definition of antisemitism that conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Political speech, including criticism of any government, is a core First Amendment protection.
- We look forward to working with you on the true work of advancing safety for Jewish people, and all people in North Carolina safer.

Action 3 - Fighting against HB823 - The Vouchers bill that would siphon a projected \$400+ million from our public schools – to put into the private school voucher program. Today we will tell our lawmakers to not prioritize a giveaway of taxpayer funding to wealthy families attending private schools over the needs of the 1.5 million children attending local public and charter schools. (NC Justice Center, Every Child NC)

Take Action - Send a letter to your elected officials through [Every Child NC's easy sign-on tool](#).

Call NC General Assembly Leadership

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative - [Find their Contact Info Here](#)

Basic Script:

- My name is ____, I live in ____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling today to express my deep concern about **HB823**.
- As a taxpayer of this state, I do not want our state to give \$526 million to fund a private school vouchers program.
- It is morally irresponsible that you want to prioritize funding wealthy families attending private schools over the needs of the 1.5 million children attending local public and charter schools.
- Our public schools face well-documented historic highs in teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, learning loss stemming from school closures during the pandemic, and shortages of nurses, counselors, and therapists in the face of unprecedented mental health challenges.
- Legislators should prioritize funding for these critical resources that provide educational opportunities for the overwhelming majority of North Carolina families instead of giving away taxpayer money to the wealthiest North Carolina families, including those who already attend private schools.
- Hear us loud and clear, the people of this state will not let you dismantle our public school system.

Announcements -

- **North Carolina UU the Vote Launch - Tuesday, May 14th at 7:00pm.** Join UU Justice NC and UU's across the state for the official kick-off of our 2024 UU the Vote Campaign. We will be joined by National UU the Vote Organizer, Nora Rasman, Carolina Jews for Justice Executive Director Abby Lublin, and other guests from our partner organizations across NC. This year, our moral legacy is on the line. Together, we can organize the largest activation of UUs in our state's history. Let's get ready to UU the Vote!
-

Friday, April 26th, 2024 - Early Voting Plan Advocacy Training with Common Cause NC

*** Friday Action Hour #204 is sponsored by Bernise Lynch. Thanks Bernise!

In the coming weeks, County Boards of Elections across the state will be meeting to pass their plans for early voting locations and hours. Our pro-democracy movement wants as many early voting days and hours as possible! The deadline for BOEs to pass these critically important plans was moved up by a few months, so we need to get skilled up fast in order to powerfully participate in this process. Today we are excited to receive an in-depth Early Voting Plan Advocacy Training from **Ann Webb and Tyler Daye from [Common Cause NC](#)**.

Weekly Round-Up

- Across the country this week, students on college campuses are protesting the war in Gaza - causing major disruptions to college finals and graduation plans. USC has canceled its main graduation ceremony, Columbia students are camping out on the lawn where their graduation is supposed to take place, and students across the country have been arrested. "They'll say we're disturbing the peace, but there is no peace. What really bothers them is that we are disrupting the war." Howard Zinn
- The 2024 Legislative Session has begun, and the N&O is reporting this week that the first major piece of legislation Republicans will take up during the short session will be the bill that would require all North Carolina sheriffs to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This will be the focus of next week's Action Hour.
- This week, Gov. Roy Cooper released his budget proposal for the 2024 legislative short session - which included significant 8.5% raises and bonuses for teachers. Let's turn out in Raleigh next week (Thursday, May 2nd) for the NC Budget & Tax Center's Our Dollar, Our Future Advocacy Day and fight for these much deserved raises.
- Last week, a UNC System board committee approved policy gutting DEI without objection or discussion. Students say they were kept out of the process. The full board will vote on it in May. [Sign this petition](#) in solidarity with University of North Carolina students from across the state who stand against the removal of DEI funding from UNC System schools. ** Request from Wyatt! Our Action Hour member / Student at NC State!
- A federal court has ruled that District Attorneys in North Carolina can no longer enforce a racist law allowing for the felony prosecution of individuals with prior felony convictions if they unknowingly or mistakenly cast a ballot without first regaining their eligibility to vote. U.S. District Court Judge Loretta Biggs ruled in a summary judgment ruling that the state's only strict liability voter prosecution law violated both the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment, and enjoined the law from being enforced in any prosecutions.

Common Cause NC Early Voting Plan Advocacy Training

1. Review our [Airtable](#) of the status of early voting plans, and identify if your county has voted yet or not.
 - a. If your county has passed a plan, but we don't have a copy of it in the sheet, please [call the CBOE](#) and ask for a copy of the **Early Voting Plan and also ask about when their board of elections budget will be discussed.**
 - b. **If your county has NOT yet voted on an early voting plan, please call or join a breakout room with other people from your county to plan action.** If it's not clear when your board will meet, have someone call the CBOE to ask. You can use the resources we've shared to get started.
 - c. If you don't have a county partner on the call, you can either reach out to other folks in your area, or we can work with you today!
 - d. Email Ann & Tyler with anything you find! awebb@commoncause.org ; tdaye@commoncause.org

Resources:

- [EV Plan Discussion Calendar](#) - When CBOEs will discuss EV Plans (always contact CBOE to confirm date, time, and location)
- [Early Voting Advocacy Talking Points Letters](#) - Talking Points/Data for every county
- [EV Sites Map Visualizer](#) - Shows EV sites from 2016-2022 and the percentage of non-white voters who used the site
- [Map of 2020 General Election Early Voting Sites](#)
- [PDF of 2020 General Election EV Sites](#)
- [PDF of 2016 General Election EV Sites](#)
- [County Boards of Elections Contact Info](#)
- More resources: demnc.co/earlyvoting (Including [a video](#) of the training you saw today)
- [CID Tool](#) - Early Voting Siting Tool
- ***If you attend a CBOE meeting (any time!) we would LOVE it if you can share a report with us using: ccnc.me/CBOEreport***

Announcements

- **Next Week We celebrate Sam's Graduation!** Get your confetti ready!

- **Our Dollars, Our Future - May 2nd from 10:00 - 2:00pm in Raleigh** (Halifax Mall, 16 W Jones St) Join the [NC Budget & Tax Center](#) for their second-annual day of action! Our state budget matters for almost every aspect of our daily lives — from the air we breathe and water we drink, to the quality of our kids' education — and yet powerful lawmakers are intentionally leaving us out of the process. Join people from across the state in meeting with legislative leadership to demand a more transparent and equitable budget process. We will also discuss how we can organize to ensure future budgets fund the services and programs our state needs so every North Carolinian — from Boone to Wilmington and all parts between — has what they need to thrive. [Register Here.](#)
- **North Carolina UU the Vote Launch - Tuesday, May 14th at 7:00pm.** Join UU Justice NC and UU's across the state for the official kick-off of our 2024 UU the Vote Campaign. We will be joined by National UU the Vote Organizer, Nora Rasman, Carolina Jews for Justice Executive Director Abby Lublin, and other guests from our partner organizations across NC. This year, our moral legacy is on the line. Together, we can organize the largest activation of UUs in our state's history. Let's get ready to UU the Vote! [Register Here!](#)

Friday, April 19th, 2024

Weekly Round-Up

- On Saturday, a LGBTQ story hour at the Durham Public Library was canceled due to a bomb threat. This is the second bomb threat of an LGBTQ story hour in the Triangle in a month. On March 16th a Drag Story hour was also canceled.
- The UNC System Board of Governor's committee approved a new policy Wednesday that would repeal the system's efforts to employ diversity officers and work toward diversity-related goals. If approved by the full board, it also would eliminate jobs related to DEI efforts. Many faculty members and students at the system's campuses immediately expressed concerns about the new policy. Others said they should have been involved in the conversation before it was up for a vote. -Raleigh News & Observer
- UNC Chapel Hill low-wage workers are in an ongoing battle with the institution to get free parking, higher wages. "All we're asking is for them to let the individuals that are making less than \$50,000 a year to not have to pay"
- In the next few weeks, our County BOEs will be meeting to pass their plans for early voting locations and hours. The deadline for county boards of elections to pass these critically important plans was moved up by a few months, so Common Cause NC, Democracy NC and Southern Coalition for Social Justice are teaming up to get us skilled up fast to participate in the process. Next week, we will be joined by Common Cause NC for an in-depth training followed by time to take action. You can also attend their training on Democracy NC and Southern Coalition for Social Justice to host an early voting plan advocacy training on Monday, April 22 at 6:00pm. [Register here.](#)
- This week House majority leader Tim Moore announced that a legislative short session priority would be to [increase funding for vouchers](#) for the coming year by around \$300 million to ensure that the state could fund vouchers for all families who applied. A closer

look at this year's applicants reveals a striking pattern: The majority come from families too wealthy to qualify for vouchers in previous years.

Action 1 - Tell Your State Legislators and Speaker Tim Moore - NO to Expanding NC School Vouchers! Use Our Tax Dollars To Pay Our Teachers!

*** Action Organized by [Public Schools First NC](#)

North Carolina teacher attrition is at its highest level in decades. Teachers are leaving the profession, and the number of new teachers coming into the profession is shrinking. North Carolina's beginning teacher pay is the lowest of states in the southern region, which puts North Carolina at a huge competitive disadvantage, made worse by the dismal salary growth across the years (see our [fact sheet](#) for details). Driving our teachers out of the classroom is hurting our children, our communities and our economy.

But instead of focusing on this dire situation, House leader Tim Moore said that his priority is to add ANOTHER \$300 million to fund vouchers this year so wealthier families can receive them too. North Carolina's voucher programs have been expanding for the past several years and allocations skyrocketed in 2023-24. New applications also ballooned to double previous years, helped by \$1,000,000 spent by the State (taxpayers!) to market the program. Now wealthy families qualify for vouchers. More than half of this year's applicants came from the two wealthiest tiers. To qualify for Tier 3, families (of four) must make \$115,000+ annually. Eighteen percent of the applicants came from Tier 4 where families of four must have annual incomes above \$259,000.

The General Assembly must focus on supporting the teachers who educate the overwhelming majority of North Carolina's students. Spending taxpayer funds on private school tuition instead of paying our public school teachers a professional wage is fiscally irresponsible and insulting to the millions of families who rely on our public school educators every day.

Our state constitution is clear – we are legally required to fund our public schools and that includes paying our teachers and not funding private schools who discriminate! The teacher exodus, coupled with fewer teachers entering the profession should motivate our state legislators to take quick and decisive action to improve conditions for teachers.

Step 1 - Sign Public Schools First NC's Petition - [Sign Petition Here](#)

Step 2 - Call Your State Representative, State Senator, Tim Moore and Phil Berger

- Speaker Tim Moore, 919-733-3451, Tim.Moore@ncleg.gov
- President Phil Berger, 919-733-5708, Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov
- Your State Representative & Senator - [Find their contact info here](#)

Basic Script

- Hi, my name is _____, I am a person of faith and a resident of _____

- I am calling in regards to the recent report that Speaker Tim Moore is championing a \$300 million expansion of our state's vouchers program.
- I join others across your district / the state in calling on you to support adequate funding for our public school educators and not fund unaccountable private, mostly religious schools that do not serve all children.
- It is fiscally irresponsible to spend our public tax dollars on programs that will primarily benefit rich people who already send their children to private schools. Show your support instead for our public school teachers and support staff that are educating the majority of our school-age children as mandated by our state's constitution!
- North Carolina teacher salaries have stagnated for more than a decade and are now lower than salaries in other southern region states. Our schools can't attract or retain quality educators when the NCGA puts them at a competitive disadvantage through skimpy funding that does NOT even keep up with inflation.
- We need to pay our teachers like their job is the most important job on our children's journey to become successful citizens...because it is.
- Please Fund Our Public School Educators, NOT Private School Vouchers.

Action 2 - Call / Text Campaign for Wendy's Workers at 3107 Shannon Rd in Durham, NC

*** Organized by the Union of Southern Service Workers

On March 8th, four Wendy's workers at the Shannon Rd store in Durham, NC decided to go on strike to fight for better working conditions. Their strike was a peaceful, lawful, four day strike protected by federal labor law, yet management has been retaliating against them and intimidating them since their return to work. This community call/text in campaign is to show both the four strikers and Wendy's corporate offices that Taurus ("Tar-us"), Kaisai ("Kay-sha"), Neveah ("Na-vey-a"), and Justice ("Just-is") have the support of Durham as they stand up for themselves. As the four workers told Wendy's, "this company is profitable because of our hard work, yet, our wages cannot cover the basics like food, rent, and utilities. We want to properly care for our families and work in a safe environment, so we are taking a stand to improve our future." They demanded:

We demand fair and consistent scheduling.

- We demand management give hours as requested and stop cutting hours.
- We demand an end to workers being harassed to come in on days off with short notice and threats to discipline when arriving within 30 minutes of a last minute shift.
- We demand an end to bomb threats, manipulation and threats of violence from management if you do not come in on your day off
- We demand an end to blocking transfers to the Hillsboro Rd location.

We demand fair pay we can build our lives on and an end to wage theft.

- We demand \$25 an hour for all employees.
- We demand the promised hired rate be fulfilled.
- We demand we are paid for the hours we work, on time.

- We demand management pays us the promised traveling pay per policy when we work at a different location.

We demand dignity and equal treatment.

- We demand better communication.
- We demand consistent uniform policy enforcement, and for discipline to wait until uniforms have arrived. Currently, ordered uniforms have not arrived but workers are verbally disciplined for not having the ordered uniforms.
- We demand new management and retraining on the handbook with policies that respect employees.

We demand health and safety.

- We demand all broken equipment gets fixed.
- Fix the cash register drawer which gets stuck, fix drink machines, oven, and grill as well as do regular maintenance, fix ceiling with exposed wires, and fix the windows in the lobby and fix the window in drive thru have been shot up.
- We demand regular maintenance and sanitation done on equipment.

We exercise our right to organize and we demand a seat at the table.

Wendy's Corporate Phone Numbers to call:

- Ethics and compliance hotline 1-800-256-8595
- Customer Service: 888-624-8140
- For Complaints: 1-614-764-3100
- 888-352-5267
- 916-445-1254
- 800-952-5210

Call Script:

Hi, my name is _____, and I'm calling with the Union of Southern Service Workers in support of the Wendy's workers at the Shannon Rd store in Durham, NC who walked out on strike Friday, March 8!! We support their demands for:

- Safe working conditions including immediately fixing broken glass in store
- \$25/hr pay; fair and on time payment of wages promised upon hire
- Back pay for lost hours strikers are missing due to retaliation they faced when they returned to work
- END to harassment, threats, and retaliation from management! Treat all employees with dignity and respect. That includes putting Taurus back on the work schedule!
- We are demanding you respect workers' federally protected right to organize-- stop cutting worker's hours, intimidating them, and telling them to sign pieces of paper stating they won't strike.
- Wendy's, your customers and our communities are watching!

Managers to text:

- Amy Arroyo (HR representative at Meritage Hospitality, Wendy's corporate): 616.213.0215 (ext 1022) —> CALL - This is a landline
- Janice's (District Manager): 336.639.0689 OR jtranter@mhgi.net
- Adrienne's (General Manager): 984.215.8716

Text Script:

Hey, my name is _____ and I'm with the Union of Southern Service Workers in support of the Wendy's workers at the Shannon Rd store in Durham, NC who walked out on strike Friday, March 8!! We support their demands for safe working conditions, fair and on time pay, and an END to harassment, threats, and retaliation from management. We demand you respect their federally protected right to organize-- stop cutting worker's hours, intimidating them, and telling them to sign pieces of paper stating they won't strike.

*** That includes putting Taurus back on the work schedule!

Note: Don't feel you need to get into a texting exchange or answer phone calls from general or district management. They have been hostile towards workers who went on strike.

Action 3 - Ask Your House Member to Support and Cosponsor H.R. 598, The Earth Bill***** Action Organized by our friends at UUSJ**

The Earth Bill was introduced in the 118th Congress by Rep. Espaillat (NY-13), with original cosponsors Rep. Velazquez (NY-07), Rep. Lee (CA-12), Rep. Nadler (NY-12), and Rep. Grijalva (AZ-07), with others joining upon introduction. The Earth Bill has been framed as a visionary, science-based, legislative proposal that seeks to leverage mandates to end climate pollution at the source, within industry. Importantly, it also seeks to deploy a timeline for compliance specifically designed to save current and future generations.

The Earth Bill focuses on three industrial elements: [electricity](#), [cars](#), and [food](#) as core consensus solutions with broad support among Americans. These industrial products have significant import for our economy, with extensive supply and production lines that shape and inform corporate practices, and contribute to climate pollution. Yet, most Americans agree our electricity should be renewable, our cars electric, and our food produced using healthy practices.

Earth Bill Network advocates see an opportunity for the bill to create movement energy and:

- Apply new legal mandates, authorize grants, and impose requirements on industry
- Grant the Secretary of Agriculture authority to issue regulations requiring the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and advance animal welfare standards
- Amend the Internal Revenue Code, adding a section for Climate Transition Costs

- Establish oversight from the following departments: The Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Agriculture.

Ask Your House Member to Support and Cosponsor, H.R. 598 [Take Action Here](#)

Last but not least, express gratitude to an individual and/or organization who is spreading love and fighting for justice in this world. Send them a text, give them a call, write a letter, or post a message of gratitude on their Facebook page! Never underestimate the power of gratitude.

