

# Request for Remote Public Input for House Select Committee on COVID-19 Public Comments Report - LINC

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
03/30/2020 03:04 PM	Economic Support Working Group	MARK WARD	Please consider a package to help NC farmers and related agribusiness through this tough time. Some kind of crop protection initiative that will provide a mechanism to protect existing crops from ruin - perhaps with a payback to the State upon sale. Thank you.
03/30/2020 03:04 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mrs Barbara Coulson	<p>When pollworkers, most of whom are elderly, are harder to find as well as secure polling places, it would be a smart idea to convert to vote by mail for the upcoming general election. States that have done this show it to be a far more secure method when all registered voters are mailed a ballot a few weeks in advance of the election. This gives them time to research candidates, fill out the ballot, and return it to the Board of Elections or their local post office. The Board of Elections could hire staff to count the ballots, and much money could be saved by the counties by not having to support several hundred polling sites and pollworker salaries. It would also lessen the danger of a resurgence of the Coronavirus, which is considered by health experts to be a distinct possibility. Initiating a ranked choice system of first, second, and third choice would also avoid any costly runoffs and give voters the opportunity to vote for their first, second, or third choice of candidates. Voters would have to be informed well in advance about the benefits of this so they understand the process, but I believe it would be well worth using this election as a pilot program.</p> <p>Secure elections- save money- avoid runoffs- give voters choices to rate candidates- and maybe save the State.</p>
03/30/2020 03:08 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Sam Watts	<p>From the State Retirement System: A provision from last year's legislative budget would have been very helpful to have had in place prior to the current public health emergency. Section 35.2(a) &amp; (b) of HB 966 from last year would allow for the use of electronic identity authentication by the Retirement System in lieu of notarization for transactions with the state and local retirement systems.</p> <p>Given that our office is currently closed to the public because of the health emergency, we are unable to allow members to drop off paperwork and have it notarized by our staff. This current situation requires members to seek outside notary services and to mail the papers to us. While I realize this is a short-term limitation today, the fact that we are functioning in this manner highlights the long-term wisdom of allowing us to get this updated process in place as soon as practicable. Particularly since it's not unthinkable that we could have another wave or two of COVID-19 outbreaks before the emergency is over it would make sense to move forward on this initiative.</p> <p>Even though House Bill 966 was not enacted because of the budget impasse, the Retirement System staff went ahead and built the infrastructure to use online identity authentication into the refunds process using existing resources. We also have determined that we can begin to build the online process into other processes as we do routine maintenance on our automated systems, so we no longer need to non-recurring portion of the original request. We do, however, in order to begin using what we built, still need the recurring portion of the request as it would fund a new contract for a software maintenance agreement with a provider of the identity authentication service. The</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>recurring appropriation would be \$300,000 per year. The special provision language is needed to adjust the retirement statutes to allow for alternatives to notarization.</p> <p>I would also be neglectful if I didn't mention that the paper notarization process would be retained by the division and available to members who don't choose to use the online option.</p> <p>Thanks for your time. Sam Watts, Legislative Liaison, N.C. Department of State Treasurer.</p>
03/30/2020 03:12 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Dr. Homer Edward Price	To enable all citizens of North Carolina to participate safely in the November elections, even if the coronavirus pandemic is not over by then, it should be made easier and quicker to vote by mail. Collecting unmarked absentee ballots and filling them out without the voters being present should, of course, remain illegal.
03/30/2020 03:18 PM	Health Care Working Group	Dr. Susan Attermeier	We still don't know how long movement restrictions due to COVID-19 will be in force for healthy people. Nor do we know how many people will be sick and homebound. In order to maximize participation in elections it makes sense to allow voting by mail should that be necessary. It may or may not be needed but it is a wise precaution.
03/30/2020 03:30 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms Jo Schultz	I strongly urge that all efforts be made to allow all residents to be able to vote, including same day registration, early voting, expanded polling places and no excuse absentee ballots.
03/30/2020 03:34 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms. Dawn Wheeler	Please build a structure to support remote voting. I live in Charlotte, but I am very vulnerable based on the risk factors for the Coronavirus. I do not want the board of elections to wait so long that they cannot do virtual voting.
03/30/2020 03:40 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Lawson Henry Lowrance	Please ensure the opportunity to vote in November 2020 for all eligible voters by greatly expanding "vote by mail" to include anyone who chooses that option.
03/30/2020 03:43 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	COVID 19 and Voting Sarah Shaefer	We need mail-in ballots for all North Carolina voters for the 2020 general election in November. Everyone should automatically be mailed a ballot. It is very important because we most likely won't be able to vote in-person.
03/30/2020 03:54 PM	Health Care Working Group	Ms Victoria Smith	I totally agree with the state implementing the stay at home order. This is very important to protect our citizens and also slow the spread that will overwhelm our healthcare systems. I do have a problem with businesses that don't comply with the order. I'll give you an example: A local large car dealership remains open. It sounds like the service department may be needed for customer repairs but there is little need for the staff of the

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			sales department to go to work in order to call and beg people to buy new cars for the dealership's monetary benefit. In reality, people are loosing jobs and are scarred. They are not buying new cars! In addition, it puts the sales department staff at great risk of contracting the virus and spreading it throughout the community. If businesses are able to put their own profits above the safety of the community, that's just plain disgusting! Please enforce the stay at home order equally throughout the state!
