

**Chatham County Democratic Party Weekly News Digest**  
**July 24, 2023**

**Upcoming Events**

**July 24 – July 28, 6 – 8 p.m. – Municipals Matter, Sponsored by North Carolina Democrats**

Remember, the candidate filing period for the upcoming municipal elections is still open! If you or someone you know is running for local office, join the North Carolina Democratic Party's **virtual training sessions for registered Democrats running for municipal office**. The trainings cover everything you need to know about how to run a successful municipal campaign. PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH SHIFT/TRAINING SESSION COVERS A DIFFERENT TOPIC!

July 24th, 6 - 8 p.m. | Telling Your Story, Messaging, & Press  
July 25th, 6 - 8 p.m. | Win #s & Field  
July 26th, 6 - 8 p.m. | Budgets, Fundraising & Call Time  
July 27th, 6 - 8 p.m. | VoteBuilder for Campaigns  
July 28th, 6 - 8 p.m. | GOTV for Municipals

To RSVP, go to: [Building Blue: Municipals Matter! - North Carolina Democrats](#)

**July 25, 6 p.m. – Last Session of People Power School 102, Sponsored by Poder NC**

The goal of People Power School is to provide *nuestra gente* with political education on the civic process and how we can organize for meaningful wins. We can do that by building a relationship directly with elected officials in shared spaces. Join us for the last session of People Power School 102 and get to meet a new slate of NC and national leaders that are defining how we win. PPS 102 will be hosted **online through Zoom**. *Nos vemos pronto!* Sign up and bring a friend. Sign up at: [People Power School 102](#)

**July 25, 7:30 p.m. – Unpacking the Latest Supreme Court Decisions, Sponsored by Red Wine & Blue**

Is your head spinning from the latest Supreme Court decisions? Want help understanding what this all means? Let's make sense of it with our favorite history teacher, Jillian Gaeta of Roots to Revolution. Jillian will help break down the latest rulings and what they mean for our country – with a flare of historical perspective. Join us!

Sign up at: [Unpacking the Latest Supreme Court Decisions - Get The Facts!](#)

**July 26, 7:30 p.m. – TroubleMaven Academy Summer School, Sponsored by Red Wine & Blue**

Have you joined a TroubleMaven class yet? If not, you've been missing out! Join us for 1, 2, or the last 3 weeks of our TroubleMaven Academy Summer School. By the end of the Academy, you will have the information and skills you need to be an effective, confident advocate around issues that are important to you.

Sign up at: [TroubleMaven Academy Summer School](#)

**July 26, 8 p.m. – Why is right-wing media so crazy?**

From Fox News to NewsMax, and Breitbart to TruthSocial, the American Right has built an enormous, well-funded and openly partisan media ecosystem all its own. Media Matters for America monitors and analyzes the right-wing echo chamber, and, in this virtual event sponsored by Carolina Forward, two of their leaders, Kat Abughazaleh and Julie Mullican, will join us in a discussion about how the Right's media ecosystem works, and how to most effectively counter its torrent of misinformation. Hope to see you there!

To sign up, go to: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

**July 27, 7:30 p.m. – Troublemaker Training: Handling Tough Topics Like a Pro, Sponsored by Red Wine & Blue**

Want a little help having effective and persuasive conversations? We got you! Join us to hear from Jess McIntosh, a communication strategist, CNN commentator and former host of Signal Boost. She can help you with tips and advice on what to say (and what not to say) and how to connect with others.

Sign up at: [Troublemaker Training: Comms 101 - Handling Tough Topics Like A Pro](#)

**July 29, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. – Liberation Series-Part I, Sponsored by Community Organizing for Racial Equity (CORE), Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center, Pittsboro**

Join CORE for conversation and restoration! We are hosting the first event in our Liberation Series where we will have conversation about what it means to live with a liberated mindset and how we can take action using our individual power. Our restoration practice at this event will be Yoga, and don't worry it's beginner friendly!