Announcements

- Earth Day Gathering - Tuesday, April 23rd at 7:00 pm ET Join UU Ministry for Earth on the Full Moon closest to Earth Day so we may all find time to ground, recenter, and imagine what is possible for Earth. There will be time for reflection and small group sharing. [Register Here.](#)
- **North Carolina UU the Vote Launch - Tuesday, May 14th at 7:00pm.** Join UU Justice NC and UU's across the state for the official kick-off of our 2024 UU the Vote Campaign. We will be joined by National UU the Vote Organizer, Nora Rasman, Carolina Jews for Justice Executive Director Abby Lublin, and other guests from our partner organizations across NC. This year, our moral legacy is on the line. Together, we can organize the largest activation of UUs in our state's history. Let's get ready to UU the Vote! Registration Coming Soon!
- The deadline for county boards of elections to pass early voting plans was moved up by a few months, so Common Cause NC, Democracy NC and Southern Coalition for Social Justice are teaming up to get us skilled up fast to participate in the process. Next Friday at Action Hour, we will be joined by Common Cause NC for an in-depth training followed by time to take action. You can also attend their training on Democracy NC and Southern Coalition for Social Justice to host an early voting plan advocacy training on **Monday, April 22 at 6:00pm.** [Register here.](#)
- The Poor Peoples Campaign (ppc) (led by William Barber) and coordinated with NC PPC Coordinating Committee we have a major Speak to Power at N.C. Legislative Mall starting at 11am 1 E Morgan St, Raleigh, N.C. with great speeches, then going into N.C. Legislative bldg. and speak to representatives/senate; my contact info is: Jim Norris ; txt/call 3364808172 ; email: norris@wfu.edu

Friday, April 12, 2024 - Tax Day Actions with the NC Budget & Tax Center

- Today's guest host - Ann Zimmerman! (Lisa is on vacation!)
- Today's Community Partner Guest! Heba Atwa, Legislative Advocacy & Campaigns Manager at the North Carolina Budget and Tax Center.
- And thank you to today's sponsor of Action Hour #202 Lou Gadoll!
- And welcome to anyone here for the first time!

Weekly Round-Up

- This week, 24 million people watched the Women's College Basketball Final between Iowa and South Carolina. This marks the first time in history that viewership for the Women's Final was larger than the Men's Final! Woohoo!
- This week, people from Texas to New Hampshire experienced the awe of a total solar eclipse.
- Tomorrow in Raleigh, there will be a Christian Nationalist anti-LGBTQ Rally in Raleigh, as part of a national day of action. The facebook details say - "We will pray, fast, and stand with our families at every state capital on April 13th. If this is America's last stand, we must stand." There will be a Pro-LGBTQ counter protest called "March with Pride to the Capital" from 11:30 - 3:00. Participants are invited to meet at Freedom Park at 11:30.
- "A lawsuit accusing NC officials of unnecessarily warehousing foster children in locked psychiatric facilities has survived the Department of Health and Human Services' effort to dismiss the case. The federal complaint contends that the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services discriminates against hundreds of North Carolina foster kids with disabilities by warehousing them for extended periods of time in short-term psychiatric residential treatments facilities." - [Raleigh News and Observer](#)
- "Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson told a Wake County Republican group in December 2023 that he believes our state's woefully underfunded public schools are [being given too much money](#), according to audio of his speech obtained by The News & Observer. Robinson told the East Wake Republican Club that "it has already been proven that school systems get better results on less money," and that "cutting the fat" out of the education budget would be "essential."
- "This week, The DOJ released final rules that will close the "gun show loophole" for background checks... the loophole allowed sellers who sold guns at trade shows, on the internet, and out of car trunks to avoid conducting background checks."
- What did we miss?

Today's Tax Day Action - Call for the State to Choose NC Communities, not Corporations.
Led by Heba Atwa - NC Budget and Tax Center.

A TAX DAY TOOLKIT

In this Tax Day engagement and advocacy toolkit, you will find ways to share facts, stories, and the importance of tax policy and public investments that prioritize the wellbeing of workers, families, and communities.

Theme:

State and local taxes are how communities in North Carolina come together to fund the systems and institutions that we all care about. No matter where we come from or what we look like, we all want access to great schools and teachers, safe roads and effective public transit, and beautiful parks and libraries to enjoy with our loved ones. However, right now **our tax policies ask low- and middle- income taxpayers to contribute more of their share of income in total state and local taxes than millionaires and corporations.**

For more than a decade, NC lawmakers have chosen to eliminate taxes for big corporations and cut taxes for the wealthy instead of investing in the programs and services that provide access to opportunity for all. These tax cuts have done nothing to make progress on the challenges we face. There is a better way. Instead, **we could keep the corporate income tax at 2.5 percent and keep about 2 billion in revenue a year we'd otherwise lose**, and pass equitable tax policies like a state [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) that keep workers and families out of poverty and are proven to improve education and health outcomes, and have positive impacts on the wellbeing of both kids and parents in claiming families.

Core points to communicate:

- **Our tax code is inequitable**, it asks for those with less to pay more as a share of their income. More than 10 years of tax cuts have disproportionately benefited the wealthy and corporations.
- **We pay our taxes and yet state lawmakers have decided corporations do not have to pay theirs.** The scheduled corporate income tax elimination would mean at least \$2 billion less annually to fund public schools, roads and other basic needs we have in our day-to-day lives.
- **Taxes fund our future**; they deliver the services and support we need to thrive so that nothing stands in the way of us providing a great life for our families.
- **Our work creates the wealth that fuels corporate profits and our public dollars bolster businesses bottom-lines.** People drive our economy and making sure that people have what they need will deliver the well-being that flows through our communities to generate better outcomes. When our policymakers ensure corporations pay what they owe, we are asking certain businesses to have a stake in our collective effort.

Action 1: Petition to Demand That the NC General Assembly Choose Our Communities Over Corporations

Step 1: Sign the petition: <https://ncbudget.org/choosecommunities/>

Step 2: Ask your networks to sign the petition

Action 2: Share information about NC's tax code with your networks on social media

SAMPLE TWEETS: Be sure to use #ncga #ncpol, and if you want to tag or send a message to your legislator, you can find their twitter handle here if they are on Twitter.

- [Senators twitter handles can be found here](#)
- [Representatives twitter handles can be found here](#)

SAMPLE GRAPHICS: Click the graphic you want to use and it will direct you to download it to your computer.



Follow us @ncbudgetandtax to retweet and share graphics.

- Those with the lowest incomes are paying the most in taxes in NC! It's time for equitable tax policies like keeping the corporate income tax, and funding a state EITC and CTC.
- We pay taxes to build communities that ensure everyone in NC has access to the programs and services needed to thrive. But NC lawmakers have decided profitable corporations don't have to pay a dime! Keep the NC Corporate Income Tax!
- Tax cuts over the last ten years have largely benefited corporations and the wealthy, resulting in nearly \$12 billion less in personal income tax revenue in 2023 than we would have had without the cuts.
- #NC faces growing economic inequality and a low-wage economy that doesn't support people's well-being. -Tax cuts don't fix that. Keep the Corporate Income Tax!
- Of the 44 states that have a corporate income tax, NC's rate of 2.5% is the lowest. Cutting it altogether means \$2 billion less annually for our communities.
- NC lawmakers should choose the well-being of children and communities over zero taxes for corporations. We need a generous, refundable Child Tax Credit!
- NC lawmakers rejected policies like refundable tax credits for workers and families while voting to eliminate the corporate income tax entirely!
- Tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations have failed to deliver on promised benefits for regular NC families – it is past time for legislative leaders in the General Assembly to choose communities over corporations.

Action 3: Write a Letter to the Editor

1. The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- Remember to keep your Letter under 250 words. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit. You can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts.

2. Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- For too long, a handful of politicians in North Carolina have let wealthy corporations rig the rules to favor their campaign contributions over our contributions for each other. It's time to demand our leaders make corporations pay what they owe through taxes. That's how we show up for each other and make sure everyone has the freedom to thrive, delivering the quality public education that our children are owed.
- NC leaders have chosen to make the corporate income tax rate ZERO by 2030, instead of using our shared resources to pay for the things that make our state a great place to live and work.
- As our work has made North Carolina prosper, a greedy few have rigged the rules to redirect resources from our communities to their country clubs, from our classrooms to their ballrooms, & from our public parks to their private jets.
- Although nearly [one in five children](#) live below the poverty line in North Carolina, legislative leaders are choosing tax cuts for corporations over tax credits that lift kids out of poverty.
- Policymakers in North Carolina have created a tax code that asks people with the lowest incomes to pay more than their share of taxes while the richest North Carolinians pay the smallest portion of their incomes. And to make matters worse, lawmakers have voted to phase out the corporate income tax entirely — meaning that starting in 2030, profitable corporations will pay no state income taxes in North Carolina.
- North Carolina state lawmakers should implement a generous, fully refundable NC Child Tax Credit (CTC) for low- and moderate-income families, choosing the wellbeing of children and communities over zero taxes for large corporations.

3. Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a person of faith, I believe....
- In _____ county, keeping the corporate income tax would mean more funding for _____

- As a mother / father / caregiver, more funding for (affordable childcare, jobs training, etc) would let me and my neighbors take care of our families

4. Talking Points about taxes in North Carolina:

North Carolina lawmakers have repeatedly passed policies that make our state and local tax system more inequitable

- North Carolina lawmakers have repeatedly passed policies that make our state and local tax system more inequitable in recent years. They have created a tax code that asks people with the lowest incomes to pay more than their share of taxes while the richest North Carolinians pay the smallest portion of their incomes.
- Legislative leaders claim this decade of tax cuts has benefited our state, but in reality, the disproportionate benefit is enjoyed by the wealthiest North Carolinians and profitable corporations, while the rest of us experience declining investment in the services and programs that mean access to opportunity for the vast majority of North Carolinians, like public education, and clean air and water.
- In North Carolina, the lowest-income taxpayers who make under \$22,000 pay a higher share of their incomes in state and local taxes than any other income group.
- North Carolinians with incomes under \$22,000 pay a 75 percent higher share of their income in state and local taxes than the richest 1 percent.
 - [NC families with incomes below \\$22,000 pay almost 11% of their income in state and local taxes, while the richest 1% of households pay just 6%.](#)
 - Comparing the 2023 personal income tax rate to the personal income tax rate after all scheduled cuts are in effect clearly shows the income levels that will benefit the most from scheduled cuts. Based on 2023 incomes in North Carolina, cutting the personal income tax rate from 4.75% to 2.49%:
 - \$0-The tax cut given to an early childhood educator earning on average \$25,000 who is single with two kids. Meanwhile a single millionaire with two kids enjoys a \$14,700 tax cut
 - \$480-The tax cut given to a 15-year teaching veteran and single mother of one, earning \$53,000. Meanwhile, a single millionaire with one child will receive a tax cut of \$14,700.
- The scheduled elimination of the corporate income tax and continued reductions in the personal income tax rate will mean a loss of [over \\$13 billion in public money per year](#) when fully enacted.

[Eliminating the corporate income tax will enrich wealthy shareholders and executives — and make North Carolina's tax code more unequal.](#)

- Legislative leaders in the NC General Assembly have chosen big corporations over North Carolina's people, homegrown businesses, and future generations by passing policy that will eliminate the state corporate income tax beginning in 2030.

- When these corporations no longer contribute to our state by paying these taxes, North Carolina will have \$2 billion less in public money, a number that will grow each year. This is even though corporations, like all of us, benefit from countless public investments — from the education that prepares our workforce to the roads that get goods to market. Just like people in North Carolina pay taxes on our incomes, corporations should pay taxes on the profits they realize.
- Corporate income taxes are mostly passed on to affluent shareholders or to highly paid managers and executives, many of whom live outside of North Carolina. Over 80 percent of corporate tax cuts in North Carolina flow out of state. NC workers on the other hand, have received little to no benefit from recent corporate income tax cuts.
- We must come together this year to demand that our leaders stop these tax cuts for wealthy corporations, which will redirect our resources away from the priorities that people across the state have identified: affordable child care, a sound basic education for every child, safe drinking water and support for the small businesses that anchor main streets across our state.
- Most of the companies that pay the corporate income tax in North Carolina operate in multiple states and have profits of more than \$25 million — 72 percent of all corporate income tax collections in our state come from these companies
- 75 percent of employment growth in NC is generated by small, homegrown businesses, not large multi-state corporations that will benefit from the corporate tax elimination.
- More than 40 years of research has found that income tax cuts for corporations may have a small effect, but more likely no impact, on economic growth.¹³ That is because the loss of public funding can lead to less investment in the public services, like education and infrastructure, that businesses need.
- State and local taxes account for just ¼ of 1 percent of all business expenses, so tax breaks are unlikely to drive hiring decisions.

A generous and fully refundable state EITC would improve the wellbeing, and health and education outcomes of children and parents in claiming families.

- Tax policies coming out of the General Assembly over the last decade – including the elimination of a graduated personal income tax, continuous decreases in the now flat personal income tax rate, and the scheduled elimination of the corporate income tax – have made the tax load carried by working families with the lowest incomes heavier. A generous and refundable state tax credit for working families would reduce some of that harm.
- From grocery store workers to home health aides to early childhood educators, workers across North Carolina contribute to our state's economy every day, but North Carolina's upside-down tax code asks these families to pay more in taxes as a share of their income than the wealthiest in NC.

- When fully enacted, the elimination of the corporate income tax will cost the state more than [\\$2 billion in a single year](#), far exceeding the [\\$482 million](#) it would take to enact a generous and refundable state EITC at 20% of the federal credit.
- A refundable state EITC set at 20% of the federal credit would provide a financial boost of over \$400 and reach an estimated [23 percent of North Carolina families](#). The benefits of this boost in income to households is clear: more dollars translate into [reduced child poverty](#), [better health outcomes](#), [higher educational achievement](#), and [greater lifetime earnings](#). Families in every district across the state – [including one million North Carolinian children](#) -- would benefit from a state EITC.
- Because barriers in access to high-wage work have caused Black and Latinx families to be overrepresented at the lower end of the state's income distribution, a state EITC would also improve racial equity while correcting our upside-down tax code.

Access to quality, free tax preparation programs like the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program Ensures those eligible claim all beneficial tax credits:

- To fully realize the benefits of state level tax credits for workers and families, North Carolina also needs to ensure that families eligible for tax credits actually receive them. Right now, only [79% of NC households](#) eligible for the federal EITC claimed it in tax year 2021.
- State investments in a free tax preparation infrastructure would immediately generate returns for communities by putting more dollars in the pockets of workers, who will spend it in ways that support their families and local economies. If every eligible family had claimed the federal EITC in recent tax years, more than \$300 million additional dollars would have flowed through North Carolina communities each year and [supported spending on necessities like food and housing](#).

A fully refundable state CTC will help families afford the basics, boost local economies, and slash elevated child poverty levels across the state.

- Nearly [one in five children](#) live below the poverty line in North Carolina – that's less than \$29,950 a year for a family of four.
- A bold state CTC for low- and moderate-income North Carolinians would reduce child poverty by nearly one-third.
- Child Tax Credits are linked to improved infant and maternal health, better school performance, increased college enrollment, and greater lifetime earnings in the next generation.
- It would cost the state a little over \$2 billion each year to reduce child poverty in NC by nearly one-third through a refundable CTC-Almost the same amount the elimination of the corporate income tax will cost us in just the first year alone.

5. What's at Stake

- NC is almost dead last in school funding, and NC leaders want to make it worse by not making profitable corporations pay what they owe through taxes.
- Keeping NC's corporate tax rate would provide for our kids' education.
- Teacher pay is far behind the national average as the price of basic needs soars. Demand lawmakers stop giving away tax cuts to corporations and pay dedicated teachers what they're worth.
- The boosts our economy needs are things like removing the barriers to work that face North Carolinians, like access to affordable childcare, transportation and job training, and focusing on producing more homegrown entrepreneurs and on helping startups and young, fast-growing firms already located in the state to survive — not cutting taxes and trying to lure businesses from other states.
- Tax cuts have failed to deliver promised benefits while undermining our ability to pay for things North Carolinians need.
- [Funding elections increases voter turnout in North Carolina.](#)

6. Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- NC leaders need to choose our communities over corporations.
- It's time to demand our leaders make corporations pay what they owe North Carolina through taxes & pay us a fair return on our work. That's how we show up for each other, delivering the [name what you hope to accomplish: i.e. "good-paying jobs & affordable care" or "better schools & quality healthcare"] that ensure all NC families can thrive.
- When our leaders make wealthy corporations pay what they owe our state through taxes, we will make North Carolina a place where we all have what we need to overcome our challenges and keep our families safe and well.
- It's time for North Carolinians across our state to come together to demand our leaders rewrite the rules, so nothing stands in the way of us providing a great life for our families. We're demanding the services & support needed to see ourselves through, in good times & bad.
- It's time for our lawmakers to choose the programs and services we rely on to thrive, not more tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy.
- While adoption of a state Earned Income Tax Credit would be a meaningful move towards recognizing the contributions of regular North Carolinians to our economy, it can't be the only step lawmakers take to make sure that our tax policies work for working people. We must keep the corporate income tax.
- There's still time to stop the scheduled elimination of the corporate income tax. North Carolina needs all corporations to pay what they owe so that workers, homegrown businesses, and communities have what we need to drive our economy forward.

7. When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link.](#)

Closing Announcements

- **Join the North Carolina Budget & Tax Center on Thursday, May 2nd** in Raleigh for a day of advocacy to take the budget back to the people. We will be requesting meetings with legislative leadership to demand a more transparent and equitable budget process, and joining together to discuss how we can organize to ensure future budgets fund the services and programs our state needs so every North Carolinian — from Boone to Wilmington and all parts between — has what they need to thrive.
- Tomorrow, April 13th in Raleigh, there will be a Christian Nationalist anti-LGBTQ Rally in Raleigh, as part of a national day of action. April 13th. There will be a Pro-LGBTQ counter protest called “March with Pride to the Capital” from 11:30 - 3:00. Participants are invited to meet at Freedom Park at 11:30.