03/30/2020 03:57 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr David Aylward	With the upcoming elections in November we need to be prepared for a potential second wave of the virus and make certain voters can vote by mail, adopting the same rights to vote by mail used in California (no proof of hardship required). We should also make sure counties have the resources to recruit staff at voting locations as these staff are traditionally elderly volunteers who will not be available if this pandemic is present in November. Lastly, we need to ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina. The primaries in different parts of the country have been dangerously destructive to our democracy with the closing of voting locations in Arizona, the reporting app debacle in the Iowa caucus, the lack of early voting and voting by mail, and the discrepancies in counted votes versus exit poll data. Disaffected voters who have lost faith in the democratic process are one thing, but disaffected voters on the verge of poverty are another. I strongly urge the state to work hard to ensure accuracy, transparency, and availability/ flexibility in our democratic processes this coming November. Our democracy and nation hang in the balance.
03/30/2020 03:59 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms Victoria Smith	We need mail in voting for the 2020 election! We have no real idea whether this virus emergency will be over in November. There are reports that it could return in the Fall. With no vaccine coming soon, it's silly not to plan for the event that the population won't need to be staying home in the Fall so as not to put vulnerable citizens at risk. We should also expand early voting throughout the state to hopefully keep the crowds down.
03/30/2020 03:59 PM	Health Care Working Group	Dr Jerry Barker	1. please expand Medicaid to all NC citizens, 2. protect rural hospitals to prevent further closings 3. Silver Sneakers (which most state retirees & Medicare enrollees have for free) offers a M-W-F 30-minute appropriate workout
03/30/2020 04:03 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Anne Clark	It is obvious given the fact that so many states have had to postpone their primaries that we need to look at a vote by mail solution to prevent the possibility of being unable to vote in person in November. Vote by mail would be less expensive and more democratic as well, and would increase the percentage of people in the state who vote, as shown by other states that successfully use this voting method. Please consider making this needed change immediately.  Anne Clark Chapel Hill, NC
03/30/2020 04:07 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Rick Stone	Please redouble your efforts to ensure that NC voters are able to exercise this fundamental right for the November 2020 election. No one knows for sure the impact the novel corona virus (covid-19) may have at that time so it is imperative that mechanisms are put in place to ensure North Carolinians are able to exercise their right to vote in this most important election. Thank you!

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
03/30/2020 04:15 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Isaac Boulter	<p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>I am a citizen and constituent of Yancey County writing to voice my concerns regarding our state's plans to ensure that the coming election is not adversely affected by the ongoing pandemic. I support many of the recommendations provided by the State Board of Elections to the Governor and legislative leaders last week, especially regarding helping North Carolinians to vote by mail via absentee ballots. I want to encourage the Committee to consider our elections as they develop our state's response to this unprecedented health crisis.</p> <p>In particular, I believe there are four essential aspects to include in the state's plans for November. First, every possible action must be taken to ensure that any and all North Carolina voters can cast their ballots by mail. It may be necessary to deliver ballots by mail, in order to allow voters to receive them safely. Second, counties must be given the resources necessary to both recruit more poll workers for the election and protect their health if the virus is still a threat. We have seen in recent weeks, as some ill-advised states continue to hold their primary elections, that a lack of poll workers has crippled the voting process for many Americans; we must ensure this does not happen here. Third, provisions must be made to give county election boards the necessary flexibility and financial resources to create early voting plans for the fall election. We cannot know how the health crisis will develop over the intervening months, but North Carolinians need to be able to respond and adapt to the situation. Finally, all government meetings that occur remotely during this time -- those concerning the fall election, those concerning our state's response to the pandemic, and those that would be occurring normally -- must be made open and transparent. The people of North Carolina expect and deserve to have oversight of our government and elected officials at all times, but now more than ever as we navigate this crisis, we must be able to hold our representatives accountable.</p> <p>I appreciate the Committee's ongoing efforts to protect North Carolinians during this uncertain time, and wish them steadfast courage and wisdom in their work.</p> <p>Regards, Isaac Boulter Yancey County, 28714</p>
03/30/2020 04:31 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Penny Stevens	Please treat people with dignity weather they have insurance or not. People need help not stop gaps due to their ability to pay for what they need. This is a time to come together not divide us. Please do the right thing to help everyone not just the rich they have money to do what they want to do. The rest of us are left out.
03/30/2020 04:32 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Bruce Frey	Our state should prepare now for the 2020 election to make sure every qualified citizen can exercise their right to vote without waiting an unreasonable time to cast their vote. The state should pursue options to allow absentee ballots by all voters in case the coronavirus pandemic continues or re-emerges again in the fall. Safe and free elections is a hallmark for our country's democratic process.