**August 2, 7 – 8:30 p.m. – Building a Strong Public School Strong Team, Sponsored by Down Home North Carolina**

So you've got a couple few folks in your county who have been through the Public School Strong training, got their shirts and maybe showed up at a couple of school board meetings. But you want to form a real team, get some stuff done in your county, get more people involved, and be part of statewide organizing as a county.

You need a strong team! Join us for this training to learn about best practices of strong teams, suggested roles, and how to organize other parents and supporters to join you. And make some plans for your next steps!

To join, go to: [Building a Strong Public School Strong Team - Down Home North Carolina](#)

**August 10-11 and October 23 – REI Phase I "In-Person" Workshops, Sponsored by Organizing Against Racism**

Here are two opportunities for personal growth and understanding in the area of race and racism. Many have described these in-person workshops as "life changing."

**Thursday & Friday, August 10-11, 2023**  
**8:45 a.m. - 5 p.m.**

**REI Phase I Workshop**  
**Durham Location TBA**  
**"IN-PERSON"**

[REGISTER For August 10-11](#)

**Monday & Tuesday, October 2-3, 2023**  
**8:45a.m. - 5 p.m.**

**"IN-PERSON"**

**REI Phase I Workshop**  
**Durham Location TBA**

[REGISTER for October 2-3](#)

**August 19, 2 p.m. – Bilingual canvass for House Minority Leader Rep. Robert Reives, Siler City.**

We'll be talking with Leader Reives' constituents and finding out what issues are most important to them. Don't speak Spanish? That's okay - we will pair you with someone who does! Sign up at: <https://www.mobilize.us/countytoaccountnc/event/565582/>

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**High-Speed Broadband Coming to Many New Households in NC. Find Out if You are Eligible.**

The Biden-Harris Administration is investing in high-speed broadband internet for all! Nearly 782,000 households in NC are saving up to \$75 a month on internet costs with President Biden's Affordable Connectivity Program – but many more are eligible! Find out if you qualify here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/getinternet/>

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**News from Neighbors on Call**

**Policy Update (7/24/23)**

**Governance**

- **On Thursday Republican leaders at the NCGA announced that they were close to negotiating a budget agreement.** According to Speaker of the House Tim Moore, the negotiators have reached an agreement on teacher and state employee pay raises, but negotiations about tax cuts and state reserves continue. [Governor Cooper's office issued a statement Friday that excessive personal income tax cuts could harm public education in North Carolina.](#) Since the budget is late, the state has been operating on the previous budget since July 1.

**Voting Rights**

- **On Monday the North Carolina Board of Elections released a list of university and government IDs that can be used for voting.** Photo ID is now required to vote in North Carolina following an April state supreme court decision. Most of the institutions that submitted IDs for approval were approved, including all UNC system universities. Six institutional IDs were not accepted due to a lack of expiration dates; those institutions will be able to apply again next year. All approved IDs will be usable through the 2024 election.

**Economic Policy**

- **A bill under consideration at the NCGA would invest \$1.5 billion to award a single business the right to develop three casinos across the state.** Though the draft bill doesn't name specific counties, Republican House Speaker Tim Moore said the casinos would be in Anson, Nash and Rockingham counties. Republican Senate leader Phil Berger represents Rockingham County. Moore and Berger indicated that the bill has support, but it is unclear whether it will pass while budget negotiations are also ongoing.

**Education Policy**

- **On Friday Governor Cooper vetoed the "Charter Schools Omnibus" bill.** The Republican-sponsored bill would allow counties to spend tax revenues on charter school construction or renovation, remove enrollment caps at low-performing charter schools, and allow charter schools to give enrollment preference for students from certain preschools. Cooper's veto will likely be subject to a veto override vote when the NCGA reconvenes on August 7, along with five other vetoed bills.
- **On Thursday Speaker of the House Tim Moore said that a broad education bill would not be considered for a vote this session.** Among the many controversial aspects of the bill, SB 90 includes a provision to allow school superintendents to be fired based on five successful parent complaints along with multiple provisions restricting materials in school and public libraries.