Friday, April 5th - 2024 State Legislative Session Review

Weekly Round-Up

- This week seven aid workers with World Central Kitchen were killed in Israeli strikes.
- President Biden told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that U.S. policy on the war in Gaza will be determined by whether Israel takes "a series of specific, concrete and measurable steps" to address deaths of civilians and [aid workers in the territory](#).
- According to the [State of the Teaching Profession report](#) presented Wednesday to the State Board of Education - 10,373 of North Carolina's 90,638 teachers left their profession between March 2022 and March 2023. 1 in 9 teachers have left the profession.
- This week, the Florida Supreme Court Ruled that Yes on 4 (which establishes a constitutional amendment that would protect Floridian's access to abortion.) can be on the November ballot. Gov. DeSantis has said that there is no way that they will get the 60% of the votes required to pass the measure, but at least 30% of the ballot initiative signatures were from registered Republicans. Many UU Congregations were ballot measure drop-off locations and UUs collected thousands of signatures. The interim director of the Yes on 4 campaign, Taylor Aguilar is a UU.
- Yesterday, April 4th was the 56th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's murder in Memphis.
- Way to go NC State! Both Men's and Women's basketball teams have made it to the Final Four!

Today's Focus - A Preview of the 2024 State Legislative Session

The 2024 NC Legislative Session will be kicking off in a few short weeks. This Friday, we will receive a briefing on all the bills that we will be advocating for, and those that we'll be fighting against during this year's "short session."

First, the basics:

- In 2024, the North Carolina General Assembly is scheduled to convene on *April 24* and adjourn on July 31.
- This is called the “short session.” The NC General Assembly holds a “Long session” on even years - and in this session passes the budget for the two year legislative cycle. We are currently in the 2023-24 Legislative Session. The short session is on election years. It includes small changes to the budget, and other bills but typically ends in mid-summer, leaving the rest of the year to focus on elections.
- You can follow all these bills through the website [NCLeg.gov](https://www.ncleg.gov) You can also find your elected officials (and how they voted), the legislative calendar, and other useful info on this site.

Our go to resource - [The North Carolina Justice Center’s 2024 People-First Policy Agenda.](#)

This rich document, “unpacks the opportunities the 2024 legislative session presents for the General Assembly to reconsider our state’s budget and tax plan and take important actions to ensure all North Carolinians have an opportunity to share in prosperity. This agenda reflects policy choices that will expand access to robust public educational opportunities, meaningful work opportunities, and critical safety net supports to insulate households and local economies against a potential downturn. Our recommendations seek to strengthen consumer protections, safeguard the dignity of all North Carolinians, and ensure stability for the years ahead.”

TAXES

- We need to ensure the state has available revenue to support economic opportunity
- Repeal scheduled reductions in corporate income tax rates; hold at the current and regionally competitive rate of 2.5 percent.
- Repeal scheduled reductions in individual income tax rates; hold at the current rate, 4.5 percent.
- Oppose HB 146, the Taxpayer Protection Act, a constitutional amendment that would limit the state’s ability to generate revenue into the future.

*** Key partnership [The NC Budget & Tax Center](#)

MEDICAL DEBT

- Support SB 321, Medical Debt De-Weaponization Act, model legislation that would strengthen consumer protections against medical debt and require large healthcare facilities to provide patients with a financial assistance policy and post price information.

*** Key partnership [The NC Justice Center’s Health Advocacy Team](#)

EDUCATION

- Fully fund the Leandro Comprehensive Remedial Plan and reverse the diversion of public revenue from public to private education.
- Students Bill of Rights?

*** Key partnership [Every Child NC](#)

SB739 - Defining Antisemitism in NC

*** Key Partnership [Carolina Jews for Justice](#)

- Oppose [SB 739](#): based on what was proposed last year; awaiting details of this year's version and timeline. Adopts IHRA definition of antisemitism, which cites examples including criticism of and activism opposing policies of State of Israel. Conflates Jews with Israel; criminalizes dissent; curtails free speech; exploiting Jews in name of "safety" while driving wedges to make us singled out, less safe, and in service of apocalyptic salvation (basis of Christian Zionism & Evangelicalism). Makes case for resourcing further police protection and militarization of Jewish institutional spaces.
- The campaign to adopt and implement the IHRA definition is bad for Jews and Palestinians, and for human and civil rights.
- One more tool in kit for authoritarianism, curtailing of rights..
- Resource: [Diaspora Alliance](#)
 - [IHRA Explainer and Messaging](#)
- What we fight FOR!: Keeping us (all) safe means investing in what we need to thrive: public education, health care, rights, public infrastructure, free & fair elections, etc.
 - Hate Crimes Prevention Bill!

IMMIGRATION

- Oppose HB 10, Require Sheriffs to Cooperate with ICE, an anti-immigrant bill that circumvents the local authority of sheriffs by requiring them to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).
- Oppose HB 167, Community Action ID Card Restrictions; this bill specifically target community IDs as a prohibited form of identification.

*** Key partnership [El Pueblo](#), Carolina Immigrant

Other Notes on the Session

- "Senate leader Phil Berger took a step back from pushing to usher more casinos into North Carolina on Wednesday, saying that he was not "intent on moving anything in particular" related to casinos during the state's short legislative session." [N&O](#)

Read more at:

<https://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/article285477572.html#storylink=cpy>

Action 1 - Call / Text Campaign for Wendy's Workers at 3107 Shannon Rd in Durham, NC

*** Organized by the Union of Southern Service Workers

Managers to text:

- Amy Arroyo (HR representative at Meritage Hospitality, Wendy's corporate): 616.213.0215 (ext 1022)
- Janice's (District Manager): 336.639.0689 OR jtranter@mhgi.net
- Adrienne's (General Manager): 984.215.8716

Wendy's Corporate Phone Numbers to call:

- Ethics and compliance hotline 1-800-256-8595
- Customer Service: 888-624-8140
- For Complaints: 1-614-764-3100
- 888-352-5267
- 916-445-1254
- 800-952-5210

Call Script:

Hi, my name is _____, and I'm calling with the Union of Southern Service Workers in support of the Wendy's workers at the Shannon Rd store in Durham, NC who walked out on strike Friday, March 8!! We support their demands for:

- Safe working conditions including immediately fixing broken glass in store
- \$25/hr pay; fair and on time payment of wages promised upon hire
- Back pay for lost hours strikers are missing due to retaliation they faced when they returned to work
- END to harassment, threats, and retaliation from management! Treat all employees with dignity and respect
- We are demanding you respect workers' federally protected right to organize-- stop cutting worker's hours, intimidating them, and telling them to sign pieces of paper stating they won't strike.
- Wendy's, your customers and our communities are watching!

Text Script:

Hey, my name is _____ and I'm with the Union of Southern Service Workers in support of the Wendy's workers at the Shannon Rd store in Durham, NC who walked out on strike Friday, March 8!! We support their demands for safe working conditions, fair and on time pay, and an END to harassment, threats, and retaliation from management. We demand you respect their federally protected right to organize-- stop cutting worker's hours, intimidating them, and telling them to sign pieces of paper stating they won't strike.

Note: Don't feel you need to get into a texting exchange or answer phone calls from general or district management. They have been hostile towards workers who went on strike.

Background

On March, 8th, four Wendy's workers at the Shannon Rd store in Durham, NC decided to go on strike to fight for better working conditions. Their strike was a peaceful, lawful, four day strike protected by federal labor law, yet management has been retaliating against them and intimidating them since their return to work. This community call/text in campaign is to show both the four strikers and Wendy's corporate offices that Taurus ("Tar-us"), Kaisai ("Kay-sha"), Neveah ("Na-vey-a"), and Justice ("Just-is") have the support of Durham as they stand up for themselves. As the four workers told Wendy's, "this company is profitable because of our hard work, yet, our wages cannot cover the basics like food, rent, and utilities. We want to properly

care for our families and work in a safe environment, so we are taking a stand to improve our future.” They demanded:

We demand fair and consistent scheduling.

- We demand management give hours as requested and stop cutting hours.
- We demand an end to workers being harassed to come in on days off with short notice and threats to discipline when arriving within 30 minutes of a last minute shift.
- We demand an end to bomb threats, manipulation and threats of violence from management if you do not come in on your day off
- We demand an end to blocking transfers to the Hillsboro Rd location.

We demand fair pay we can build our lives on and an end to wage theft.

- We demand \$25 an hour for all employees.
- We demand the promised hired rate be fulfilled.
- We demand we are paid for the hours we work, on time.
- We demand management pays us the promised traveling pay per policy when we work at a different location.

We demand dignity and equal treatment.

- We demand better communication.
- We demand consistent uniform policy enforcement, and for discipline to wait until uniforms have arrived. Currently, ordered uniforms have not arrived but workers are verbally disciplined for not having the ordered uniforms.
- We demand new management and retraining on the handbook with policies that respect employees.

We demand health and safety.

- We demand all broken equipment gets fixed.
- Fix the cash register drawer which gets stuck, fix drink machines, oven, and grill as well as do regular maintenance, fix ceiling with exposed wires, and fix the windows in the lobby and fix the window in drive thru have been shot up.
- We demand regular maintenance and sanitation done on equipment.

We exercise our right to organize and we demand a seat at the table.

Friday, March 29th - Celebrating our 200th Friday Action Hour

Today's Action Hour is sponsored in loving memory of **Barbara Gulick**, original Friday Action Hour member who passed away two years ago on Easter Sunday. We love you, Barbara.

Welcome to our Special Guests - Nicole Pressley, Director of the UUA's Side With Love Organizing Strategy Team, The Texas UU Justice Ministry, and Carolina Jews for Justice.

2020 Year in Review

- Our first action hour was on May 8, 2020 and our first action was calling on NCGA Leadership to Expand Medicaid. First song - Keep on Moving Forward.
- Early Days – During the Trump Administration we advocated for Covid 19 relief funding, preparing the 2020 election for the COVID-19 crisis, fully funding the US Postal Service when Louis DeJoy wanted to sabotage it, and not prematurely ending the 2020 census.
- May - Demanding Justice for Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, [Tony McDade](#) and on May 25 “George Floyd, a 46-year old African-American was killed by Derek Chauvin, a white Minneapolis police officer, who knelt on Floyd's neck for at least seven minutes while he was handcuffed and lying face down on the road, including around four minutes after Floyd stopped moving.” On that day, we called Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman demanding justice for George Floyd.
- This led to a summer of uprising. Together we witnessed national protests, advocated for confederate statues to come down, and joined a national reckoning around police violence.
- Action Hour Culture – Music, Gratitude and Confetti. Average Attendance: 3-5 people. There was only 1 week in 2020 when no one showed up.
- In 2020 we began calling for Dontae Sharpe (Greenville, NC) to be pardoned and receive compensation for being wrongfully convicted and incarcerated for over 25 years.
- In September, Ruth Bader Ginsberg died and we called on Sen. Tillis to not support Trump's nomination of Amy Coney Barrett less than one month before the election. On August 9th 2016, when speaking about Merrick Garland's nomination, Thom Tillis said “Voters, not a lame-duck president, should decide the composition of the highest court in the land.”
- We Ended year with the 2020 Presidential Election of Joe Biden, the run-off election in Georgia and “Stop the Steal” events across the country.

2021 Year in Review

January

- Jan. 5: The Rev. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff win in Georgia's runoff election, giving Democrats control of the Senate.
- Jan. 6th Insurrection. Violent Trump supporters storm the Capital. It delays but doesn't stop Congress from certifying the election - although seven NC Reps vote against the certification. (We hold Action Hours for congregations in districts of the “Seditious 7”)
- Jan 20th - President Joe Biden is Inaugurated. VP Harris - First woman, first Black and first Asian person to serve as VP. The night before, DC mall is illuminated in memory of Americans who have died from Covid. The first authentic display of grief, compassion, and hope.
- The fight begins for passage of Progressing Policies - For the People Act, Raise the Wage Act, Green New Deal, Medicare for all, #SaveAsylum, Equality Act

Spring

- We celebrated that many of us started getting Vaccines!
- Called for the Passage of the For the People Act – The most comprehensive voting rights legislation since 1965.
- Action Hour - Writing Public Comments to NC Utilities Commission to Hold Duke Energy Accountable for their Integrated Resource Plan.
- March 11: President Biden signs a sweeping \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan
- Andrew Brown Jr was killed by the Sheriff's Dept. on April 21st in Elizabeth City, NC. We spent May calling for the Release of Body Camera Footage and for the passage of a state law that would make footage open to the public.
- Called for the UNC Board of Trustees to grant tenure to Nikole Hannah-Jones and advocated for the safety of UNC students of color.

Summer

- On June 5-8, Indigenous and First Nations Peoples gather with friends of faith to fight Line 3 in Minnesota. We joined the fight with our phone calls to the Biden Administration
- We keep fighting for the For the People Act and John Lewis Act.
- June 17: President Biden [signs legislation](#) to make Juneteenth a holiday.
- We shift our attention to the NC State Budget in partnership with the People's Budget Coalition! Advocating for Medicaid Expansion & full funding of the Leandro Plan!!! Our First Letter to the Editor action hour about the State Budget!
- Began our Action Hour collaborations with Carolina Jews for Justice
- Engaged in the Redistricting Process by writing Public Comments.

Fall / Winter

- Nov. 15: President Biden signs a historic \$1 trillion Infrastructure Bill.
- **OUR FIRST WINS!!!!** Governor Cooper Pardons Dontae Sharp
- We write Letters to the Editor calling on Governor Cooper to Pardon Howard Dudley, Michael Parker and Glen Edward Chapman. He Pardons Howard Dudley!!!!

2022 Year in Review

Spring

- Push to reform the filibuster fails, dooming the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act.
- West Virginia Action Hour! in partnership with West Virginia's Faith Table of Faithful Democracy. Following a low point - when hope of a voting rights bill faded, we turned to gratitude (Thank you Marian!) and wrote Letters to the Editor lifting up excellent journalism around democracy in our communities. We also learned more about the history and current political dynamics of our neighbors in West Virginia.
- On January 8th, unarmed pedestrian Jason Walker was killed in Fayetteville by armed motorist Jeffrey Hash. Hash, an off-duty Cumberland County Sheriff's Deputy, was not arrested. Instead he was allowed to leave the scene and was later placed on administrative leave. We called on Kimberly Spahos to charge Jeffrey Hash.
- Russia Invaded Ukraine

- CELEBRATION! - The Senate voted to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court. We made calls to our Senators to confirm Judge Jackson.
- **WIN!** Special Texas & North Carolina UU Action Hour - Call on Texas Governor, District Attorney and Board of Pardons to STOP Melissa Lucio's Execution. Melissa Lucio was set to be executed on April 27th. The evidence supported her overwhelming innocence. Her execution was halted!
- Our 100th Friday Action Hour!!! And we Celebrated the Life of beloved Action Hour member - Barbara Gulick

Summer

- Mass Shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas where nineteen students and two teachers were killed and seventeen others wounded Kept fighting for Medicaid Expansion & Leandro
- **WIN!** Fought against and defeated HB 755 North Carolina's Don't Say Gay Bill
- On June 24th, we found out minutes before the start of Action Hour that the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, eliminating the constitutional right to abortion.
- Worked with UUSC to call on our Senators to vote for the Electoral Count Act in conjunction with our Legislative Meeting with Sen. Tillis' Office on July 21st.
- Wrote Public Comments to the North Carolina Utilities Commission about Duke Energy's draft Carbon Plan. In partnership with [Green Faith](#) and [NC- APPPL](#), NC Interfaith Power and Light and Mountain True.
- Passage of the Inflation Reduction Act - largest investment in climate justice in country's history, price reforms for certain prescription drugs, lower premiums under the Affordable Care Act, money for the IRS to enforce tax laws, a corporate minimum tax.

Fall

- We Kept Fighting for Leandro - Three straight weeks in September including our most successful Letter to the Editor Action Hour ever.
- Afghan Adjustment Act - Including our special September Immigrant Justice Action Hour timed perfectly following our legislative visit with Sen. Burr's office in partnership with UUSJ.
- Following the release of recordings where Columbus County Sheriff Jody Greene vowed to fire every black member of his department - we called and emailed every Columbus County Commissioner and the City Leaders in Columbus County and asked them to speak out against Greene. It was clear, they were not used to being held accountable. This also led to us developing an interfaith safety team with CJJ to support the Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus county that Jody Greene and his Oath Keeper friends were intimidating.
- **BIG WIN!** In early November, the NC Supreme Court ruled that the state must fully fund years 2 and 3 of the Leandro Education Funding Plan.
- The 2022 – Election. Ted Budd defeated Cheri Beasley for the open senate seat. Republicans flipped the U.S. House, but following another Georgia run-off, Democrats

kept the Senate. In North Carolina, Democrats narrowly avoided a Republican Super Majority by ONE SEAT.

- **WIN -** The Electoral Count Act was included in the omnibus bill passed! This reforms and modernizes the outdated 1887 Electoral Count Act to ensure that electoral votes tallied by Congress accurately reflect each state's public vote for President. Sen. Tillis was key!
- Called for Governor Cooper & The State Clemency Office to Pardon Glen Edward Chapman and Michael Parker. **WIN -** Governor Cooper commuted the sentences of six people in North Carolina prisons and granted pardons of forgiveness to four others - but not Chapman or Parker.
- **WIN -** Columbus County Sheriff's Department was suspended from participation in the 1033 military surplus equipment program after using surplus military equipment to intimidate residents and eventually, Jody Greene was removed as Sheriff.