03/30/2020 04:39 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections &	Voter Rights Victoria Estes	Here is what needs to be done to protect voter rights both now and in the future. 1. Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail. This is important because voting should be accessible amd easy for all people. 2. Provide counties the

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
	Public Safety) Working Group		<p>resources to recruit more pollworkers for November. The more people on hand the easier the flow of voters goes. We need to ensure a relaxed and prepared vibe is present at the polls. 3. Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election. Every person has a unique schedule and our voting periods need to reflect that. 4. Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina. Just because business as usual has changed, does not mean that people lost the right to be a part of the political process. Advertising and announcing of political gatherings should be increased all the way around.</p> <p>Thank you for all that you do.</p>
03/30/2020 04:39 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Richard Carbonaro	Send a voting form with a registration number on it to all registered voters in the state of North Carolina, and have it returned to the board of elections in the county of resident.
03/30/2020 04:50 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Karen Floyd	<p>My understanding is that the state legislature has begun convening committee meetings remotely to determine how our state can best respond and what urgent actions need to be taken.</p> <p>I strongly urge the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This is the most critical issue to be addressed: make it easier for ALL NC voters to have the ABILITY TO CAST A BALLOT BY MAIL</li> <li>2. Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November</li> <li>3. Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election</li> <li>4. Ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina</li> </ol>
03/30/2020 04:52 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Patrick Sweeney	Please do not politicize this nation's fundamental democratic process. Elections - while essentially political - are, nevertheless, sacred exercises of the process that made and make this nation great. Do not use this current crisis to politically manipulate the sacred electoral process of citizens voting. Recognize the critical role elections play in this nation's existence and do what's necessary to ensure that its role is maintained. Make voting accessible by mail. Encourage voting by keeping polls open, by expanding early voting sites and hours of operation. Do NOT violate the sanctity of the precious right for which our fellow countrymen have literally died. Do NOT besmirch the honor of their sacrifice.
03/30/2020 04:53 PM	Health Care Working Group	Ann Suk	I hope that the health rights of all, particularly the most vulnerable, are prioritized now and in the future. Quality healthcare should be available and accessible to everyone anyway, regardless of immigration status or documentation status or income; this access is also important now to prevent further spread of COVID-19. Likewise, everyone should have the ability to take time off of work for sick leave without losing income or employment. Paid sick leave is especially important now so that people are not driven by economic precarity to work while they are unwell - and it should also be a priority at all times. People should have access to safe housing where they can shelter in place and practice social

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>distancing; access to safe and affordable housing is also a constant issue.</p> <p>As someone with many friends working in clinical settings, I am also concerned about their ability to protect themselves from contracting - and transmitting - COVID-19. As people working on the front lines of this crisis, healthcare professionals need full support and protection so that they can stay safe themselves and continue to care for others.</p> <p>Incarcerated individuals should also be released to prevent spread of COVID-19 in prisons.</p> <p>Another priority is public education about COVID-19, with particular focus on countering xenophobic narratives. Engaging local communities across the state in spreading awareness about the disease, how it spreads, and how to prevent it is essential.</p>
03/30/2020 05:33 PM	Health Care Working Group	Mrs. Allison Costanzo	<p>Recommendations/Suggestions to the General Assembly on How to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic as it Pertains to Older Adults</p> <p>Submitted by The NC Coalition on Aging March 30, 2020</p> <p>As a Coalition comprised of a diverse array of 75 consumer, provider, and advocacy programs/organizations that represent North Carolina's aging population, we have sought input from our members about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their operations and the persons they serve. Based on that input, we are pleased to have this opportunity to share with you suggestions for policy solutions that would help ensure the continuing viability of programs and organizations that serve older adults and protect the health and well-being of our state's seniors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults who are 65 years of age and older, those in long-term care facilities, and those with underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness or death from COVID-19. Today in our state, there are approximately 1.7 million people age 65 or over. According to state data, 84% of people 65 and over have at least one chronic disease and 55% have two or more chronic diseases. With this data in mind, we make the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Expedite the process for ensuring additional federal funding coming into the state for such programs as home delivered meals gets to the local level quickly. For example, many programs already have waiting lists for people needing meals and demand is expected to grow with this crisis. In addition, numerous programs many have to make accommodations in their food procurement and delivery process which will be more expensive and funding for this is not included in their current budget.</li> <li>· Take steps to ensure that people can get the services they need. This may entail granting state agencies flexibility to approve modifications in how services are delivered, where they are delivered, by whom they are delivered, how they are reimbursed, and what the reimbursement rate is. For example, allow adult day care programs to receive funding if they are continuing to serve a program recipient in a different manner/setting or allowing PACE (Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly) programs to shift staff from their center into the home of the recipient. Also, look at ways to increase the reimbursement to adult care homes which have not received funding for the temporary State/County Special Assistance (SA) payment for almost a year and seek approval from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide more flexible access to the \$30 million in Civil Money Penalties (CMP) funds for skilled nursing facilities to supplement programs designed to improve the quality of life of nursing facility residents during this emergency</li> </ul>



Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Since having adequate staffing is a critical issue in all settings from home care to long-term care facilities, look at ways to better support existing staff as well as steps the state can take to expand the workforce all across the continuum from direct care workers to medical personnel. Policies pertaining to health care access, sick leave benefits, child care assistance, and other work place provisions need to be examined. In addition, potential options for increasing the supply of workers such as allowing medical and nursing students to graduate early, addressing provisions relative to locum tenens providers, fast tracking reciprocity of licensure for providers from out of state, relaxing scope of practice requirements, and promoting the use of volunteers and non-clinicians as feasible need to be explored.</li> <li>· Older adult on fixed incomes, including those whose life savings are tied to the stock market or volatile pension plans, may be at risk of having insufficient money coming in to cover basic expenses such as housing, food, transportation, and medical co-pays, deductibles and premiums. Attention needs to be directed to identifying ways to support those at risk through efforts such as short-term financial assistance and counseling on options and budgeting.</li> <li>· Make grants available to local aging service providers to expand their services to reach out to older adults in their communities, including many they have not previously served. Many agencies are already increasing their efforts in such areas as telephone reassurance to older adults who live alone, assistance to family caregivers, providing help to seniors who need services such as prescription pick-up and food delivery, and matching volunteers to seniors in need. It is anticipated that these agencies will also be called upon to assist seniors who have problems receiving their federal stimulus check. Because many local agencies operate on a very tight budget, they do not have the staff or resources to sustain these efforts. Because of the social distancing policies in place due to the pandemic, older adults are at increased risk of social isolation. There is strong evidence that social isolation and loneliness is associated with poor health and higher rates of mortality among the elderly. Many of the enhanced efforts being undertaken by local aging agencies are directly related to addressing social isolation. Also due to the stay at home orders and social distancing provisions, many agencies are implementing continuous operations plans to support working remotely. Some agencies do not have equipment such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other items needed to help ensure they are able to operate with new requirements, and funding for these items were not included in current operating budgets.</li> <li>· Ensure that staff working with older adults in the home (ex. from local aging agencies and county departments of social services) and in all care settings (including home care, hospice, assisted living, and nursing home) have adequate personal protective equipment (PPE). In addition to gloves, face masks, and gowns, there is also a need for adequate supplies of diapers, wipes, and hand sanitizer. Staff who work with older adults, particularly those with compromised immune systems, should also be a priority for COVID-19 testing.</li> <li>· Address measures to combat frauds and scams targeting the elderly. Many older adults are very anxious about the COVID-19 virus and this along with the increased social isolation that some of them are facing makes them more vulnerable to fraud and financial exploitation.</li> <li>· Because there is great dependence on the use of the Internet, not only for using</li> </ul>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>telemedicine as a substitute for office visits with doctors and other medical providers but for such things as providing a source of communication for older adults in long-term care facilities with their family members who are now restricted from visiting them, access to reliable broadband and technology needs to be available in every community in our state.</p> <p>· Due to the COVID-19 virus, there is heightened concern among some older adults about estate planning, and executing documents such as wills, powers of attorney, and health care powers of attorney which require witnesses and notaries. Due to the provisions of current state law, these sorts of transactions are now becoming more difficult. Some states have enacted provisions for electronic wills and remote notarization statutes. The General Assembly should consult with the NC Bar Association's Elder and Special Needs Law Section, the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services, and other relevant entities to evaluate the need for changing North Carolina requirements pertaining to these legal documents.</p> <p>Continued on second form. Thanks!</p>
03/30/2020 05:35 PM	Health Care Working Group	Mrs. Allison Costanzo	<p>Recommendations/Suggestions to the General Assembly on How to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic as it Pertains to Older Adults</p> <p>Submitted by The NC Coalition on Aging</p> <p>March 30, 2020</p> <p>As a Coalition comprised of a diverse array of 75 consumer, provider, and advocacy programs/organizations that represent North Carolina's aging population, we have sought input from our members about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their operations and the persons they serve. Based on that input, we are pleased to have this opportunity to share with you suggestions for policy solutions that would help ensure the continuing viability of programs and organizations that serve older adults and protect the health and well-being of our state's seniors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults who are 65 years of age and older, those in long-term care facilities, and those with underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness or death from COVID-19. Today in our state, there are approximately 1.7 million people age 65 or over. According to state data, 84% of people 65 and over have at least one chronic disease and 55% have two or more chronic diseases. With this data in mind, we make the following suggestions:</p> <p>· Because the impact of the COVID-19 virus is expected to extend into the run off election as well as the general elections in November, provisions need to be made for accommodating older voters in the elections. In addition to examining absentee voting provisions, the General Assembly and the State Board of Elections should look into the possibility of expanding the use of Multipartisan Assistance Teams (MATs). These teams are currently maintained by every County Board of Elections to help those in facilities such as nursing homes, hospitals, and assisted living facilities request and submit absentee ballots. The role of MATs could be expanded to assist anyone outside of these facilities who needs assistance.</p> <p>· Many of the agencies who provide services to older adults are non-profits which rely on</p>



Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>charitable giving and fund raising to fund significant percentages of their budgets. Agencies are already seeing a reduction in giving and many of them have had to cancel fund raising event for the foreseeable future. We encourage the General Assembly to consider a tax change to add a targeted, temporary giving credit or deduction that would be available to all North Carolinians to encourage them to support the work of charitable organizations in their communities.</p> <p>· There are more than 1,200 people over the age of 65 in prisons in the state. Elderly prisoners are more likely to have multiple or serious health conditions like heart disease or diabetes that could lead to higher risk of COVID-19. Under North Carolina law, some people who are terminally ill, permanently and totally disabled or age 65 or older can be released and returned home through medical release. Also, the Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction has authority to “extend the limits of confinement” for people who are permanently and totally disabled or terminally ill so they can receive medical care outside of prison. We recommend that the General Assembly examine the medical release and medical furlough provisions as they apply to older prisoners to determine if they are being used to the current extend needed to save as many lives as possible, conserve prison healthcare resources, and protect the public health. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
03/30/2020 05:43 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Dr. Laura Vanderbeck	With everyone so focused on the Pandemic, which of course, they have to be, I hope YOU, our elected officials, will not overlook providing for the safety and integrity of our upcoming elections this November. After the debacle in 2016, another messed up election could be the death knell of our democracy.
