

CCDP Weekly News Digest January 23, 2023

Important Dates to Remember

February 11 – Winter SEC Meeting
February 20, 6 p.m. – Chatham County Board of Commissioners Meeting
February 25 - March 11 – Annual Precinct Meetings
March 20 – Chatham County Board of Commissioners Meeting
April 15 – Annual CCDP County Convention

For more upcoming events and details, visit: <https://www.ccdpnc.org/calendar-of-events>

News from the North Carolina Democratic Party

This week's news releases:

NCDP Statement on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

North Carolina Democratic Party Chair Bobbie Richardson released the following statement commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day:

"Today we commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., reflect on his teachings, and applaud the impact and change that he enacted. Dr. King dedicated his life to making a nation where neighbors help each other, communities thrive, and equal opportunity is promised to every person in America. However, we must not merely acknowledge this day – work is left to be done."

"Dr. King's legacy calls us to be visionaries. Visionaries to see and change our communities, our state, and this country. Dr. King demanded change. His perseverance led him to the 'mountaintop' where he saw the potential to form a more perfect union and, with great determination, work together to better the lives of others. I urge my fellow North Carolinians to take up the mantle of Dr. King, continue to fight against all forms of discrimination, and envision a brighter future for all."

Two Years In, Biden Delivers for Working Families Where GOP Failed

Today marks two years since President Biden was sworn into office. Since then, under his leadership, Democrats have delivered time and again for working families – a stark contrast with how Republicans led when they were in power.

"What a difference two years makes. President Biden, Governor Cooper, and Democrats brought us out of the pandemic, lowered costs, helped create jobs, and always put working families over special interests. Democrats' leadership couldn't draw a starker contrast with how Trump and a GOP-controlled Congress used their power in 2017 and 2018: passing tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and big corporations and caving to special interests like Big Pharma," said NCDP Chair Bobbie Richardson.

As a reminder, in 2017-2018, Republicans put special interests first and left working families behind:

- **Gave Tax Giveaways to the Ultra-Wealthy and Big Corporations**
- **Offshored American Jobs:** Created new incentives for corporations to ship American jobs overseas.
- **Attacked Americans' Health Care:** Repeatedly voted to gut the Affordable Care Act to kick [tens of millions](#) Americans off their health care and end protections for as many as [133 million](#) Americans with preexisting conditions.
- **Failed to Deliver on Lowering Prescription Drug Prices and Infrastructure**
- **Ungovernable chaos:** Shut down the government twice because of basic inability to govern.
- **Appointed Anti-Choice, Anti-Worker Judges:** Appointed the right-wing Supreme Court majority that paved the way for Republicans to criminalize abortion and has ruled with big corporations over workers.
- **Stood with NRA Over Reducing Gun Violence:** Sided with the gun lobby and manufacturers by revoking commonsense gun safety protections.
- **Eroded America's standing on the world stage:** Cozied up to authoritarian leaders, weakened relationships with NATO allies, and withdrew from the International Paris Climate Agreement to stand with big polluters.

Meanwhile, in the first two years, the Biden-Harris Administration and Democrats delivered results with an economic agenda that is on the side of workers, here's a sample:

- **Record Job Growth:** Strongest two years for job growth on record, unemployment matching 50-year low, annual inflation has come down for the past six months in a row, and a record number of Americans have health insurance.
- **Lowering Costs for Families:** Inflation Reduction Law to lower prescription drug costs, lower health care premiums and energy costs, take historic climate action, and force wealthy corporations to pay their fair share – all while reducing the deficit.
- **Fixing Our Nation's Infrastructure:** Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is rebuilding roads and bridges, providing clean drinking water, and expanding access to high-speed internet.
- **Making More in America:** More companies are reinvesting in American manufacturing – creating 750,000 good-paying jobs, with an historic \$300 billion in investments in new factories.
- **Improving Health Care for Veterans:** Passed the PACT Act to strengthen benefits for veterans and their families exposed to toxic burn pits.
- **Reducing Gun Violence:** Passed the first significant gun safety law in nearly 30 years.
- **Providing Historic Student Loan Relief:** Providing student debt relief to those who need it most.
- **Appointing Historic Court Nominees:** Appointed Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman on the Supreme Court, along with a record number of diverse federal judges in his first two years.
- **Rebuilding the Global Coalition:** Restored our standing on the world stage, and led our allies to support Ukraine and democracy worldwide, making the world a safer and steadier place.