2023 Year in Review

- Tricia Cotham party switch - shifted power (Abortion Ban, Anti-LGBTQ Bills, etc.)
- We worked with Rick Iwanski in fighting for Justice for Jada who was shot 17 times and killed by police who were responding to a reported mental health crisis.
- **WIN -** Thanks to our phone calls and letters, the District Attorney finally released the name of the prosecutor to Jada's family.
- Monster 12-week abortion ban SB20 Passed which has had ripple effects across the south
- 3 anti-trans bills became law – including a don't say gay bill and ban on gender affirming care for minors.
- We witnessed the continued systematic dismantling of our public schools - through the expansion of our state's vouchers program, book banning, and hateful policies.
- And an elections omnibus bill enacted laws to further suppress our votes, on top of our severely gerrymandered maps.
- **OUR BIGGEST WIN EVER!!!!!!** After over a decade of fighting, last year finally expanded Medicaid to over 600,000 people in our state. People said it was never going to happen, but we kept fighting – and UUs played a key role in that fight.
- October 7th - The start of the war between Israel and Hamas.
- We will keep fighting to win 4.4 Billion dollars of desperately needed funding for our public schools. **WE WILL WIN LEANDRO**

Reflection Questions

- What are your most memorable moments from Friday Action Hour?
- What are the core values of the Friday Action Hour Community?
- How do you imagine our 300th Action Hour Celebration in Spring of 2026? What wins will we be celebrating?
- What role has Friday Action hour played in your life? How has it changed you?

Friday, March 22nd - UUSJ Briefing on Federal Immigration Legislation

Weekly Round-Up

- According to a U.N.-backed [report](#) released on Monday, famine will hit Gaza's northern governorates between now and May. Today, one-third of children under the age of two in Gaza's north are suffering from acute malnutrition. At least 23 children have already died of starvation and dehydration to date.
- "A federal civil rights lawsuit filed Monday contends Raleigh officers unnecessarily killed Darryl Williams by tasing him six times, including once after police handcuffed him. The lawsuit, which is seeking \$25 million from the city, contradicts the city's previous contention that police only tased Williams, 32, three times while trying to detain him on drug charges. What neither disagrees about is that around 2 a.m. on Jan. 17, 2023, Williams begged police to stop, saying he had a heart condition, before an officer tased him again." N&O [Read more here.](#)
- "This week, the State of Florida agreed to settle a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the Parental Rights in Education Act, better known as the "Don't Say Gay" law. The [settlement](#) was a resounding victory for the parents and LGBTQ advocacy groups who filed the lawsuit. It dramatically limits the law's application to a narrow set of circumstances that seldom occur in K-12 public schools." - from Popular information. Thanks to Lucy Bradley for this info.
- The General Assembly starts its short session on April 24. Speaker Tim Moore says NC House won't revisit abortion, address IVF.
- "This weekend, Donald Trump told a crowd of cheering supporters that [migrants "are not people,"](#) that they are animals, and deserve to be rounded up like animals. "We're going to have the largest deportation effort in history," he promised, while describing his plan to put millions of our neighbors into detention camps." - Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis
- Vladimir Putin is set to assume his fifth term as president after a predetermined vote, despite quiet protests at polling stations.
- "The U.S. issued rules to ensure that most new cars are electric or hybrids by 2032, the most significant climate regulation in American history." NY Times

Today's Focus - State & Federal Immigration Legislation. Today we are delighted to welcome two members of the UUSJ's Immigration Justice Team, Terry Grogan of Virginia and Steve Eckstrand from Maryland. They will offer us a briefing on current Federal Immigration Legislation.

Action 1 - Tell our U.S. Representatives to Support HR 1325 / Senators to Support SB 255 - Let Asylum Seekers Work!

Amid historic labor shortages in critical sectors across the country, the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act (H.R. 1325) was introduced in Congress to bolster the workforce by allowing asylum seekers to apply for work authorization and get to work faster while their asylum claims are adjudicated. For more on immigration and work dynamics, see [The economy is roaring. Immigration is a key reason.](#) according to Rachel Siegel, Lauren Kaori Gurley, and Meryl Kornfield for the Washington Post.

Watch the powerful [new video](#) from our allies in the Let Asylum Seekers Work coalition.

Step 1 - Send Message: [#LetAsylumSeekersWork](#)

Step 2 - Call your U.S. Representative & Senators.

- Your U.S. Representative - Find their [contact info here](#).
- Sen. Ted Budd - 202-224-3154
- Sen. Thom Tillis - 202-224-6342

Basics Script *** Language from Refugees International

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling to ask _____ to support the bi-partisan Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act, a bill that reduces the current 180-day waiting period for work authorization eligibility to 30 days, allowing an asylum seeker to apply for authorization as soon as the asylum claim is filed.
- The bill makes no changes to law or regulation relating to the asylum process, but allows asylum-seekers to get to work faster.
- People seeking safety in the United States want to work to support themselves and their families and be part of their local communities. But having to wait six months – or often longer – to work legally prevents people seeking asylum from entering the labor force, depriving businesses of much needed workers and straining cities and localities.
- By reducing the waiting period for work authorization, asylum seekers will be able to regain self-sufficiency and contribute to their local economy. The Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act is a commonsense solution that is a win-win-win for asylum seekers, local communities, and businesses.
- Please support and co-sponsor the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act.

Action 2 - Tell President Biden - Proposed Immigration Policy Changes Will Fail and Cause Great Harm to Asylum Seekers and President's Legacy

Recent bi-partisan border bill included no pathway to citizenship. This is a seismic strategic shift

"The bargain always was that Democrats would trade border security for a path to citizenship for the 11 million or more undocumented immigrants here now. That was the basic framework of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, a bargain between the Democrats and Ronald Reagan. Now Democrats have said they could trade border security for other priorities, like

military aid. The millions of undocumented are the collateral damage." - Robert Kuttner, The American Prospect, [Border Wars](#)

As the circumstances of the asylum fight showed, regrettably, there are candidates and members of Congress, particularly in the House, who want to restrict access to asylum severely, even shut our borders to all asylum seekers, and impose other restrictions on asylum and immigration. Shockingly, more than a few Senators are willing to negotiate on these points while failing to include any consideration of pathways to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented in the U.S.

Sadly, there are also signs that the White House is considering adopting executive orders to implement some objectionable parts of the proposed "compromise" legislation. In a volatile political environment with images and stories of asylum seekers lined up at the border and straining the resources of cities and states [reflected in the polls](#), it is impossible to predict what action the President may take.

UUSJ has already joined with 150+ others to oppose such executive action: read the [letter here](#), see exclusive coverage by Politico [here](#), and review a [joint statement](#).

Take Action - Send Message to Biden Here - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am writing to urge the Biden Administration to NOT support any border bill that does not include a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million or more undocumented immigrants here now.
- The recently proposed immigration policy changes will fail and cause great harm to asylum seekers.
- President Biden's moral legacy is on the line.

Action 3 - Tell our State Representatives and Senators to vote NO on SB10.

SB10 is expected to move through the NC General Assembly during this spring's legislative session. This bill would require all NC sheriffs to cooperate with ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement).

Call your State Senator & Representative. Find their [contact info here](#).

Basics Script ***

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling you today about SB10, the bill that is expected to move through the NC General Assembly during this spring's legislative session.

- This bill would require all NC sheriffs to cooperate with ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement).
- This bill is the latest iteration of laws across the country known as “show me your papers” attacking immigrant communities.
- We know that when ICE and Local law enforcement collaborate our communities are less safe. Vote NO on this bill. Thank you.

Announcements

Friday, March 29th, 2024. Our 200th Friday Action Hour!

Tuesday, March 26th - Protest in Raleigh for Access to Abortion Medication Mifepristone.

On March 26th, the US Supreme Court will hear oral arguments concerning Mifepristone and the FDA. Currently, the majority of abortions are by medicine and use Mifepristone. To protest the action of SCOTUS, North Carolina people of faith will gather that same day on the steps of the Terry Sanford Federal Building in Raleigh (310 New Bern Ave.) from 10:00 - Noon. At the same time, there will be a major protest in Washington D.C. organized by the Women's March. This rally is being organized by the Community Church of CH UU in collaboration with the [Triangle Interfaith Reproductive Justice Coalition](#). Please bring a carload from your church/fellowship and bring signs. Here is [rally info](#). The eyes of history are upon us. Any questions, contact melvafokun@gmail.com.

Join the North Carolina Budget & Tax Center on Thursday, May 2nd in Raleigh for a day of advocacy to take the budget back to the people. We will be requesting meetings with legislative leadership to demand a more transparent and equitable budget process, and joining together to discuss how we can organize to ensure future budgets fund the services and programs our state needs so every North Carolinian — from Boone to Wilmington and all parts between — has what they need to thrive.

Friday, March 15 - Budget & Tax Center

Weekly Round-Up

- The application deadline for Opportunity Scholarship school vouchers closed on Friday, March 1 with application [numbers nearing 72,000](#), a huge increase over previous years. However, because the 2023 Appropriations Act (i.e., budget) expanded voucher eligibility to families of all income levels, doubled the annual marketing budget to \$1,000,000 and made all private school students eligible, more applications were expected. A closer look at this year's applicants reveals a striking pattern: The majority come from families too wealthy to qualify for vouchers in previous years.
- **Four Years Ago** - “Shortly after noon Eastern on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared Covid — or “the coronavirus,” then the more popular term — [to be a global pandemic](#). Stocks plummeted in the afternoon. In the span of a single hour that night, President Donald Trump delivered an Oval Office address about Covid, Tom Hanks posted on Instagram that he had the virus and the N.B.A. announced it had

canceled the rest of its season. [It was a Wednesday](#), and thousands of schools would shut by the end of the week. Workplaces closed, too. People washed their hands frequently and touched elbows instead of shaking hands (although the C.D.C. continued to discourage widespread mask wearing for several more weeks)."

- Breaking News - [Judge Says Fani Willis, the Fulton County district attorney Can Stay on Trump Case, but Only if Former Romantic Partner Leaves](#)
- Online sports betting officially became legal on Monday.

Today's Guest, Heba Atwa, Legislative Advocacy & Campaigns Manager with the NC Budget & Tax Center. And we are thrilled to announce a new partnership with BTC where they will be joining us quarterly to inform us and call us to action around campaigns related to the state budget and state tax code.

Investment in our people and communities is crucial to a bright shared economic future in our state. However, for more than a decade, tax cuts have been prioritized over supporting the programs and services crucial to the mutual success of our state's residents. By 2031, corporations will pay zero in state income tax in North Carolina, causing a revenue loss of more than \$2 billion annually — \$2 billion less every year to pay for quality education and quality child care for our kids, infrastructure that our state needs, free and fair elections, and keeping our air and water clean.

Strong state infrastructure and affordable, quality childcare and public education help our businesses, our people, and our economy thrive.

Action 1: Sign Petition to Demand That The NC General Assembly Choose Our Communities Over Corporations

Step 1: Sign the petition: <https://ncbudget.org/choosecommunities/>

Step 2: Ask your networks to sign the petition

Sample language for social media:

- [Images and GIFs you can use](#) (Find more at <https://library.into-action.us/>)
- Relevant hashtags: #ncga #ncpol #fundourfuturenc

Short posts:

- NC is almost dead last in school funding, and NC leaders want to make it worse by not making profitable corporations pay what they owe through taxes. Tell them to stick up for our kids and communities, not corporations. NCBudget.org/ChooseCommunities #ncga #ncpol #nced
- Keeping NC's corporate tax rate would mean more revenue for our kids' education. Sign this petition and join me in demanding that lawmakers stop helping rich corporations and to start looking out for our kids. NCBudget.org/ChooseCommunities #ncga #ncpol #nced

- Do you think corporations and rich people in North Carolina should have to pay what they owe? You're not alone! Sign the petition >>> [NCBudget.org/ChooseCommunities](https://ncbudget.org/ChooseCommunities) #ncga #ncpol #nced
- Join me in signing this petition to demand NC lawmakers choose our communities over corporations!! [NCBudget.org/ChooseCommunities](https://ncbudget.org/ChooseCommunities) #ncga #ncpol #nced

Longer posts:

- For too long, a handful of politicians in North Carolina have let wealthy corporations rig the rules to favor their campaign contributions over our contributions for each other. It's time to demand our leaders make corporations pay what they owe through taxes. That's how we show up for each other and make sure everyone has the freedom to thrive, delivering the quality public education that our children are owed. Join me in signing this petition to demand lawmakers choose our communities over corporations. [NCBudget.org/ChooseCommunities](https://ncbudget.org/ChooseCommunities)
- Eliminating the Corporate Income Tax would divert \$900 million from our public resources, which is about a quarter of what it would take to meet our constitutional obligation to provide a sound public education. Sign this petition with me and demand our lawmakers invest in our kids instead of giving corporations a tax cut. [NCBudget.org/ChooseCommunities](https://ncbudget.org/ChooseCommunities)

Action 2: Sign up to attend a day of advocacy in Raleigh on May 2

Join the North Carolina Budget & Tax Center on May 2 in Raleigh for a day of advocacy to take the budget back to the people. We will be requesting meetings with legislative leadership to demand a more transparent and equitable budget process, and joining together to discuss how we can organize to ensure future budgets fund the services and programs our state needs so every North Carolinian — from Boone to Wilmington and all parts between — has what they need to thrive.

Register and invite your networks: <https://ncbudget.org/ourdollars/>

Action 3: Write a letter to the editor about the corporate income tax cuts

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- Remember to keep your Letter under 250 words. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit. And you can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts.

Recommended Basic Structure & Sample Talking Points

Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- For too long, a handful of politicians in North Carolina have let wealthy corporations rig the rules to favor their campaign contributions over our contributions for each other. It's time to demand our leaders make corporations pay what they owe through taxes. That's how we show up for each other and make sure everyone has the freedom to thrive, delivering the quality public education that our children are owed.
- Legislative leaders are shirking their constitutional obligation to provide a sound basic education while giving profitable corporations a pass on their taxes.
- NC leaders have chosen to make the corporate income tax rate ZERO by 2031, instead of using our shared resources to pay for the things that make our state a great place to live and work.
- As our work has made North Carolina prosper, a greedy few have rigged the rules to redirect resources from our communities to their country clubs, from our classrooms to their ballrooms, & from our public parks to their private jets.

Key Context

- By 2031, corporations will pay zero in state income tax in North Carolina, causing a revenue loss of more than \$2 billion annually — \$2 billion less every year to pay for quality education and quality child care for our kids, infrastructure that our state needs, free and fair elections, and keeping our air and water clean.
 - [In North Carolina, we could spend:](#)
 - \$151 million to support healthy pregnancies and child development for 10 times the number of low-income first-time moms and their babies through the Nurse-Family Partnership program.
 - \$300 million to keep child-care providers open by boosting pay for early childhood educators and supporting new child-care centers.
 - \$267 million to guarantee every school has licensed staff to support student mental & physical health.
 - \$200 million to provide free breakfast and lunch to every public school student.
 - \$4.2 billion to halve the number of children living in poverty with generous child tax credit.
 - \$26 million to protect North Carolina's environmental resources by adding key staffing and technology to the Department of Environmental Quality.
 - \$13 million to cover the costs of two weeks of early voting for every registered voter in the state.
 - \$93 million to expand and preserve affordable housing for 10,000 low-income households.
 - \$775 million to end hunger in North Carolina.

Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a person of faith, I believe....

- In _____ county, eliminating the corporate income tax cuts would mean more funding for _____
- As a mother / father / caregiver, more funding for (affordable child care, jobs training, etc) would let me and my neighbors take care of our families

Additional History and Context

- **Who benefits from corporate income tax elimination?** Elimination of the corporate income tax would send the vast majority of the \$900 million annual tax break to shareholders out of state. Estimates suggest that less than 20 percent of the corporate income tax rate cut would stay with residents. Of those small number of shareholders in North Carolina, 69 percent of the next tax cut will go to the richest 20 percent of taxpayers.
- **The vast majority of profitable corporations benefiting will be out of state corporations.** 68% of corporate income tax paid in North Carolina comes from large corporations that get less than 25% of their income from NC. These corporations don't pay income taxes based on payroll or property in NC –just sales — so further reductions to the rate don't give them any additional incentive to expand or create more jobs here. Nor does it give them an incentive to move existing out-of-state jobs and facilities to North Carolina; the vast majority of other states also tax corporations only in proportion to their sales, so their tax liability to those states doesn't change if they move here. Such moves are rare, in any case.
- **Who is hurt by corporate income tax elimination?**
 - Children: The state's failure to comply with the Leandro funding plan for early childhood education and K-12 would be at serious risk in future years when funding requirements to support a sound, basic education in North Carolina ramp up just as tax cuts get scheduled to go into effect.
 - Small, local businesses: The reality is that not that many businesses pay the corporate income tax because they choose to organize in other ways, aren't profitable, or benefit from many tax loopholes and use tax avoidance strategies. Without public dollars to invest in the technical assistance, access to capital, and other supports to small, local businesses, North Carolina's growth model isn't building wealth locally.
- When corporations don't pay their share, the lack of revenue would mean cuts to the public institutions that support a good quality of life in North Carolina – unless the revenue is made up in other, less equitable ways. Making up for the lost revenue from all income tax cuts being proposed would require more than doubling the current sales tax rate, which would put more taxes on the backs of everyday North Carolinians instead of corporations.