03/30/2020 05:48 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr Kenneth Jordan	I hope that you will make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail, provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November, give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election, and ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina.
03/30/2020 06:00 PM	Health Care Working Group	ms patricia buede	Make it easier for ALL NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina
03/30/2020 06:16 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. H. Michael McQuown	<p>As a highly concerned American and N.C taxpayer and voter, one in the highest at-risk group, I'm inclined to say that you should ignore most if not ALL that republicans have to say about the trumponavirus--aka coronavirus--as der trump [sic] and the rest of the traitorous "republicans" have been ignoring and covering the true nature and danger of COVID-19 to America. (Except for greedy burr, who had already sold out, as well as selling his stocks.)</p> <p>That said, it's important to continuously publicize--newspapers, radio, TV, Internet, etc.--and warn ALL North Carolinians of the dangers of the virus.</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>The governor and legislature should go all out to procure as much and as many of the supplies and equipment needed to protect individuals from contracting the virus.</p> <p>ALL public service workers should receive the highest priority in receiving those supplies, including but not limited to nurses, hospital aides, doctors, grocery store staff (who are ALSO on the front line of susceptibility). All workers who face and have contact with the public on a daily basis, and who are still at their now-dangerous jobs.</p> <p>All monies to save PEOPLE, NOT corporations!</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
03/30/2020 06:19 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Irving Silberberg	STRONGLY RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL EARLY EARLY VOTING DAYS AND ENHANCED PROCEDURES FOR MAIL IN BALLOTS AND PROVISION FOR ADDITIONAL BUDGET TO ACCOMPLISH THESE OBJECTIVES.
03/30/2020 06:22 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Damien Gu	Please change all further elections this year to automatic vote by mail ballot. Washington and California already implement this vote by mail system. Please do not put our voters at risk.
03/30/2020 06:31 PM	Education Working Group	Mrs. Elizabeth Neuendorff	How are military families being addressed in regards to education for their students? Military families have 30 days to enroll after a PCS. This means there are students currently not enrolled in school. If they do not enroll, will there be a waiver for the 30 days? If these students have a IEP or 504 how are their needs being meet?
03/30/2020 06:39 PM	Education Working Group	Mr Stephen Lee	I understand we don't want the grading of students like we traditionally do. Like grading on how much a student knows and it has been unethical to do grade on a students behavior. But this is an entirely different situation. If we don't hold (Students Accountable) all this online resources is in vain. There should be some type of grading for ( Production Progress) for students that are attempting to learn. And those that are just logging into their accounts online and doing none of the work assigned by teachers. It's total nonsense if you aren't making students accountable. We can be transparent in the grade they receive but I need not to say any more. Asking someone to build a house for learning and to receive nothing tangible in return is like giving every child a trophy for running. It may in this case be ok to just do that because a great deal of students aren't even running.
03/30/2020 06:40 PM	Education Working Group	Mrs Terri Sessoms	We have several teachers who are parents of young school age children. These teachers are being asked to both work as a teacher facilitating real time online instruction, while also assisting their own children with real time online learning. The overlap is creating much stress on the teacher/parent and all children involved are not getting the best instructional delivery possible. By expecting these teacher/parents to facilitate real time, online delivery, their own children are not receiving instruction. Can these employees be allowed to use the emergency leave granted last week so they may assist their own children? This would also allow the LEA to employ a substitute teacher.