NCDP Statement on Roe v. Wade Anniversary

North Carolina Democratic Party Chair Bobbie Richardson released the following statement on the 50th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision:

"Today marks 50 years since the Roe v. Wade decision and the first anniversary where its protections are no longer the law of the land. While abortion remains safe and legal in North Carolina, Republicans have already set their intentions on further restrictions of our rights and embraced divisive politicians who demean women and call abortion a 'scourge.' This year we won't be celebrating, instead we will be standing together as North Carolinians to protect our future and ensure everyone has the freedom to make their own health care decisions."

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News from Neighbors on Call

Call to Action from Down Home NC: Call NC House Speaker Tim Moore to Demand Fair Rules

Last week, the NC House Republicans enacted temporary – and devious – new rules for the chamber.

The Speaker can now bring up a veto override vote with no advance notice.

During the previous legislative session, NC House rules stipulated that members couldn't vote to override a gubernatorial veto "until the second legislative day following notice of its placement on the calendar.

Permanent rules will be adopted in February.

Please call Speaker Moore this week at 919-733-3451.

Here is a sample script from Progress NC:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of _____ county. I am calling today to let Speaker Moore know that I am opposed to removing the notice period for veto overrides. It is extremely important to me that all representatives have a chance to weigh in on crucial legislation. It undermines the will of the voters to deny the opportunity for those we elected to represent us. Please tell Speaker Moore not to remove the notice period from the House rules. Thank you for your time.

Governance

- [On Wednesday the NCGA began its long session.](#) Though the lawmakers are now taking a legally-required two-week break, reconvening on January 25, the first day of the session included a [controversial temporary rule change in the NC House eliminating a provision requiring advance notice of veto override votes.](#) Republicans, who are one vote short of the supermajority required to override a veto from Governor Cooper, will [seek to make the rule change permanent once the break is over. Important issues expected to come up in this session of the NCGA include Medicaid expansion, Republican-driven restrictions on abortion, and public school spending.](#) In addition, lawmakers will draw two new electoral maps (for US House and NC Senate races) and likely rewrite the state's voter ID law.
- On Thursday [Governor Cooper announced a ban of the app TikTok on state-owned mobile phones.](#) The decision follows TikTok bans on government devices by the federal government and many other states due to TikTok's ownership by Chinese company ByteDance and its status as a security risk.

Health Care Policy

- [On January 4 the NC treasurer's office announced that the State Health Plan](#) – the health insurance plan for NC government employees and teachers – will switch from Blue Cross Blue Shield to Aetna. State Treasurer Dale Folwell said that costs to employees will not change, but which providers are considered in-network may change. [On January 12, Blue Cross NC filed a complaint that the request for proposals \(RFP\) put out by the treasurer's office was inadequate.](#) The office must either deny the appeal within ten days or schedule a meeting with Blue Cross NC to discuss their complaint.

News from NC House Democratic Leader Robert Reives' Office:

Rep. Reives Officially Sworn into Office

Rep. Reives and other members of the North Carolina House of Representatives were officially sworn into office last week. Rep. Reives was joined by friends and family in the House Chamber. Rep. Reives will continue to serve as the House Democratic Leader for the 2023-24 biennium. He continues to represent House District 54, but the district itself has changed. The 54th district still includes all of Chatham County, but now includes Liberty and Staley in Randolph County. The previous iteration of the district was all of Chatham County and a small portion of Durham County.