Talking Points about corporate income tax cuts

- Corporate tax cuts concentrate wealth in the hands of rich shareholders. We've seen time and again that when corporations get tax cuts, they don't go on a hiring or investment kick -- they pass that wealth along to their shareholders, who are

disproportionately richer, older, and whiter than average taxpayers. The end result is the rest of us end up paying more while rich people can hoard even more wealth.

- Eliminating the corporate income tax is another step in a long line of tax cuts that have mostly helped rich people hold onto more money. The average annual tax cut for the top 1% in NC based on laws passed since 2013 is \$47,000, compared to less than \$700 for the bottom 80% of NC taxpayers.
- Corporate tax cuts are great for rich shareholders but leave working people out. Cutting corporate taxes has not boosted wages for most workers.
- We must come together this year to demand that our leaders stop these tax cuts for wealthy corporations, which will redirect our resources away from the priorities that people across the state have identified: affordable child care, a sound basic education for every child, safe drinking water and support for the small businesses that anchor main streets across our state.
- Some more language you can borrow from Fund Our Future:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XTCKnQSI07NWrvA87DoVzlanpCPL4e4mRFwkaJvkSdl/edit?usp=sharing>

What's at Stake

- NC is almost dead last in school funding, and NC leaders want to make it worse by not making profitable corporations pay what they owe through taxes.
- Keeping NC's corporate tax rate would provide for our kids' education.
- Teacher pay is falling further behind the national average as the price of basic needs soar. Demand lawmakers stop giving away tax cuts to corporations and pay dedicated teachers what they're worth.
- The boosts our economy needs are things like removing the barriers to work that face North Carolinians, like access to affordable child care, transportation and job training, and focusing on producing more home-grown entrepreneurs and on helping startups and young, fast-growing firms already located in the state to survive — not cutting taxes and trying to lure businesses from other states.
- Tax cuts have failed to deliver promised benefits while undermining our ability to pay for things North Carolinians need.
- [Funding elections increases voter turnout in North Carolina.](#)

Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- NC leaders need to choose our communities over corporations.
- It's time to demand our leaders make corporations pay what they owe North Carolina through taxes & pay us a fair return on our work. That's how we show up for each other, delivering the [name what you hope to accomplish: i.e. "good-paying jobs & affordable care" or "better schools & quality healthcare"] that ensure all of our families can thrive.

- When our leaders make wealthy corporations pay what they owe our state through taxes, we will make North Carolina a place where we all have what we need to overcome our challenges and keep our families safe and well.
- It's time to join together across North Carolina to demand our leaders rewrite the rules so nothing stands in the way of us providing a great life for our families. We're demanding the services & support needed to see ourselves through, in good times & bad.

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).
- **Report Back Here:** <https://forms.gle/9L2cnPpsDhnqbja7>

Action 4: Learn more about what's going on with taxes in North Carolina

Read at least one of the following articles this week and tell a fellow North Carolinian about what you learned.

- Watch our most recent Making Connections webinar in English or Spanish about how a bill works, how to find out how your lawmakers voted, and why the appropriations and finance committees are so important when it comes to policy in North Carolina.
<https://ncbudget.org/makingconnections/>
- State Tax Policy Is Not Race Neutral:
<https://ncbudget.org/state-tax-policy-is-not-race-neutral/>
- Who pays taxes in North Carolina? In our state, our tax code makes income inequality worse: <https://ncbudget.org/who-pays-taxes-in-north-carolina/>
- Personal Income Tax Cuts In NC Are Redistributing Wealth To Rich White People:
<https://ncbudget.org/personal-income-tax-cuts-in-nc-are-redistributing-wealth-to-rich-white-people/>
- NC Leaders' Tax Cuts For Wealthy Mean We Will Lose More Than \$13 Billion For NC Needs:
<https://ncbudget.org/nc-leaders-tax-cuts-for-wealthy-mean-we-will-lose-more-than-13-billion-for-nc-needs/>
- Wealthy Corporations Paying What They Owe Would Help North Carolina Thrive:
<https://ncbudget.org/wealthy-corporations-paying-what-they-owe-would-help-north-carolina-thrive/>

Announcements

Friday, March 22nd, 2024 - Federal Immigration Legislation. This Friday we will get a briefing from our friends at UUSJ on the Afghan Adjustment Act, the stalled bi-partisan Immigration Bill, and the current politics of immigration in this election year. Then we will take action, calling our US Senators and writing messages to President Biden.

Friday, March 29th, 2024. Our 200th Friday Action Hour!

Tuesday, March 26th - Protest in Raleigh for Access to Abortion Medication Mifepristone.

On March 26th, the US Supreme Court will hear oral arguments concerning Mifepristone and the FDA. Currently, the majority of abortions are by medicine and use Mifepristone. To protest the action of SCOTUS, North Carolina people of faith will gather that same day on the steps of the Terry Sanford Federal Building in Raleigh (310 New Bern Ave.) from 10:00 - Noon. At the same time, there will be a major protest in Washington D.C. organized by the Women's March. This rally is being organized by the Community Church of CH UU in collaboration with the [Triangle Interfaith Reproductive Justice Coalition](#). Please bring a carload from your church/fellowship and bring signs. Here is [rally info](#). The eyes of history are upon us. Any questions, contact melvafokun@gmail.com.

Join the North Carolina Budget & Tax Center on Thursday, May 2nd in Raleigh for a day of advocacy to take the budget back to the people. We will be requesting meetings with legislative leadership to demand a more transparent and equitable budget process, and joining together to discuss how we can organize to ensure future budgets fund the services and programs our state needs so every North Carolinian — from Boone to Wilmington and all parts between — has what they need to thrive.

Friday, March 8th - White Christian Nationalism

***Today's Action Hour is sponsored by Eileen Hanson Kelly**

Weekly Round-Up

- Super Tuesday was this week. Based on [unofficial results](#), 1.79 million North Carolinians cast their ballots this spring - an estimated 24% voter turnout. In comparison, 31.2% of registered voters cast a ballot in the presidential primary in 2020.
- The Presidential Election is set - Biden vs. Trump And the Governor's race is set - Stein vs. Robinson. Mark Robinson received 65% of the vote - 663,917 voters.
- In North Carolina, Biden received 87.3% of the vote - with 13% 88,021 voters choosing "no preference." There was not an organized effort to do this as a protest to the Israel / Hamas war like in MN, but it still sends a message to Biden.
- President Biden delivered his State of the Union last night - projecting strength, vigor, and optimism. Key topics - abortion, immigration, January 6th, Ukraine / Putin, Infrastructure, Taxing the wealthy & War in Gaza / Temporary Pier for Humanitarian Aid.
- Trump met with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban at Mara Lago. Orban has turned Hungary into an 'electoral autocracy' which has allowed him to stay in office since 2010 and threaten their election system, independent judiciary, and many fundamental rights.
- Shout out to everyone who turned out for Saturday's Moral March in Raleigh with the Poor People's Campaign
- Today is International Women's Day. The Evening of Sunday March 10th marks the start of Ramadan. This Sunday, March 10th is Abortion Providers Appreciation Day. You can share your appreciation for Providers on the [Kudos board](#) organized by ProChoice NC

Democracy North Carolina will be reviewing preliminary data throughout the coming weeks. Some initial data points of note*:

- Registered North Carolina voters participated in semi-open party primaries, with races for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, U.S. Congress and the NC General Assembly all the way down every party ballot. In 2012, the last time a primary this large took place while a Democrat served as President, 34% of registered voters cast a ballot in NC
- Statewide, roughly 9.3% (694,591) of voters turned out for early voting.
- As of today, Tuesday's election resulted in 7,983 provisional ballots statewide, as compared to 18,229 in the 2020 Primary. While the number of provisional ballots is likely to increase as counties continue to process these ballots over the canvass period, this large difference may reflect the lower turnout of this primary as compared to 2020.
- Counties varied widely in the number of provisional ballots voted, with the fewest (3) cast in Chowan County and the most (1,422) cast in Wake. While some of this variance can be explained by population, the number of provisional ballots cast in a county may also reflect the county's culture around affirmatively offering them to voters. For example, in Mecklenburg County only 527 provisional ballots were cast, despite Wake and Mecklenburg having similar numbers of registered voters. And in the much less populous Brunswick County, 521 provisional ballots were cast.
- 536 voters completed an ID exception form with 464 voters returning to the county boards of election with their photo ID. Counties with the highest number of ID exception forms included Wake (71), Mecklenburg (58), Durham (54), and Buncombe (26). From preliminary results listed in the provisional file, the most common reason provided for needing an ID exception form was a "lost or stolen ID" followed by "photo ID applied for but not yet received."
- 88,021 registered voters chose "no preference" over President Joe Biden in the Democratic party primary and 7,386 registered voters chose "no preference" over Donald Trump in the Republican party primary.

Today's Focus - Understanding the Threat of White Christian Nationalism

Today we will watch the new video - [What Is Christian Nationalism and Why Is It A Threat To Democracy?](#) This video from Red, Wine and Blue Featured Katherine Stewart, author of "The Power Worshipers" The new full-length documentary God & Country, is based on her book.

New Documentary - God & Country

- You can check out the trailer of that documentary here:
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt29259251/>
- Watch the [Laura Flanders Show](#) episode featuring the creators of the documentary.

Check out this in-depth report - **All of US: Organizing to Counter White Christian Nationalism and Build a Pro-Democracy Society**

Download the report here: <https://www.organizingallofus.org/>

"White Christian nationalists and a broader authoritarian movement are mounting a visionary, well-resourced, and strategically coordinated effort to ensure white Christians maintain their

ongoing dominance in all sectors of U.S. society, including government, culture, media, entertainment, family, religion, and business.

Our social movements, including the institutions that comprise civil society, are lagging behind as white Christian nationalism continues to expand its influence and consolidate power. We have a critical and limited window of time to close the gap between the high level of threat and our collective response to it. This report is part of a growing pro-democracy effort seeking to sound the alarm and support immediate collective action.”

Announcements

UU the Vote 2024 National Launch - Thursday, March 14th from 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ET We enter the work of UU the Vote 2024 grounded in the current political and spiritual conditions of our faith and national community. The work that is needed in 2024 will require us to anchor in our power and connect authentically to mobilize UUs, voters, and our local communities. UU the Vote 2024 is an ambitious strategy to grow a powerful pro-democracy majority. Join Side With Love for the kick-off of UU the Vote 2024, where you'll learn about the electoral work of State Action Networks (like North Carolina!), their partners in key states, and more! Register Here: <https://secure.everyaction.com/15gwk4JrxUO2eFcwBkgl0w2>

Friday, March 1st

***** Today's Action Hour is sponsored by Ry Garcia-Sampson (Thanks boo!)**

Weekly Round-Up

- “The Gazan health authorities said that more than 100 people were killed and more than 700 injured in a “massacre.” after Israeli forces opened fire near an aid convoy.
- The Gazan health ministry has reported that the death toll in Gaza has surpassed 30,000 since the start of Israel’s military offensive in October.
- In this week’s Michigan primary, over 100,000 “Uncommitted” votes were cast - sending a message to the Biden campaign that voters will not ignore his support and funding of Israel. Michigan is a key swing state. “Michigan Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib pointed out, 74% of Democrats in Michigan support a ceasefire.” Arab and Muslim organizers of this Uncommitted campaign in Michigan hoped for 10,000 votes, they got ten times that.
- Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell Will Step Down as G.O.P. Leader at the End of This Year - acknowledging that his national security views have put him out of step with a party now headed by Donald Trump.
- Just over two months into implementation, 349,000 North Carolinians have enrolled in Medicaid expansion! You can track enrollment via the [NC Medicaid Enrollment Dashboard](#) from NC DHHS, which is updated monthly.
- On Friday a Manhattan jury ruled that N.R.A. leaders had engaged in a pattern of financial misconduct and corruption.
- This week, a private citizen in Durham raised four flags from his flagpole that can be seen from the street in close proximity to a little league baseball field. The four flags are

a swastika, the Confederate flag, a MAGA flag, and the Russian flag. This demonstrates a growing trend of support from the extremist right, of Vladimir Putin's authoritarianism.

- It's time to Vote! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7JkWLF7awY>

Action 1 - Tell our Federal Elected Officials to Support a Permanent Ceasefire

Step 1 - Ask Rep. Deborah Ross for call for a Ceasefire

Context - Pro-Palestinian protesters were arrested last week after blocking the street during a "Die-In" near Deborah Ross' offices. U.S. Representative Ross is a Unitarian Universalist is a progressive Democrat who has not yet called for a permanent ceasefire but is seen as moveable on this issue.

Phone: (919) 334-0840 (Raleigh Office), (202) 225-3032 (D.C. Office)

Email Rep. Ross. <https://rossforms.house.gov/forms/writeyourrep/>

Basics Script

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a fellow Unitarian Universalist.
- First, I want to thank you for your relentless commitment to reproductive rights, environmental justice and healthcare. In doing so, time and time again you have honored the sacredness of all lives in North Carolina. In all this work, you have made our faith proud.
- I am calling on you to live into those same values in the way you demonstrate leadership in Washington around the war in Israel and Gaza.
- I join others across the state and country in urging you to go call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. In doing so, you are proclaiming that the safety and existence of one people does not require the dehumanization of another.
- It is time for Rep. Ross to Lead. Your moral legacy is on the line.

Call Your U.S. Representative, and our Two U.S. Senators

- Your U.S. Representative - Find their [contact info here.](#)
- Sen. Ted Budd - 202-224-3154
- Sen. Thom Tillis - 202-224-6342

Basics Script

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- I am calling in regards to the ongoing tragic war in Israel and Gaza.

- This week, the Gazan health ministry has reported that the death toll in Gaza has surpassed 30,000 since the start of Israel's military offensive in October. Additionally, this week, more than 100 people were killed and more than 700 injured in a "massacre." after Israeli forces opened fire near an aid convoy.
- First, I want to ask _____ to publicly mourn the 30,000 thousand lives lost in Gaza. Palestinian, Muslim and Arab North Carolinians are grieving, and I urge _____, as someone who honors the sacredness of every life, to grieve with them.
- I also urge you to go further and call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. In doing so, you are proclaiming that the safety and existence of one people does not require the dehumanization of another.

Action 2 - Spread the word! Tomorrow is the last day of Early Voting! Tuesday is the Primary!

Amplify this helpful video from Common Cause NC!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7JkWLF7awY>

And share this information with your community.

1. **If you are not registered to vote**, tomorrow (Saturday, March 2nd) is the last day to do same-day registration during early voting at any early voting site in your county. You CANNOT register to vote on primary election day - Tuesday, March 5th.
2. **You need to have an ID to vote.** Voter photo ID is about your face! The address on your ID DOES NOT have to match your voter registration! Acceptable IDs include NC Drivers License, NC Non-driver ID, US Passport, US Military or Veteran ID, Tribal ID, An APPROVED NC Student ID & NC Government Employee ID ([See full-list here](#)) or you can get a FREE ID from [County Board of Elections](#), Out-of-State Drivers License (only if you registered to vote in NC within 90 days of the election)
3. Mail-In Ballots - The deadline to request an absentee ballot has passed. Completed absentee ballots must be received no later than 7:30pm on Election Day (March 5th)
4. Election Day - you need to go to your assigned polling place on Tuesday, March 5th between 6:30am - 7:30pm. Find your polling place at ncvoterguide.org

Action 3 - Ask you Congregation / Minister t to Sign-On to this [statement](#) in solidarity with Annunciation House, a Catholic humanitarian organization in El Paso, Texas that has provided hospitality and other life-saving services to migrants for decades. ***UUSJ has helped draft and join the letter

Please [sign on](#) to this Interfaith statement of Solidarity to show strong support in response to the recent [legal attack](#) coming from **Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton** who is trying to force Annunciation House to close. "Annunciation House is a model of service and a beacon of hope for people of faith who put their values into action. Together in one voice, we will continue to loudly proclaim that every person is created in the image of the Divine and deserves safety and respect." [Interfaith Statement of Solidarity with Annunciation House](#). AG Paxton's unfounded

effort is part of the Texas govt's wider attack on the immigrant community. Therefore, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition is circulating a sign-on statement in solidarity with Annunciation House for:

The IIC is hearing that Texas-based immigration advocates and service providers would appreciate a strong showing of solidarity from their counterparts in other states. **The deadline to sign on is this Monday, March 4 at 12 noon ET/9 AM PT. The letter can be signed by Faith organizations (including congregations); and Individual faith leaders.**

- **View the statement:** bit.ly/AHouseStmt
- **Sign on by 3/4:** bit.ly/AHouseForm

Announcements

- **North Carolina Poor People's Campaign Event.** On Saturday, March 2nd, join PPC for their State House Assembly & Moral March on Raleigh. Participants will gather at 10am at the State Capital (1 E. Morgan Street, Raleigh). Then, at 11am we will march to the NC General Assembly (16 W. Jones St.). This event is part of a national day of mobilization, kicking off the PPC's 2024 voter mobilization campaign. [Register Here.](#)
- **UU the Vote 2024 National Launch** - Thursday, March 14th from 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ET
We enter the work of UU the Vote 2024 grounded in the current political and spiritual conditions of our faith and national community. The work that is needed in 2024 will require us to anchor in our power and connect authentically to mobilize UUs, voters, and our local communities. UU the Vote 2024 is an ambitious strategy to grow a powerful pro-democracy majority. Join Side With Love for the kick-off of UU the Vote 2024, where you'll learn about the electoral work of State Action Networks (like North Carolina!), their partners in key states, and more! Register Here:
<https://secure.everyaction.com/15gwk4JrxUO2eEcwBkgl0w2>

Friday, February 23rd at 11:00 - Concluding our Month of Leandro Education Advocacy!