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
03/30/2020 06:48 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Victor Fahrer	<p>I support the recommendations Made by Common Cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail</li> <li>• Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November</li> <li>• Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election</li> <li>• Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina</li> </ul>
03/30/2020 06:52 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Keith Poston	<p>"I am writing from Lincoln County to support mail in voting for the 2020 General Election. The current pandemic is creating a lot of uncertainty for the future, but one thing that should remain intact is our democracy. I firmly believe it would be an act of voter suppression to not take this measure."</p>
03/30/2020 06:54 PM	Education Working Group	Karen Dameron	<p>As a HR Employee in a school district, teachers who were scheduled to take licensing test were sent cancellation notices because of COVID-19. Testing centers have closed. There has been no guidance given on what will be done for teachers whose jobs are at stake if they can't take and pass licencing test by June 30th.</p>
03/30/2020 07:13 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Brandon Lee	<p>My concern is for renters in North Carolina. What is North Carolina doing to ensure that renters are protected from 1) evictions, 2) debt, 3) unfair treatment during these unprecedented times? Thank you.</p>
03/30/2020 07:23 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr Fred Martin	<p>We need to make sure everyone can vote. Need mail options.</p> <p>Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail  Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November  Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election  Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina</p>
03/30/2020 07:33 PM	Education Working Group	Brandon Lee	<p>Implement this now so that when all this is over, the following actions will be policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide enough school librarians, psychologists, social workers, counselors, nurses, and other health professionals to meet national professional-to-student standards;</li> <li>- Provide \$15 minimum wage for all school personnel, 5% raise for all ESPs (non-certified staff), teachers, administrators, and a 5% cost of living adjustment for retirees;</li> <li>- Expand Medicaid to improve the health of our students and families;</li> <li>- Reinstate state retiree health benefits eliminated by the General Assembly in 2017;</li> <li>- Restore advanced degree compensation stripped by the General Assembly in 2013.</li> </ul> <p>Thank you.</p>
03/30/2020 07:36 PM	Health Care Working Group	Brandon Lee	<p>This pandemic has absolutely shown the world that the United States need Medicare for All (or a single-payer, universal healthcare system) immediately. This is a matter of life and death.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
03/30/2020 07:38 PM	Economic Support	Brandon Lee	<p>Repeal General Statute 95-98. Allow ALL workers in North Carolina the right to unionize</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
	Working Group		and collective bargain.  Thank you.
03/30/2020 07:38 PM	Education Working Group	VP, Durham Hispanic Cmte Italo Medelius	Legislators, on the Durham Mayor's Hispanic-Latino Committee, we've been advocating for our mayors and commissioners to improve language accessibility with COVID-19 education and notices. In Durham, due to staffing, our Stay in Place notice did not come out translated until the morning after it was announced. Durham has been strong with language accessibility, I can only imagine how the rest of our counties (like Pender county where I grew up in a largely Hispanic community) are managing with translation. I ask you to please ensure at least for the rest of the crisis, any and all materials or notices or electronic communications be disbursed in both English and Spanish. Thank you.
03/30/2020 07:39 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Brandon Lee	Ensure that all workers regardless of full-time, part-time, and/or temporary status have at least 10 days of Paid Time Off per year.  Thank you.
03/30/2020 07:40 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Brandon Lee	Any worker collecting a pay check right now should be paid at least double time hazard pay for having to work through a global pandemic.
03/30/2020 07:41 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Brandon Lee	Thank you. Free any at-risk prisoners because social distancing is impossible in prisons which puts everyone in North Carolina at risk.
03/30/2020 07:41 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Brandon Lee	Thank you. Pressure the federal government to deactivate Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities in North Carolina.
03/30/2020 07:48 PM	Health Care Working Group	Ms. Jacqueline Knable	Thank you.
03/30/2020 07:51 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Richard McLaughlin	Please pressure the Fed Gov. to ensure that all appropriate production facilities are engaged in the manufacture of items to confront this Healthcare crisis. Physicians and nurses are dying and when that happens hospitals eventually close. Where will the sick go then? Rich or poor , they will suffocate. Money won't save anyone ,
03/30/2020 08:08 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Bette Meyer	Please do what is needed to get mail in voting in North Carolina!  Improve and expand mail-in voting. We vote in a rural county; have voted absentee ballot - but it is a bit burdensome. Changes that would help: pre-paid postage for the return; not require 2 witness or notarization. Mail-in balloting, done right, can be very safe. A number of other states do it.

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
03/30/2020 08:13 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms Geri Ingram	Please make all possible resources available to ensure we can safely vote in the November elections....be it absentee balloting, early voting sites and dates, and same day registration.....whether COVID-19 is defeated by then or not.
03/30/2020 08:19 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Ms. Nancy Brown	We need to reevaluate our polling places and voting by mail!
03/30/2020 08:29 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr Dallas Golden	All hardware and hobby lobby stores need to be closed in carteret county. The hobby lobby isnt making much money aint worth the time to open. I know a employee shes staying home doesnt feel safe. But the rest should be home to as well. The belk is closed just doing online orders from salaried associates.