**Policy Update (7/17/23)**

**Governance**

- **No North Carolina budget vote until August, top House member says:** Negotiations between the GOP-led House and Senate are continuing with debate centered on tax cuts. (Brian Murphy, WRAL)

**Education Policy**

- **July surprise: GOP lawmakers unveil sweeping bill to remake public education in NC:** Abruptly scheduled public hearing, however, is postponed till next week (Greg Childress, NC Newsline) and [NC House GOP bill would make it easier to fire school superintendents, prosecute librarians](#) (Michael Hyland, CBS17)
- **NC lawmakers seek to restrict minors' mental health privacy rights:** A new proposal in the state House would repeal minors' rights under state law to consent to mental health counseling without a parent's permission except in cases of emergency. It's part of a national conservative push to reassert parental rights. (Laura Leslie, WRAL)
- **Bill to OK tax money for charter school construction clears NC legislature:** House Bill 219 would leave it up to county commissions to decide whether to spend local tax dollars on charter school construction. (Travis Fain, WRAL)
- **Gov. Roy Cooper lets UNC omnibus bill become law without his signature** (Joe Killion, NC Newsline)

**Health Care Policy**

- **North Carolina medical marijuana bill likely dead for this year, House speaker says** (AP/WRAL)
- **North Carolina Medicaid managed care for people with mental illness and disabilities delayed again:** The start date for the plans that will cover roughly 160,000 people had been last Dec. 1. The state Department of Health and Human Services then pushed back its implementation to April 1, then to this coming Oct. 1. (AP/WRAL)
- **Mannequin exams, New instructor licenses, Changes could be coming to NC dental practice laws:** Lawmakers are considering proposed legislation that could bring changes to the North Carolina dental profession. (Anne Blythe, NC Health News)

**Abortion Rights**

- **Ultrasound documentation requirement for abortion pills will remain on hold** (Lynn Bonner, NC Newsline)

**LGBTQ Rights**

- **Republican lawmakers eye veto overrides for NC bills targeting transgender youth:** The bills, vetoed last week by Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper, seek to ban gender-affirming care for minors and prohibit transgender girls and women from playing on female sports teams. (Laura Leslie, WRAL News)

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**News from NC Congressman Jeff Jackson**

**The Defense Bill**

Well, that went worse than I expected.

Last week I told you how the annual defense bill moved through a committee I'm on, and how the job of the Chair was to block the most controversial amendments.

Then I told you the next stop for the bill was the whole House, where members would get another shot at loading it up with culture war amendments.

My hope was the Speaker would be able to prevent that, as the Chair had.

Here's what happened:

The Speaker met with the far-right caucus.

They told him they were going to file amendments about abortion, racial race theory, Pride flags, diversity programs, library books on military bases, etc.

The Speaker asked them not to file those amendments.

The far-right threatened to vote against the bill.

The Speaker caved.

At which point, the floodgates opened and a river of culture war amendments made it into the bill.

The abortion amendment, in particular, was a major moment. I was on the House floor and as soon as that amendment passed, it was like a balloon deflating. It meant a lot of people who wanted to vote for the bill simply couldn't bring themselves to anymore.

One amendment that notably failed would have halted the process of renaming military bases that are currently named after Confederate generals. 41 Republicans voted against the amendment to halt the process, which, combined with all the Dems, was enough to sink it. The renaming will continue.

When the full bill itself finally came to a vote, it passed, but just barely.

I voted against it.

And it's dead-on-arrival in the Senate. Because of all the culture war stuff, now it's just another set of talking points that won't become law.

Now we're waiting for the Senate to pass their version of the defense bill. They're in the driver's seat.

**The Senator from Alabama**

I was hoping this would get resolved before I needed to update you about it, but it hasn't been.

There's a Senator from Alabama who disagrees with the military's travel policy when it comes to abortion, and the way he's chosen to react is something you should know.

In protest, he has blocked the nomination of *every single general and admiral in the military*.

That means the entire top leadership for our military is frozen. If there's a vacancy, it stays vacant.