Weekly Round-Up

- Yesterday, hundreds of people from across the state turned out for our Leandro Day of Action. Shout out to everyone who participated in this incredible event! Especially Wilmington's Leandro-Song Singers and our Car Caravan participants. Marie's first Action with UU Justice NC!
- Congratulations to everyone who got Leandro Letters to the Editor Published across the state this week! [Greensboro](#), (Kate! - FIRST TIME) [Chapel Hill](#) (Dorothy!) Charlotte, & Salisbury (Eileen)!
- This week, the restaurant - Good Hot Fish in Asheville Targeted by Racially Motivated Vandalism - shutting off power to the restaurant and leaving behind a sticker that

included anti-semitic, and white supremacist message and imagery.

<https://carolinas.eater.com/2024/2/8/24066398/asheville-good-hot-fish-racist-incident>

- It has been six weeks since botched budgeting led DPS to withdraw raises from 1,300 classified staffers, who are among the district's lowest-paid workers. They include cafeteria workers, instructional assistants, bus mechanics, physical therapists and custodians. The situation has led to protests shutting down schools and the resignations of the superintendent and budget director. We are pivoting this week because Durham Public Schools have come to a decision about staff salaries. They will stop paying last year's promised raises at the end of this month, opting instead to give 11% raises to 1,875 classified staff members for the rest of the school year. Of course, if Durham had Leandro funding, this would be a different story.
<https://abc11.com/dps-durham-school-board-pay-dispute-decision/14459315/> You can watch the full briefing with Durham Association of Educators and Pastors for NC Children Here. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rt-k0W8zLHw>
- Pro-Palestinian protesters were arrested yesterday after blocking the street during a "Die-In" near Deborah Ross' offices. U.S. Representative Ross is a Unitarian Universalist is a progressive Democrat who has not yet called for a permanent ceasefire but is seen as moveable on this issue.
- 2/14 - UUA Condemns Violence Against Gaza, Urges Immediate and Total Ceasefire
<https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/uua-condemns-violence-urges-ceasefire>
- Nex Benedict, a 16-year-old nonbinary, genderfluid student at Owasso High School in Oklahoma, died a day after they were reportedly beaten by classmates on school grounds.
<https://www.them.us/story/nex-benedict-death-everything-we-know-nonbinary-oklahoma-teen>

Action 1 - Call NC Senate Education / Higher Education Committee & Appropriations Chairpersons about Leandro!

[Senator Amy Galey](#) (R)

District 25 – Alamance

(919) 301-1446 / Amy.Galey@ncleg.gov

[Senator Michael Lee](#) (R)

District 7 – New Hanover

(919) 715-2525 / Michael.Lee@ncleg.gov

[Senator Lisa Barnes](#) (R) (also on Education/Higher Education)

District 11 – Franklin, Nash, Vance

(919) 715-3030 / Lisa.Barnes@ncleg.gov

[Senator Dean Proctor](#) (R)

District 45 – Caldwell, Catawba

(919) 733-5876 / Dean.Proctor@ncleg.gov

Basic Script

- Hello my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith/conscience.
- Yesterday, the North Carolina Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case.
- Hundreds of people across North Carolina traveled to Raleigh to demand that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution.
- Regardless of the decision that will be made by the courts, you _____ and the Education leadership of the General Assembly need to give our children their money - and fulfill the promise made to them in our state's constitution.
- Our massive, State-wide movement from the mountains to the ocean will not stop fighting until you stop hoarding our tax dollars and fully fund the Leandro Plan.

Action 2 - Ask Rep. Deborah Ross for call for a Ceasefire

Context - Pro-Palestinian protesters were arrested yesterday after blocking the street during a "Die-In" near Deborah Ross' offices. U.S. Representative Ross is a Unitarian Universalist is a progressive Democrat who has not yet called for a permanent ceasefire but is seen as moveable on this issue.

Phone: (919) 334-0840 (Raleigh Office - She is in town)

Email Rep. Ross. <https://rossforms.house.gov/forms/writeyourrep/>

Basics Script

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a fellow Unitarian Universalist.
- First, I want to thank you for your relentless commitment to reproductive rights, environmental justice and healthcare. In doing so, time and time again you have honored the sacredness of all lives in North Carolina. In all this work, you have made our faith proud.
- I am calling on you to live into those same values in the way you demonstrate leadership in Washington around the war in Israel and Gaza.
- I join others across the state and country in urging you to go call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. In doing so, you are proclaiming that the safety and existence of one people does not require the dehumanization of another.
- It is time for Rep. Ross to Lead. Your moral legacy is on the line.

Announcements

- **Monday, February 26th at 9:00am, Johnston County Courthouse 207 E Johnston St. Smithfield, NC.** Invitation to Pack the Court House. State courts are now preparing to hear the case of death row prisoner Hasson Bacote of Johnston County. They will present evidence that race affected not just his trial, but those across North Carolina. If the courts find evidence of systemic discrimination, the [Racial Justice Act](#) could prompt a broad reckoning with the role of race in the North Carolina death penalty. The courts must answer this key question: **Will North Carolina confront overwhelming evidence of racial bias in the death penalty and protect the Constitutional rights of jurors and defendants?** Link for getting more info/ updates on RJA and to let us know you'd like to attend or support: <https://bit.ly/RJAGoogleForm>
- **North Carolina Poor People's Campaign Event.** On Saturday, March 2nd, join PPC for their State House Assembly & Moral March on Raleigh. Participants will gather at 10am at the State Capital (1 E. Morgan Street, Raleigh). Then, at 11am we will march to the NC General Assembly (16 W. Jones St.). This event is part of a national day of mobilization, kicking off the PPC's 2024 voter mobilization campaign. [Register Here.](#)
- **UU the Vote 2024 National Launch** - Thursday, March 14th from 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ET We enter the work of UU the Vote 2024 grounded in the current political and spiritual conditions of our faith and national community. The work that is needed in 2024 will require us to anchor in our power and connect authentically to mobilize UUs, voters, and our local communities. UU the Vote 2024 is an ambitious strategy to grow a powerful pro-democracy majority. Join Side With Love for the kick-off of UU the Vote 2024, where you'll learn about the electoral work of State Action Networks (like North Carolina!), their partners in key states, and more! Register Here: <https://secure.everyaction.com/15gwk4JrxUO2eEcwBkgl0w2>
- **UPLIFT Pastoral Space & Vigil** - Join UPLIFT Ministries on Friday, February 23, at 8 ET/7 CT/6 MT/5 PT to be in community and hold ourselves and each other in the feelings and needs we're experiencing right now in the wake of Nex Benedict's death. This event centers the needs and experiences of trans/nonbinary+ people of all ages. We will have closed trans/nonbinary+ breakout spaces for children/youth and for adults. If we have capacity, we will offer breakout spaces for trans families (ie, families which have at least one trans family member--however you define "family" and "trans"--expansive definitions apply) as well as for cisgender people who are seeking pastoral support in the wake of this tragedy. This will be a space for sharing feelings and holding space for each other. We will not have capacity for one on one chaplain support. The main event will be 1 hour and 30 minutes, and we'll have an additional 30 minutes of "cooldown"/chill time after the official event end, for anyone seeking a mellow transition back out of the event. We'll play music during this time. All are welcome--this is a space that is open to everyone--cis, trans, metagender, questioning, and more. Register here: https://uua.zoom.us/join/register/tJArcEigrDggGtzpdF95L4B_d3BJ1C4msDH6#/registration

*****Today's Friday Action Hour Sponsor is Joy Blevins, Community Church of Chapel Hill**

The Leandro Day of Action is 1 Week Away! This week, in partnership with [Every Child NC](#) we will write Letters to the Editor *calling out* the injustice of this week's re-hearing of the Leandro Case and *calling for* adequate school funding for every child in our state - no matter their zip code! This is a huge opportunity for us to blanket the state with LTE's on the week of the case.

Weekly Round-Up

- This week, Israel occupation forces have conducted at least 50 bombings in Rafah, the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt where at least 1.7 Palestinians have sought refuge.
- Fani Willis spars with lawyers seeking her removal from Trump case. This was a spectacle that had nothing to do with the case. Fani brought it. "A man ain't a plan"
- Trump wants North Carolina GOP leader Michael Whatley and daughter-in-law Lara Trump (lives in NC) to be the next leaders of the Republican National Committee.
- Ongoing Strike continues due to massive accounting error which has cut DPS staff pay. Durham students might have to make up lost days if school closings persist. This will be our focus for next week's action hour?

Today's Action - Writing Letters to the Editor about Leandro

On Thursday, February 22nd, the State Supreme Court will again hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case.

The Basics

- This document offers a general letter format and sample language that you are welcome to use. Of course, you can also adapt / change language so that it's in your voice!
- You are encouraged to personalize the letter based on your life experiences and concerns.
- You will directly submit your letter to your local papers. [Find your local papers here.](#)
- Remember to keep your Letter under 250 words. As you draft your letter, use the word count function to make sure you are under that count.
- If you know that your local papers have lower word counts - follow that limit. And you can use this [LTE excel sheet](#) to find your papers and word counts.

Recommended Basic Structure & Sample Talking Points

Start with a Strong Opening Statement

- This week, the North Carolina Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case.

- That is why, on February 22nd, North Carolinians from the mountains to the ocean will show up outside the courthouse to demand that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution.

Key Context

- In *Leandro v. The State of NC*, originally settled over twenty-five years ago, the court ruled that the state must guarantee every student access to a quality education and fully funded public schools. For decades, politicians have outright ignored this ruling and refused to fund our public schools. Now our court has decided to reopen a case that has long been settled.

Identify yourself and your concerns / what's at stake for you and your community.

- As a person of faith, I believe....
- As a parent / grandparent of a public school student. / As a concerned community member....
- I am proud to be a part of the Every Child NC Coalition demanding that our children get the resources they deserve.
- In _____ county, full funding of the Leandro Plan would mean _____ every year. Please see the attached data sheet which outlines the transformative impact Leandro Funding would have on _____ county.
<https://everychildnc.org/leandro-impact-analysis-2/#toggle-id-1>

Additional Leandro History and Context (Written by Every Child NC)

- State courts are playing politics with people's lives and taking back long-established rights in decisions that will harm people of all backgrounds. In North Carolina, our state court has already overturned voter ID and redistricting decisions that threaten our democracy. Our public schools are next on the docket.
- One of the key politicians who has violated court orders and refused to fund our schools is Senate leader Phil Berger. In a blatant conflict of interest, his son, Supreme Court judge Phil Berger Jr., refuses to recuse himself from a case centering on his own father's mistreatment of our state's children.
- North Carolina has billions in unused revenue that could go toward fulfilling *Leandro*, but our legislature continues to ignore the needs of students across North Carolina in favor of private schools and tax cuts for their wealthy political donors. Our leaders have a responsibility to provide the public school funding that North Carolina's students are owed.

Talking Points about the Leandro Case (Written by Every Child NC)

- Every North Carolina student, no matter their neighborhood or background, deserves an education that sets them up for success in school and life. It's a right guaranteed in our state constitution. That's only possible when we fully fund our public schools and

guarantee that every student in North Carolina has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

- Our families, communities, and futures depend on the quality of North Carolina's public education system. When North Carolina fully funds its public schools, we set students up for success in college, career, and life. Investing in public education is an investment in the state's future and the well-being of all North Carolinians.
- Politicians across our state have not only refused to fully fund public schools but are taking public money out of public schools to expand private school vouchers for wealthy families and to give tax cuts to corporations. If we fully fund our public schools instead, every student can have access to resources like smaller class sizes, dual language immersion, early college high schools, safe and healthy learning environments, mental health supports, and individualized instruction.
 - These resources are especially vital in rural and low-income communities where public schools are more likely to be deprived of the resources they need to ensure every student receives a quality education.

What's at Stake (Written by Every Child NC)

- If the court takes the unprecedented step of overturning *Leandro*, North Carolina will jeopardize the future of over 1.5 million children in every community across our state. Our courts need to stop playing politics with our children's future and our state's leaders must fulfill their constitutional duty to provide the funding owed to North Carolina's students.
- If the court chooses to deny students their constitutional rights, we risk a cycle of underfunded public schools that harms not only our children, but also our economy, our democracy, and our state as a whole.
- The politicization of our court, from education to voting rights, is alarming for the future of our state. If we don't stand up now, emboldened ideological judges will continue undermining the rights guaranteed to every North Carolinian.

Strong Closing Statement:

Consider a short, pithy ending that sums up your main points. A few examples:

- The state's refusal to provide our children with a sound basic education is morally reprehensible, disgraceful, shameful.
- State Leadership - Stop hoarding our tax dollars. Give the kids their money.
- We won't stop fighting for our kids.

When You're Done Writing Your Letter

- Check your spelling, grammar and word count!
- Then submit your letters to the editor to your local newspapers. Find your local newspapers [via this link](#).
- **Report Back Here: <https://forms.gle/9L2cnPpsDhnqbja7>**

Announcements

- **Leandro Day of Action for Education Rights - Thursday, February 22nd in Raleigh.**
The fight for public education continues on 2/22, when the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. Join [Every Child NC](#) for this day of action in Raleigh, where North Carolinians from the mountains to the ocean will show up to demand that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution. [Register Here.](#)
- **UU Justice NC's 2/22 Leandro Day of Action - Car Caravan** - As a part of Every Child NC's Leandro Day of Action on Thursday, February 22nd, UU Justice NC is leading a morning car caravan to spread our powerful message through the streets surrounding the State Supreme Court. Participants will gather at 9:00am in the parking lot of the UU Fellowship of Raleigh (3313 Wade Ave, Raleigh) to decorate their cars with pre-made signs and then take our message to "Fund Schools with Leandro" to the streets of downtown Raleigh! You can [Register Here.](#)
- **UU the Vote 2024 National Launch - Thursday, March 14th from 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ET** We enter the work of UU the Vote 2024 grounded in the current political and spiritual conditions of our faith and national community. The work that is needed in 2024 will require us to anchor in our power and connect authentically to mobilize UUs, voters, and our local communities. UU the Vote 2024 is an ambitious strategy to grow a powerful pro-democracy majority. Join Side With Love for the kick-off of UU the Vote 2024, where you'll learn about the electoral work of State Action Networks (like North Carolina!), their partners in key states, and more! Register Here: <https://secure.everyaction.com/15gwk4JrxUO2eEcwBkgl0w2>
-

February 9th, 2024 - Week 2 of our Leandro Month of Action

*****Today's Friday Action Hour Sponsor is Joy Blevins, Community Church of Chapel Hill**

This morning, we continue our **Month of Leandro Advocacy** in the lead up to Thursday, February 22nd's Leandro Day of Action! On 2/22, the State Supreme Court will again hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Today, we will continue to call and email our state elected officials, asking them to sign-on to [Every Child NC](#)'s Commitment Form in support of the Leandro School Funding Plan. We will also work to recruit UUs across the state to participate in the 2/22 Day of Action.

The Weekly Round-Up

- TODAY is the deadline to register to vote in the NC Primaries.
- North Carolina now has four separate redistricting lawsuits going on simultaneously, most allege that the new Republican-crafted maps disadvantage minority voters.

- Ongoing Strike due to massive accounting error which has cut DPS staff pay. Durham school workers will get higher pay one more month, but future salaries undecided. All Durham public schools closed to students Friday due to 'overwhelming' absences, and the superintendent has resigned.
- News & Observer Article this week covers the surge in private school vouchers applications. [Read more Here.](#)
- On Tuesday, "None of the Above" won the Nevada GOP Primary over Nikki Haley.
- This week the supreme court heard the case challenging the Colorado Supreme Court ruling that disqualified Trump from being on the ballot. Supreme Court Seems Likely to Reject Challenge to Trump's Eligibility.
- Bi-partisan Senate Bill on Immigration died this week after Trump pressured republicans to sink the deal so that he could keep it as a campaign issue.
- "The United States House of Representatives rejected impeachment charges against Alejandro Mayorkas, the homeland security secretary, after a small group of Republicans broke with their party and refused to support what amounted to a partisan indictment of President Biden's immigration policies."

Action 1 - Ask Your State Elected Officials to Sign-On to the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form.

First Call & Email Your Elected Officials:

- Your State Representative - <https://ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>
- Your State Senator - <https://ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>

Basic Script:

- Hi my name is _____, and I am a person of faith, and one of your constituents.
- Today I am calling on _____, as a candidate in the 2024 elections to sign on to Every Child NC's Candidate Commitment to Leandro.
- By signing you would be indicating that you are aware of the current failure to provide every child in the state with access to a sound basic education, and pledge to vote to implement the spending and policy recommendations contained in the Leandro Action Plans that have been submitted to the Courts.
- May I ask if _____ supports the Leandro Plan? (If not, why?)
- May I send the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form to you?
- **If a supporter** - "We also invite you to join people from across NC at the state Supreme Court on Thursday, February 22nd. That morning, the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. We are inviting members of the General Assembly to join us demanding that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution."

Follow-Up Email

Hi my name is _____, I am a person of faith and one of your constituents. I live _____ I just had the pleasure of speaking with your staff member _____ about the Leandro Education Plan. (INCLUDE PERSONAL NOTE - WHY YOU CARE) For nearly 30 years, North Carolina lawmakers from both parties have failed to meet their constitutional obligation to provide all children in the state with a sound basic education. But the Leandro Plan can change this.