03/30/2020 08:30 PM	Health Care Working Group	Sarah Jacobson	<p>Dear Speaker Tim Moore and House Select Committee on COVID-19,</p> <p>The American Heart Association (AHA) urgently encourages lawmakers to act decisively to slow the spread of the novel Coronavirus, COVID-19, and ensure adequate care to patients and consumers with chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, particularly among vulnerable populations. Individuals with cardiovascular disease are at higher risk of adverse health outcomes from COVID-19. For this reason, it is essential that states take timely, meaningful, and appropriate actions to ensure that the health care system has adequate capacity to provide necessary care to patients with heart disease and robustly addresses public health needs.</p> <p>The AHA believes everyone, including Medicaid enrollees, should have access to quality and affordable health coverage. As the nation's oldest and largest organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, the AHA represents over 100 million patients with cardiovascular disease (CVD) including many who rely on Medicaid as their primary source of care.</p> <p>Nationally, 28% of adults with Medicaid coverage have a history of cardiovascular disease. Medicaid provides critical access to prevention, treatment, disease management, and care coordination services for these individuals. Because low-income populations are disproportionately affected by CVD – with these adults reporting higher rates of heart disease, hypertension, and stroke – Medicaid serves as the coverage backbone for the healthcare services these individuals need. Even before COVID-19, North Carolina residents with risk factors for heart disease and stroke who lack health insurance or are underinsured are more likely to die early and have poorer blood pressure control than their insured counterparts. Furthermore, uninsured stroke patients suffer from greater neurological impairments, longer hospital stays, and a higher risk of death than similar patients covered by health insurance.</p> <p>While work continues at the Federal level to provide a more robust, comprehensive approach to addressing the spread of this epidemic, the patients and consumers we represent ask North Carolina to take swift action to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remove barriers to COVID-19 testing and treatment;</li> <li>• promote continuity of care for Americans with serious health conditions;</li> </ul>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and waive rules that require in-person interactions that promote community spread of COVID-19.</li> </ul> <p>With these goals in mind, we urge the General Assembly to pass legislation and work with the Executive branch to enact emergency measures that allow for increased funding and access for Medicaid and public health services to immediately respond to the current crisis. We also urge you to consider additional critical measures that will protect people with pre-existing conditions during this pandemic.</p> <p><b>Medicaid and State-Regulated Commercial Insurance Coverage</b>  The purpose of the Medicaid program is to provide health care coverage for low-income individuals and families. In light of the current public health crisis and uncertain economic outlook, the necessity for a robust and stable Medicaid program is more important now than ever. We call on both the executive and legislative branch to take action to ensure quality health care is available, accessible, and affordable to all state residents, including over one million North Carolinians who are currently uninsured.</p> <p>Additionally, given these perilous times and due to the increased availability of plans that are not required to meet federal patient protection standards – including short-term limited duration plans and association health plans – many Americans are enrolled in insurance-like products that may not cover testing or treatment for COVID-19, putting them at substantial financial risk. The American Heart Association supports efforts in Congress to increase the federal matching assistance percentage (FMAP) and urge North Carolina to take the following steps to promote access to coverage, remove barriers to coverage, allow access to COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccine, and ensure access to sufficient supplies of medication and pertinent pharmaceuticals to all vulnerable populations, regardless of insurance coverage.</p> <p><b>Promote access to coverage and Close the Health Insurance Coverage Gap</b>  Streamlining and removing barriers to Medicaid eligibility is an immediate step states can take to expand access to health insurance coverage that includes testing and treatment. The AHA strongly encourages the North Carolina legislature work with the Executive Branch to quickly expand access to eligible individuals. Closing the health insurance coverage gap is critical to increasing access to affordable, accessible health care for those at risk of exposure to COVID-19.</p> <p>Additionally, AHA recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adopting additional eligibility groups;</li> <li>increasing effective income standards;</li> <li>expanding hospital presumptive eligibility groups; and</li> <li>removing of cost-sharing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Access to COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccine</b>  It is critical that anyone with a chronic condition, compromised immune system, or vulnerable population who needs diagnostic testing related to COVID-19 is able to receive testing at no cost. In this emergency, we cannot allow affordability of testing and associated care to become a barrier that prevents people from taking appropriate action if</p>



Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>they show symptoms. We urge you to immediately extend free coverage of COVID-19 diagnosis and testing to uninsured individuals and the vulnerable population in greatest need. As authorized in H.R. 6201 , this option is now available to states and can be covered 100% with federal funding.</p> <p>Telemedicine Telemedicine has the potential to offer individuals and families access to health care services from the safety of their own home. The state should continue to expand access to and availability of telemedicine services during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that patients can easily access health care expertise while simultaneously practicing safe social distancing—allowing patients to avoid being exposed to COVID-19 in provider waiting rooms, exam rooms, and during associated travel. North Carolina should ensure that telemedicine services are covered at no higher cost-sharing than similar in-person visits, and that policies foster rather than frustrate provider participation in telemedicine services.</p> <p>The American Heart Association appreciates your tireless efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to work cooperatively and expeditiously to ensure the nation's citizens and vulnerable patients are protected and have access to needed healthcare during these critical times.</p> <p>We humbly ask the leaders of our state to remain steadfast in your fight to curtail this virus, while being cognizant of the aforementioned areas addressed in this letter. If you have questions or would like to discuss further, please contact Sarah Jacobson, Government Relations Director, at sarah.jacobson@heart.org or 919.463.8337.</p> <p>Sincerely, Sarah Jacobson Government Relations Director North Carolina</p>
03/30/2020 08:32 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. james watson	I would encourage the legislature to actively promote voting by mail. This would be an important step toward controlling the spread of the corona virus. Furthermore, voting by mail has been shown by its widespread adoption in several other states to be very secure, and to make it easier for people to vote who otherwise might have to stand in long lines. Furthermore, by mailing ballots directly to registered voters, the problem of vote harvesting that was such a problem in a recent election would be eliminated.