We're at 275 nominations blocked this year. If he keeps it up, by the end of the year, it'll be 650.

The way this works is that the Senate gets to confirm any new general or admiral that's moving up into a new position - but if one Senator objects, that *process* grinds to a halt and it's really hard to work around it. It would take several months of *doing nothing* else for the Senate to clear the backlog because of this Senator's objection.

He sees that as leverage, and he's using it.

Last week, it became more serious. The head of the Marines retired and the person who was supposed to replace him was blocked by this Senator. Now the Marines don't have a confirmed leader for the first time in a hundred years.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs is retiring soon. After that, it's the head of the army. Half of our Joint Chiefs will be vacant within the next few months.

Why is he doing this?

Because after *Roe* was overturned, the military was worried it was going to affect the recruitment of women who could be stationed in states that no longer allow abortion.

So, they put in place a travel policy that would accommodate women who needed to travel to get an abortion or in vitro or other pregnancy care the military doesn't cover. The policy doesn't pay for abortion, but it allows service members to take leave and apply for reimbursement for their travel, as is typical with receiving medical care not covered by the military.

The military wasn't trying to be pro-abortion; they were trying to be pro-recruitment.

By the way, remember the abortion amendment on the defense bill I referenced earlier? It was about this. It was an attempt to override the Defense Department's policy and it made it into the bill, but will be blocked by the Senate.

That's the latest. Next week I'll have an update for you about some A.I. legislation I'm working on. We've got some bipartisan support and things are looking good.

Best,

Jeff

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**Selected News and Opinion Stories of Note**

**Ballotpedia:** [State legislators who have switched political party affiliation](#)

**Carolina Forward:** [A Pipeline to Nowhere](#)

**Carolina Public Press:** [New study analyzes NC Supreme Court's rulings in favor of workers, corporations](#)

**Carolina Public Press:** [Proposed changes to N.C. Judicial Standards Commission raise concerns about judicial integrity and oversight, Part Two](#)

**Carolina Public Press:** [Defining the democracy beat](#)

**Chapelboro:** ['A Junk Pile of Bad Ideas': State Sen. Graig Meyer on How to Understand the NC Legislature](#)

**Chapelboro:** [North Carolina House Unlikely To Proceed With Education Overhaul, Speaker Says](#)

**Hopium Chronicles:** [Democrats Are Having A Good Summer. Republicans Are Teetering on A Political Abyss](#)

**Hopium Chronicles:** [Biden Has Opened A Up Small Lead, David Pepper Joins Us Next Thursday, New With Dems Released](#)

**Lucid:** [Italian Fascism: A Seminar - by Ruth Ben-Ghiat](#)

**Lucid:** [Stressed About the State of Democracy? - by Ruth Ben-Ghiat](#)

**MSNBC:** [Trump intends to use a second term to finish the devastating work he started](#)

**News & Observer:** [NC district attorneys influence legislative leaders, laws](#)

**NC Health News:** [Are NC's new abortion restrictions leading to more sterilizations?](#)

**NC Health News:** [Medical schools may be affected by SCOTUS affirmative action ruling](#)

**NC Health News:** [Governor pushes aging plan for North Carolina](#)

**NC Health News:** [Medicaid unwinding numbers show more kicked off of program than anticipated](#)

**NC Newsline:** [NC Elections Board approves list of university and government IDs that can be used for voting](#)

**NY Times:** [Trump Plans to Expand Presidential Power Over Agencies in 2025](#) (may require subscription)

**Politico:** [Biden looks to put North Carolina on '24 map](#)

**Reuters:** [Biden's age is his 'superpower' in 2024, Jeffrey Katzenberg says](#)

**The Assembly NC:** [A \\$1.4 Billion Bet on North Carolina's Universities](#)

**Hopium Chronicles:** [More Road Poling on DeSantis, 2 Events this Week, Spain's Right Comes Up Short, Focus Now on Oh, VA, and FL](#)

**Democracy Docket:** [NC Republicans Introduce Bill Targeting Boards of Elections](#)