I join others across the state in calling on you, as a candidate in the 2024 elections to sign on to Every Child NC's Candidate Commitment to Leandro. By signing you would be indicating that you are aware of the current failure to provide every child in the state with access to a sound basic education, and pledge to vote to implement the spending and policy recommendations contained in the Leandro Action Plans that have been submitted to the Courts. You can review and sign the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form here:

<https://everychildnc.org/candidate-commitment/>

In _____ county, full funding of the Leandro Plan would mean _____ every year. Please see the attached data sheet which outlines the transformative impact Leandro Funding would have on _____ county.

<https://everychildnc.org/leandro-impact-analysis-2/#toggle-id-1>

I also invite you to join people from across North Carolina at the state Supreme Court on Thursday, February 22nd. That morning, the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. We are inviting members of the General Assembly to join us affirming our children's constitutional right to a sound, basic education. You can register to participate in the event here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTO4tCO6EkLaFlyr9udjjXWU3zL1Y8ihKy3mkgf9pcugxkDQ/viewform>

Action 2 - Ask Members of the NC House Education Committees to Sign-On to the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form.

Basic Script:

- Hi my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith.
- Today I am calling on _____, as a candidate in the 2024 elections, and as a member of the House Education Committee, to sign on to Every Child NC's Candidate Commitment to Leandro.
- By signing you would be indicating that you are aware of the current failure to provide every child in the state with access to a sound basic education, and pledge to vote to implement the spending and policy recommendations contained in the Leandro Action Plans that have been submitted to the Courts.
- May I ask if _____ supports the Leandro Plan? (If not, why?)

- May I send the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form to you?
- **If a supporter** - "We also invite you to join people from across NC at the state Supreme Court on Thursday, February 22nd. That morning, the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. We are inviting members of the General Assembly to join us demanding that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution.

Follow-Up Email

Hi my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith. I just had the pleasure of speaking with your staff member _____ about the Leandro Education Plan. (INCLUDE PERSONAL NOTE - WHY YOU CARE) For nearly 30 years, North Carolina lawmakers from both parties have failed to meet their constitutional obligation to provide all children in the state with a sound basic education. But the Leandro Plan can change this.

I join others across the state in calling on you, as a candidate in the 2024 elections, and as a member of the House Education Committee, to sign on to Every Child NC's Candidate Commitment to Leandro. By signing you would be indicating that you are aware of the current failure to provide every child in the state with access to a sound basic education, and pledge to vote to implement the spending and policy recommendations contained in the Leandro Action Plans that have been submitted to the Courts. You can review and sign the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form here: <https://everychildnc.org/candidate-commitment/>

I also invite you to join people from across North Carolina at the state Supreme Court on Thursday, February 22nd. That morning, the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. We are inviting members of the General Assembly to join us affirming our children's constitutional right to a sound, basic education. You can register to participate in the event here: **CLICK HERE TO FIND YOUR COUNTY's INFO:** <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTO4tCO6EkLaF1yr9udjjXWU3zL1Y8ihKy3mkgf9p-cugxkDQ/viewform>

House Education K-12 Committee

Chairpersons:

[Rep. Hugh Blackwell](#) (R) (also Vice Chair of Appropriations)
District 86 – Burke
919-733-5805

Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Tricia Ann Cotham](#) (D) (R)
District 112 – Mecklenburg
919-733-5749

[Rep. John Torbett](#) (R) (also Chair of Appropriations)
District 108 – Gaston
919-733-5868
John.Torbett@ncleg.gov

Vice Chairs:

[Rep. Cecil Brockman](#) (D) (also on Appropriations)

District 60 – Guilford
919-733-5825
Cecil.Brockman@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Diane Wheatley](#) (R) (also on Appropriations)
District 43 – Cumberland
919-733-5959
Diane.Wheatley@ncleg.gov

[Rep. David Willis](#) (R) (also Appropriations Chair)
District 68 – Union
919-733-2406
David.Willis@ncleg.gov

House Education Appropriations Committee

Chairpersons:

[Rep. Jon Hardister](#) (R) (also Chair of Education - Universities)
District 59 – Guilford
919-733-5191
Jon.Hardister@ncleg.gov

[Rep. John Torbett](#) (R) (also Chair of Education K-12)
District 108 – Gaston
919-733-5868
John.Torbett@ncleg.gov

[Rep. David Willis](#) (R) (also Vice Chair of Education K-12)
District 68 – Union
919-733-2406

David.Willis@ncleg.gov

Vice Chairs:

[Rep. Hugh Blackwell](#) (R) (also Chair of Education K-12)
District 86 – Burke
919-733-5805
Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Jeffrey Elmore](#) (R) (also on Education K-12)
District 94 – Alexander, Wilkes
919-733-5935
Jeffrey.Elmore@ncleg.gov

Action 3 - Invite People to Participate in 2/22's Leandro Day of Action

FOR ALL CHURCHES and FAMILIES ACROSS THE STATE - Children & Youth Activity "We are Every Child" Self-Portraits. Our partners at [Pastors for NC Children](#) have organized an exciting art project so that children and youth from across the state can be represented at the

2/22 Leandro Day of Advocacy in Raleigh. The invitation is for children and youth to draw self-portraits that will be laminated and used as visuals outside the State Supreme Court to keep the focus on the children and their needs surrounding public education. Please see the attached two-page activity PDF with all the instructions you need. PLEASE SHARE this with your Religious Education Directors. Participating congregations can send portraits to Pastors For NC Children, PO Box 37241, Raleigh, NC 27627 before the 2/22 event. **(Email Rev. Lisa to get the Activity Worksheet)**

UU Justice NC's Leandro Day of Action - Car Caravan - As a part of Every Child NC's Leandro Day of Action on Thursday, February 22nd, UU Justice NC is leading a car caravan will begin our day of action by spreading our powerful message through the streets of downtown Raleigh immediately surrounding the State Supreme Court. Participants will gather at 9:00am in the Parking lot of the UU Fellowship of Raleigh (3313 Wade Ave, Raleigh). Participants will have the opportunity to decorate their cars with pre-made signs, washable window chalk, etc and then create a caravan of cars with signs like "Fund Schools with Leandro", "Invest in our Children" and "Honk for Leandro!" Join us! You can [Register Here](#).

Leandro Day of Action for Education Rights - Thursday, February 22nd in Raleigh. The fight for public education continues on 2/22, when the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. Join Every Child NC for this day of action in Raleigh, where North Carolinians from the mountains to the ocean will show up to demand that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution. [Register Here](#).

February 2nd, 2024 - All in on Leandro! - Kicking off a Month of Action

*****Today's Friday Action Hour Sponsor is Susanne Huttner from Berkely, California**

Today we kick off our **Month of Leandro Advocacy** in the lead up to Thursday, February 22nd when the State Supreme Court will again hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. This week, we are thrilled to be joined by Sarah Montgomery, co-lead of the [Every Child NC](#) Coalition, and Senior Education Policy Advocate at the [NC Justice Center](#). Sarah will brief us on the state of the Leandro court case, and let us know what we can do to keep the pressure on our elected officials to fully fund the Leandro Education Plan.

Action 1 - Ask Your State Elected Officials to Sign-On to the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form.

<https://everychildnc.org/candidate-commitment/>

Basic Script:

- Hi my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith.

- Today I am calling on _____, as a candidate in the 2024 elections, and as a member of the House Education Committee, to sign on to Every Child NC's Candidate Commitment to Leandro.
- By signing you would be indicating that you are aware of the current failure to provide every child in the state with access to a sound basic education, and pledge to vote to implement the spending and policy recommendations contained in the Leandro Action Plans that have been submitted to the Courts.
- May I ask if _____ supports the Leandro Plan? (If not, why?)
- May I send the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form to you?
- **If a supporter** - "We also invite you to join people from across NC at the state Supreme Court on Thursday, February 22nd. That morning, the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. We are inviting members of the General Assembly to join us demanding that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution.

Follow-Up Email

Hi my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith. I just had the pleasure of speaking with your staff member _____ about the Leandro Education Plan. (INCLUDE PERSONAL NOTE - WHY YOU CARE) For nearly 30 years, North Carolina lawmakers from both parties have failed to meet their constitutional obligation to provide all children in the state with a sound basic education. But the Leandro Plan can change this.

I join others across the state in calling on you, as a candidate in the 2024 elections, and as a member of the House Education Committee, to sign on to Every Child NC's Candidate Commitment to Leandro. By signing you would be indicating that you are aware of the current failure to provide every child in the state with access to a sound basic education, and pledge to vote to implement the spending and policy recommendations contained in the Leandro Action Plans that have been submitted to the Courts. You can review and sign the Leandro Candidate Commitment Form here: <https://everychildnc.org/candidate-commitment/>

I also invite you to join people from across North Carolina at the state Supreme Court on Thursday, February 22nd. That morning, the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. We are inviting members of the General Assembly to join us affirming our children's constitutional right to a sound, basic education. You can register to participate in the event here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTO4tCO6EkLaFlyr9udjjXWU3zL1Y8ihKy3mkgf9pCugxkDQ/viewform>

House Education K-12 Committee

Chairpersons:

[Rep. Hugh Blackwell](#) (R) (also Vice Chair of Appropriations)
District 86 – Burke
919-733-5805
Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Tricia Ann Cotham](#) (D) (R)
District 112 – Mecklenburg
919-733-5749

[Rep. John Torbett](#) (R) (also Chair of Appropriations)
District 108 – Gaston
919-733-5868
John.Torbett@ncleg.gov

Vice Chairs:

[Rep. Cecil Brockman](#) (D) (also on Appropriations)
District 60 – Guilford
919-733-5825
Cecil.Brockman@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Diane Wheatley](#) (R) (also on Appropriations)
District 43 – Cumberland
919-733-5959
Diane.Wheatley@ncleg.gov

[Rep. David Willis](#) (R) (also Appropriations Chair)
District 68 – Union
919-733-2406
David.Willis@ncleg.gov

Members:

[Rep. Cynthia Ball](#) (D)
District 49 – Wake
919-733-5860
Cynthia.Ball@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Brian Biggs](#) (R)
District 70 – Randolph
919-733-5865
Brian.Biggs@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Laura Budd](#) (D)
District 103 – Mecklenburg

919-733-5800
Laura.Budd@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Ashton Wheeler Clemmons](#) (D)
District 57 – Guilford
919-733-5781
Ashton.Clemmons@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Jeffrey Elmore](#) (R) (Also Vice Chair of Appropriations)
District 94 – Alexander, Wilkes
919-733-5935

Jeffrey.Elmore@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Ken Fontenot](#) (R)
District 24 – Nash, Wilson
919-733-5898
Ken.Fontenot@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Rosa Gill](#) (D) (also on Appropriations)
District 33 – Wake
919-733-5880
Rosa.Gill@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Frank Iler](#) (R)
District 17 – Brunswick
919-301-1450
Frank.Iler@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Jake Johnson](#) (R)
113, Henderson, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford
919-715-4466
Jake.Johnson@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Donnie Lambeth](#) (R)
District 75 – Forsyth
919-733-5747
Donny.Lambeth@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Brandon Lofton](#) (D)
District 104 – Mecklenburg
919-715-3009
Brandon.Lofton@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Marvin Lucas](#) (D) (also on
Appropriations)
District 42 – Cumberland
919-733-5775
Marvin.Lucas@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Marcia Morey](#) (D)
District 30 – Durham
919-733-7663
Marcia.Morey@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Larry Potts](#) (R)
District 81 – Davidson
919-715-0873
Larry.Potts@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Dennis Riddell](#) (R)
District 64 – Alamance
919-733-5905
Dennis.Riddell@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Phil Shepard](#) (R)
District 15 – Onslow
919-715-9644
Phil.Shepard@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Frank Sossamon](#) (R) (also on
Appropriations)
District 32 – Granville, Vance
919-733-5824
Frank.Sossamon@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Larry Strickland](#) (R)
District 28 – Johnston
919-733-5849
Larry.Strickland@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Julie Von Haefen](#) (D)
District 36 – Wake
919-715-0795
Julie.vonHaefen@ncleg.gov

House Education Appropriations Committee

Chairpersons:

[Rep. Jon Hardister](#) (R) (also Chair of Education - Universities)
District 59 – Guilford
919-733-5191
Jon.Hardister@ncleg.gov

[Rep. John Torbett](#) (R) (also Chair of Education K-12)
District 108 – Gaston
919-733-5868
John.Torbett@ncleg.gov

[Rep. David Willis](#) (R) (also Vice Chair of Education K-12)
District 68 – Union
919-733-2406
David.Willis@ncleg.gov

Vice Chairs:

[Rep. Hugh Blackwell](#) (R) (also Chair of Education K-12)
District 86 – Burke
919-733-5805
Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Jeffrey Elmore](#) (R) (also on Education K-12)
District 94 – Alexander, Wilkes
919-733-5935
Jeffrey.Elmore@ncleg.gov

Members:

[Rep. Cecil Brockman](#) (D) (also Vice Chair of Education K-12)
District 60 – Guilford
919-733-5825
Cecil.Brockman@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Kevin Crutchfield](#) (R) (also on Education - Universities)
District 83 – Cabarrus, Rowan
919-715-2009
Kevin.Crutchfield@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Rosa Gill](#) (D) (also on Education K-12)
District 33 – Wake
919-733-5880
Rosa.Gill@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Zack Hawkins](#) (D) (also on Education - Universities)
District 31 – Durham
919-715-2528

Zack.Hawkins@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Marvin Lucas](#) (D) (also on Education K-12)

District 42 – Cumberland
919-733-5775

Marvin.Lucas@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Lindsey Prather](#) (D) (Also on Education - Universities)

District 115 – Buncombe
919-733-5746

Lindsey.Prather@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Frank Sossamon](#) (R) (also on Education K-12)

District 32 – Granville, Vance
919-733-5824

Frank.Sossamon@ncleg.gov

[Rep. Diane Wheatley](#) (R) (also Vice Chair of Education K-12)

District 43 – Cumberland
919-733-5959

Diane.Wheatley@ncleg.gov

Information from: <https://ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/HouseStanding/7> Collected on 1/27/2023.

Action 2 - Invite 3 people you know to 2/22

Thursday, February 22nd, when the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. Join Every Child NC for this day of action in Raleigh, where North Carolinians from the mountains to the ocean will show up to demand that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution. You can Register Here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTO4tCO6EkLaFlyr9udjjXWU3zL1Y8ihKy3mkgf9pCugxkDQ/viewform>

Report Back Here: <https://forms.gle/9L2cnPpsDhnqbja7>

Announcements

One week left to register to vote in the primary! Check your registration using VOTE411, a nonpartisan voter guide: www.VOTE411.org

On Friday, February 16th we will be writing Letters to the Editor about Leandro in the lead up to the big event on February 22nd. We are in the process of putting together a full LTE toolkit, but

for those who are already getting started on their LTE's here are some great talking points on Leandro. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1l8capwq0xNE704mDaXw0q7M_ndfVp7lw/edit

January 26th, 2024 The Faithful Fight for Reproductive Rights Continues

*** Today's Action Hour Sponsor is Ann Zimmerman from the UU Fellowship of Winston-Salem

Weekly Round-Up

- On Sunday, Florida Governor [Ron DeSantis ended his Campaign for President](#)
- Monday marked the 51st Anniversary of Roe v Wade and people of faith turned out in big numbers for a rally and press conference in Raleigh. Shout out to all the UUs who joined!
- "The United Nations has designated January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, as International Holocaust Remembrance Day—a time to remember the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution. In 2024, the commemoration coincides with a surge in antisemitism worldwide." - US Holocaust Memorial Museum
- Last week, Governor Cooper posted a tweet in response to his recent meeting with Muslim Women For. "Last week I met with Muslim and Palestinian North Carolinians, including some who have had family members killed or injured in Gaza. They are deeply pained by the loss of innocent lives in Gaza, and I mourn with them for the staggering loss of Palestinian lives." This is huge.
- It's Girl Scout Cookie Time. You can purchase your favorites from a trans girl scout [here!](#)

Key dates and deadlines for the 2024 primary election in North Carolina:

- Jan. 19: County boards of elections begin mailing absentee ballots to eligible voters who have submitted an absentee ballot request
- Feb. 9: Voter registration deadline (5 p.m.)
- Feb. 15: In-person early voting begins; same-day voter registration available
- Feb. 27: Absentee ballot request deadline (5 p.m.)
- March 2: In-person early voting ends (3 p.m.)
- March 5: Primary Election Day
- March 5: Absentee ballot return deadline (7:30 p.m.)
- March 15: County boards of elections primary canvass meetings (11 a.m.)
- March 26: State Board of Elections primary canvass meeting (11 a.m.)

Action 1 - Tell Your State & Federal Elected Officials that Support Reproductive Rights!

This Monday, on the **51st Anniversary of Roe v Wade**, people of faith (including many UUs!) turned out in big numbers for a rally and press conference in front of the State General Assembly. This event sent a loud and clear message that the majority of people of faith in North Carolina believe in the **sacred right to bodily autonomy** and reject the state's agenda to control and criminalize birthing bodies. This morning, we will join the chorus by calling our state and federal elected officials to demand reproductive rights for all.