The Legislative Session began with controversy over the rules which will govern how and when legislative votes are taken. Rep. Reives has an opinion piece in the Chatham News + Record, Raleigh News & Observer, Durham Herald-Sun and Charlotte Observer discussing the issue and why it is a disservice to North Carolinians. The full op-ed is copied below:

Rules matter. In our lives there are rules of the road, rules in every classroom, and in every workplace.

Rules matter a great deal in my workplace, the North Carolina House of Representatives. After the election of a Speaker, the rules are the first thing we vote on. This week the NC House approved rules that will make our work less transparent and open to the public -- and even to many legislators.

What do the new rules do? They allow one person, our Republican Speaker of the House, to schedule a vote to override the Governor at any time with no notice to the public or other legislators. There is no requirement the vote appear on a public calendar. There is no requirement the vote occur during our regular order of business. On any legislative day, at any point from the opening prayer and pledge of allegiance to the end of the day closing gavel, the veto vote may be called up without notice in a matter of a few seconds. Note, I wrote "seconds" of notice - not minutes or hours or days.

The rules were approved on a party-line vote and they are "temporary" with the plan to come back in a few weeks to pass "permanent" rules. My hope is that my Republican colleagues will reconsider and pass rules fairer to the public and to all members of the House.

The secrecy in our new rules will particularly matter on bills vetoed by the Governor. Vetoed bills tend to be some of the most high-profile and contentious issues we deal with: abortion, voting rights, civil rights, and the State Budget. The very issues where transparency and openness are most important so citizens can follow what is going on and voice their opinions in a timely way. It is also important that the representatives of all 120 districts have the same opportunity to vote on these matters.

Obviously, we have our disagreements in the State House. 120 politicians are never all going to be on the same page. Our differences can be regional, ideological, and, yes, partisan. Yet we should all have the same information on when we are voting bills and doing our legislative business. That's just basic fairness.

You do not have to look far to see a better way of doing business -- the Republican-led State Senate is right on the other side of the Legislative Building. Their rule is imperfect, but much more sensible. The public and all legislators receive 24-hour notice prior to action taken on a vetoed bill.

I have served in the NC House of Representatives since 2014. Our body is capable of doing great things for North Carolinians. I can promise you, though, that nothing good will come out of a process built around secrecy and deception. It will lead to more partisan rancor and fighting among legislators. It will lead to more suspicion and mistrust from the people of North Carolina. Those are the last things we need as we confront problems like how to improve our public schools, how to address health care costs, and how to make our communities more safe and prosperous.

Read more coverage of the rules controversy:

CBS17: [North Carolina GOP pursues path to overriding vetoes, opening door to abortion law changes](#)

North Carolina Policy Watch: [New NC House rules would 'hold people hostage' and erode transparency, Democratic leader says](#)

WRAL: [NC House Republicans scrap rule on veto override votes](#)

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Selected News and Opinion Stories of Note

[The Assembly NC:](#) Josh Stein Makes His Case

[Chapelboro.com:](#) Democratic Attorney General Runs for North Carolina Governor

[Washington Post:](#) Thom Tillis Emerges as a Bipartisan Dealmaker as Lawmakers Fear Dysfunction Looms

[NC Policy Watch:](#) Utilities Commission Approves New Plan to Reduce Carbon Emissions, But Advocates are Underwhelmed

[NC Policy Watch:](#) Veto Showdowns and Voter ID: Democracy Will Be on the Defensive Again at the Legislature in 2023

[Chatham News + Record:](#) Weeks-Long Outage Shows Need for Better Broadband

[Chatham News + Record:](#) Holmes Says New Development Will 'Complement and Enhance' Area

[Chatham News + Record:](#) COVID Cases on the Rise in Chatham

[Chatham News + Record:](#) Retreat Wrap-Up: Chatham Commissioners Define Priorities for New Year

[Chatham News + Record:](#) Haw River Wetlands and Streams Would Be Harmed Under Proposal from VinFast

[Chatham News + Record:](#) Funding and Future: Chatham School Board Sets Priorities at Mid-Year Retreat

[WRAL:](#) In Bipartisan NC House Assignments, a Sign of GOP Strategy