Call List

- Your State Representative - Find their [contact info here](#).
- Your State Senator - Find their [contact info here](#).
- Your U.S. Representative - Find their [contact info here](#).
- Sen. Ted Budd - 202-224-3154
- Sen. Thom Tillis - 202-224-6342

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith, and I am calling to express my strong support of reproductive rights.
- As a person of faith/ conscience, I believe that our bodies are sacred, and that we are each endowed with the twin gifts of agency and conscience. Each of us should have the power to decide what does and doesn't happen to our bodies at every moment of our lives because consent and bodily autonomy are holy.
- And I am not alone in this belief. This Monday, on the 51st Anniversary of Roe v Wade, over 100 people spanning many faiths came together for a rally and press conference in front of the State General Assembly. This event sent a loud and clear message that the majority of people of faith in North Carolina believe in the **sacred right to bodily autonomy** and reject the state's agenda to control and criminalize birthing bodies.
- Moreover, abortion care is part of reproductive health care and maternal care, and it should be treated as such. Politicians have no business inserting themselves into healthcare decisions.
- We also know that the restrictions most directly impact on those who already have the least access to healthcare.
- Can you please share _____ views of reproductive rights / what they are doing to advance reproductive rights?

Action 2 - Thank Gov. Cooper for Tweet Publicly Grieving the Loss of Palestinian Lives

"Last week I met with Muslim and Palestinian North Carolinians, including some who have had family members killed or injured in Gaza. They are deeply pained by the loss of innocent lives in Gazam and I mourn with them for the staggering loss of Palestinian lives. I urge all parties involved to do what it takes to get badly needed humanitarian aid delivered safely to the people who need it. As a person of faith, I pray for an end to the lose of innocent lives and the ongoing violence. In the midst of darkness, there must be hope for a meaningful and lasting peace in the Middle East so that all families can feel safe and secure." - NC Governor Roy Cooper

Call Governor Roy Cooper - 919-814-2000 - Press Option 5 immediately

Basic Script

- My name is _____, I am a person of faith / conscience from _____.

- I am calling to thank you for your recent tweet mourning the lives of the over 25,000 Palestinians who have been killed since October 7th.
- Throughout your career, your commitment to issues like abortion rights, medicaid expansion and school funding have demonstrated your moral leadership.
- In grieving with us, you put your conscience and moral responsibility above the political complexity of this issue. I assure you that many North Carolinians share your deep concern for the safety of Palestinians and are proud of the statement you made.
- Thank you for your time, and continued work to honor the work and dignity of all North Carolinians.

Action 3 - Justice for Brittany

Justice for Brittany: You may have heard about a 33-year-old Black woman in Ohio who is being criminally charged for her miscarriage at home. You can read more [here](#), but this patient was turned away multiple times from the hospital (a Catholic hospital) although she was miscarrying, because there was still fetal activity. (note: Catholic hospitals have a history of doing that, even before Dobbs). A nurse at the hospital then called the police on her.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BRfwWeEidIH9DYcczQbIXd75PApgEt4fnU4iJXN87fM/edit#heading=h.gjja0rbp0oci>

Action 4 - Tell Congress you support expanding the Child Tax Credit (CTC)

As the House Ways and Means Committee looks to mark up [H.R. 7024](#), the *Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024*, today on January 19th, 2024. Children should not be deprived of full benefits simply because their families make too little money.

The proposal by Senate Finance Chairman Ron Wyden and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jason Smith is bi-partisan and, according to tax advocates, has the opportunity to help more kids in poverty than any other measure this Session of Congress. The [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) finds expanding the CTC to nearly 16 million kids currently excluded from full CTC benefits will help make important progress toward ending child poverty.

Take Action Here: https://uusj.salsalabs.org/child-tax-credit_2023-24/index.html?

Action 5 - Last but not least, express gratitude to an individual and/or organization who is spreading love and fighting for justice in this world. Send them a text, give them a call, write a letter, or post a message of gratitude on their Facebook page! Never underestimate the power of gratitude.

Suggestion - Email Rebecca Ceresse on being awarded Families USA's Health Justice Advocate of the Year Award for Health Coverage! Rebecca's leadership was instrumental in getting Medicaid Expansion over the finish line in North Carolina! You can email her at rebecca@ncjustice.org

Announcements

UUSJ Event - Power to Heal Film Screening & Discussion with Producer Dr. Barbara Berney - Wednesday, January 31 at 7:30pm. Power to Heal tells the story of a poignant chapter in the historic struggle to secure equal and adequate access to healthcare for all Americans. Central to the story is the tale of how a new national program, Medicare, was used to mount a dramatic, coordinated effort that desegregated thousands of hospitals across the country in a matter of months. The evening will also include a discussion about the current state of Medicare with policy guest Brittany Shannahan, Medicare-for-All Campaign Organizer with Public Citizen AND our very own Rebecca Cerese from the NC Justice Center. Register Here: <https://uusj.salsalabs.org/PowerToHeal/index.html?>

Join UUs and our Jewish neighbors this Sunday, from 2:00-4:00 pm at Jewish for Good, Levin JCC in Durham for the “Plan C” film sponsored by Judea Reform & the Triangle Interfaith Reproductive Justice Coalition. After the film our panelists Reps. Morey & Buansi, Judea Reform’s Rabbi Damsky & Emma Holst-Martz from Planned Parenthood will be with us. [Register Here!](#)

Join us Next Friday as we kick off our Month of Leandro Advocacy in the lead up to Thursday, February 22nd when the State Supreme Court will *again* hear oral arguments in the Leandro School Funding Case. Despite the landmark victory for public school funding in 2022, a change in the political make-up of the courts has prompted an unprecedented and unjust rehearing of the case. Join Every Child NC for this day of action in Raleigh, where North Carolinians from the mountains to the ocean will show up to demand that our children finally receive the sound, basic education promised to them in our state's constitution. [Register Here.](#) On Friday, February 2nd, we will be joined by Sarah Montgomery, co-lead of the Every Child NC Coalition who will help us kick off our month of action.

January 19th, 2024 - Fighting for an End to North Carolina's Death Penalty.

Today's Action Hour Sponsor, Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Former Executive Director of the [Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of California](#)

Weekly Round-Up

- This week Trump won the Iowa Caucus with Ron DeSantis coming in second, Nikki Haley a close third. The New Hampshire Primary is Tuesday 1/23.
- On Tuesday, [Nikki Haley](#) claimed the US has “never been a racist country” during an interview with Fox News.
- A stalemate continues between the Biden Administration and House Speaker over aid to Ukraine. Speaker Mike Johnson wants immigration crackdown in exchange.
- Biden was in North Carolina yesterday, to talk about “\$82 million in funding from a pandemic relief law that will be used to expand internet access to 16,000 homes and businesses across the state. He said that in the next three years, 300,000 more North Carolina homes and businesses in the state will be connected to affordable high-speed internet.” - News & Observer
- “A few hundred Israelis gathered in Tel Aviv last night to call for a ceasefire in Gaza and peace with Palestinians as the war between Hamas and Israel continues. Their

demonstration coincided with a press conference where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he informed the United States that he opposes the establishment of a Palestinian state as part of any post-war scenario.” - NPR

- Monday, January 22nd marks the 51st Anniversary of Roe v. Wade. There will be a Voices of Faith for Reproductive Justice & Bodily Autonomy Rally and Press Conference at 10:00am at the NC General Assembly.

Today's Focus - Fighting for an End to North Carolina's Death Penalty.

Today, we'll watch the 25-minute documentary: Racist Roots: Origins of North Carolina's Death Penalty and participate in the [NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Penalty](#)'s current postcard writing campaign.

Links:

- You can watch the documentary here: <https://racistroots.org/film/>
- Learn more about the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Penalty: <https://nccadp.org/>

About the Film “This powerful 25-minute film reveals the North Carolina death penalty’s deep entanglement with slavery, lynching, and racism — and inspires people to join the movement to transform the criminal legal system. It includes the stories and voices of advocates, artists, exonerees, and people on North Carolina’s death row. It is a key tool as we strive to educate the public about the injustices of the death penalty and end this cruel punishment.”

Action 1: Write A Postcard / Letter to Gov. Cooper - Calling on him to End the Death Penalty in North Carolina

“In 2023 the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty community showed up for rallies and marches, and people of faith signed a letter telling Governor Cooper to commute all death sentences to prison terms. Now it’s time for him to directly hear this message from all North Carolinians! The next step in our Commutations Campaign is a state-wide postcard campaign.

Please join us in sending thousands of postcards or letters from all parts of the state to Governor Cooper demanding he commute all death sentences. We need your help to show him there is widespread support for commutations; the single best solution for addressing the racist history and continued prejudicial use of the death penalty in NC’s criminal legal system. You can either write and mail a postcard we’ve designed or write to the Governor on your own. Feel free to write to him more than once!”

Write to Governor Cooper on your own. Tell him in a postcard that you create why he must commute all death sentences to prison terms.

- You do not need to create a postcard like ours. Keep it simple, any postcard is fine.
- Your message can be short.
- Please include your full name and return address.

You can send your correspondence to:

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

You can find a fact sheet with data and statistics you can include in your postcard [here](#).

Please let us know when you've mailed a postcard or letter [here](#).

- Attend an in-person "Commutation Community Conversation" where you can write a postcard and take a stack of postcards to encourage others to write. Go to our [events page](#) to see where we will be next!

Want to do more?

- Email Ricky Covach (ricky@nccadp.org) if you would like to receive 20 postcards to send or invite others to write.
- Email Nick Courmon (nickcourmon@nccadp.org) if you are interested in planning and hosting a "Commutation Community Conversation" in your local community.

Action 2 - Help spread the message of Racist Roots

If you'd like to request a facilitated screening and discussion of the Racist Roots film for your congregation, organization or community group, please contact Kristin Collins, kristin@cdpl.org. (If you host your own screening, please consider collecting the email addresses of people who are interested in joining the movement to abolish the death penalty. If you contact us afterward, we are happy to help them learn how to get involved.)

[Download a Racist Roots fact sheet](#) to print or share.

[Download an illustrated transcript](#) of the film.

Or just share the 25-minute documentary with your community via email or social media. Here is some Sample language:

"Today at UU Justice NC's Friday Action Hour, we watched the 25-minute documentary, Racist Roots: Origins of North Carolina's Death Penalty. You can [watch it here](#). "This powerful 25-minute film reveals the North Carolina death penalty's deep entanglement with slavery, lynching, and racism — and inspires people to join the movement to transform the criminal legal system. It includes the stories and voices of advocates, artists, exonerees, and people on North Carolina's death row. " And if you'd like to join the fight to end the death penalty in North Carolina, you can join the [NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty](#).

Action 3 - Urge your senators to support seniors—not corporate insurers! *** Ask comes from the Health Action NC Coalition

Background: An industry-friendly letter in support of Medicare Advantage is currently circulating in the U.S. Senate, and we need senators to stand up for their constituents by refusing to sign. Introduced by Sens. Cortez Masto, Scott, Peters, and Capito, this letter praises Medicare Advantage and asks for “stability” in the program, when what we really need is scrutiny of corporate health insurers and a crackdown on the harms they cause to seniors and people with disabilities. The deadline for signing this industry-friendly letter is Jan. 24. ***To learn more about the so-called “Medicare Advantage” program, visit healmedicare.org.

[Click on this link](#) to Encourage your senators to put their constituents first, and to **resist corporate and lobbyist pressure to sign on**.

Action 4 - Last but not least, express gratitude to an individual and/or organization who is spreading love and fighting for justice in this world. Send them a text, give them a call, write a letter, or post a message of gratitude on their Facebook page! Never underestimate the power of gratitude.

Announcements

- **Voices of Faith for Reproductive Justice & Bodily Autonomy - Monday, January 22nd at 10:00am at the NC General Assembly** (16 W. Jones Street, Raleigh). On the 51st Anniversary of Roe v. Wade, people of faith and conscience will gather for this rally and press conference to proclaim our sacred right to bodily autonomy. This interfaith event will feature Unitarian Universalist Speakers, Melva Okun, Rev. Sadie Lansdale, and Rev. Lisa Garcia-Sampson.
- **30 Days of Love!** This week marks the start of Unitarian Universalism's annual 30 Days of Love - an intentional holy time of spiritual nourishment, contemplation, and embodiment. This year's theme is “Imagining an Interdependent Future.” [Click Here](#) to explore a wide range of spiritual resources and reflections around this week's theme: Safety :: Decriminalization.
- [Reimagining with Energy Democracy](#), Thursday, January 25 at 7ET. For the last in our webinar series on Clean Energy as a Human Right, we invite you to explore the power of Energy Democracy and the ways our congregations can reimagine energy for our communities. Energy Democracy helps frontline communities build power and liberation by reimagining how we organize our lives toward new systems that support the health and wellbeing of our communities and ecosystems. [Click here to Register](#)

January 12, 2024 - How One Voice Helped Expand Medicaid in NC

Today's Action Hour Sponsor, Michael Sheridan from the UU Congregation of Wilmington!

The Weekly Round-Up!

*** Shout out to Peter Rawitsch who wrote our brand new [Weekly Round-Up Theme Song!](#)

- This week marked the four year anniversary of the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capital, by Trump supporters trying to overturn the results of the presidential election.
- New numbers show that 272,000 North Carolinians have already enrolled in Medicaid!
- New Lawsuit demands that NC stop locking minors in rooms in detention amid staffing crisis Since 2021, juvenile justice staff have confined kids for “administrative” reasons at least 2,097 times.
- There was a hearing this Wednesday for the lawsuit seeking to block the new state Senate map. [The lawsuit, filed by two Black voters in Eastern North Carolina](#), claims that the new Republican-crafted map violates the Voting Rights Act by “cracking” groups of Black voters between two new districts along the coast and the Virginia border.” Raleigh News & Observer - It’s unclear if the courts will act on gerrymandering lawsuits before elections?
- Vice President Kamala Harris on Thursday in Charlotte announced \$285 million in federal funding for mental health services in schools, with North Carolina expected to get \$12 million of the money - from the 2022 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.
- During this week’s court hearing, a Trump lawyer made the claim that former presidents are immune from prosecution even for any murders they ordered while in office. Oof.
- The week ahead - MLK Day and the Iowa Caucuses.

Today’s Guest Speaker

Last fall, with Medicaid Expansion hanging in the balance, one man's voice helped to expand healthcare to over 600,000 North Carolinians. Anthony Brooks suffers from heart failure, and after losing his Medicaid coverage, wasn't able to afford life saving surgery. In September, he traveled from Washington, NC to Raleigh to demand that Sen. Berger stop gambling with his life. While Sen. Berger hid in his office, news cameras captured it all. The political pressure from Anthony's story, and others like his, are credited with getting Medicaid Expansion over the finish line. Today, we are thrilled to welcome Anthony Brooks to Friday Action Hour. He will update us on his health, and share his experience of speaking truth to power.

Action 1 - Ask Gov. Cooper to recognize and mourn the 25,000 Palestinians lives lost

Today, we will also be making phone calls to Governor Cooper's office, calling for him to recognize and mourn the 25,000 Palestinians lives that have been lost in Gaza since October 7th.

Call and/or Email Governor Cooper

- Call Governor Cooper - 919-814-2000 - Press Option 5
- Send a Message to Governor Cooper [Here](#)

Basics Script

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a person of faith / conscience.
- First, I want to thank you for your relentless commitment to expanding Medicaid Expansion and honoring the sacredness of all lives in North Carolina.
- I am calling in regards to the ongoing tragic war in Israel and Gaza. Following October 7th, you made the decision to lower flags to half-staff for 1,400 Israeli victims. I applaud you in this act of grieving the innocent lives lost in Israel. But you have yet to say anything publicly about a death toll which has surpassed 25,000 Palestinians in Gaza.
- In doing so, you are deeply hurting and alienating thousands of Muslim, Palestinian, and Arab North Carolinians. And you are damaging your own moral legacy.
- Time and time again, you have demonstrated your own sense of moral responsibility. I join others across the state in asking you to act in alignment with your own values and publicly mourn the 25,000 thousand lives lost in Gaza.
- (Optional - If aligned with your views) I also urge you to go further and call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. In doing so, you are proclaiming that the safety and existence of one people does not require the dehumanization of another.

Action 2 - Ask Rep. Deborah Ross for call for a Ceasefire

Phone: (919) 334-0840

Email Rep. Ross. <https://rossforms.house.gov/forms/writeyourrep/>

Basics Script

- Hello, my name is _____, I live in _____ and I am a Unitarian Universalist. person of faith / conscience.
- First, I want to thank you for your relentless commitment to reproductive rights, environmental justice and healthcare. In doing so, time and time again you have honored the sacredness of all lives in North Carolina.
- I am calling on you to live into those same values in the way you demonstrate leadership in Washington around the war in Israel and Gaza.
- I join others across the state and country in urging you to go call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. In doing so, you are proclaiming that the safety and existence of one people does not require the dehumanization of another.

Announcements

- January 22nd - Faith Communities Reproductive Rights Press Conference
- February 22nd - Leandro Education Plan Oral Arguments at NC Supreme Court (with Every Child NC)
- March 2nd - Poor People's Campaign Mass Mobilization (in Raleigh and other locations across the country)

January 5th, 2024 - When the Lights Went Out in Moore County

Today's Action Hour Sponsor, Peter Rawitsch from the UU Congregation of Wilmington!

One year ago, a domestic terror attack incapacitated utilities to 45,000 households for 5 days in Moore County, NC. At least one person died as a direct result of this malicious act, and many more residents were harmed. To date, no one has been held accountable for this attack and nothing has been done to prevent future attacks. Our partners at Blueprint NC teamed up with the Laura Flanders Show (PBS) to break this silence. [Watch the Video Here](#)**#2**