03/30/2020 08:35 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mrs. Sarah Hudson	I am writing because I believe our state should move toward mail in ballots. Several other states successfully conduct their elections with mail in ballots and it would be an acceptable situation for the state of North Carolina especially until our current situation. We need to make it fair and safe for all our citizens to vote.
03/30/2020 08:37 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Me. Deborah Newell	I am writing with great concerns for my son whom is an inmate at Lumberton Correctional Institution. He only has a few months left to serve for a 4 year sentence. His crimes are not violent, he had an addiction to opioids which led him to steal from our family to support his addiction. I am concerned for his safety and well being in the prison system with the severity of the covid-19 outbreak. I am asking if it is possible for him to be

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			released early and be put on house arrest to finish his sentence at home where he will be safe. Thank you
03/30/2020 08:54 PM	Education Working Group	Katie Biasi	Please do not decide too early to close schools for the remainder of the year. It can be reevaluated closer to May 15. Deciding to close schools this early is too early.
			Students need in person instruction. Need to see their friends and have closure for the school year.
03/30/2020 08:56 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group		Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina
03/30/2020 08:57 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group		Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina
03/30/2020 09:03 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Testing for COVID-19 Melissa Weinmann	It seems as though people who are asymptomatic are the ones spreading this virus but only people who are showing symptoms are being tested. How can we put into perspective the true numbers of people testing positive for the virus if we are only testing a fraction of those infected or carrying the virus?
03/30/2020 09:33 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mrs. Rachel Lewis	I've learned that the General Assembly is responsible for the NCDOT requirement re: car registration and inspections. Given the current stay-at-home order, I do not plan to take my car to be inspected. I am happy to pay my renewal fees and complete the inspection at a later time. I do not believe that having my car inspected (and requiring the thousands of other NC residents who are due to renew in the next few months) is worth the risk to our health and the health of our families.
			Please consider issuing an order to grant additional time to complete state inspections during this unprecedented pandemic.
			Thank you, Rachel Lewis 8312 Pilots View Dr Raleigh 27617
03/30/2020 09:40 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Chaplain Elaine Bayless	I hope that plans are being developed to hold elections assuming the current shelter in place restrictions are still in effect, especially as regards early voting.
03/30/2020 09:43 PM	Continuity of State	Karen Merowchek	In the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic, I am in full support of mail-in voting.

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
	Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group		
03/30/2020 10:31 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Carolyn Highsmith	<p>(1) There should be no reason to delay the November 3, 2020 General Election provided adequate health &amp; safety precautions are adhered to--if this COVID-19 Crisis is still a presence from September through November 3, 2020.</p> <p>(2) If the State Board of Elections goes to an extended Absentee Mail-In period for the November 2020 General Election secondary to this COVID-19 Crisis, then the State Board of Elections needs to provide a "Receipt to the Voter" acknowledging the receipt of their Ballot in their local Board of Elections office--either by ground mail, Email, and/or text--BEFORE ELECTION DAY, NOV. 3, 2020. As a prior candidate and a voter, I've heard too many reports from voters over the years about the local Boards of Elections not receiving their Absentee Mail-in Ballots.</p> <p>(2) Also, postage should be waived for Mail-in Absentee Ballots, because this is essentially a poll tax levied on voters having to vote by mail.</p> <p>(3) If there is still a requirement of SOCIAL DISTANCING at the time of the November 2020 General Election, the Early Voting period should be lengthened and encouraged--so that people can vote safely at 6 feet apart without any crowding or lines.</p> <p>(4) Protective measures need to be initiated at all voting sites depending on the state of the COVID-19 Crisis at the time for in-person voting during the November 3, 2020 General Election. For example, do all Elections workers (including volunteers electioneering on behalf of candidates) and voters need to wear masks and gloves? Or, would just hand sanitizing, social distancing, and a new pen for marking the ballot for each new voter, etc., suffice? Does more of the voting need to be done at CURBSIDE?</p>
03/30/2020 10:36 PM	Education Working Group	Teacher Lisa Dunn	<p>As we navigate the challenges of school closure and remote learning, we're already thinking toward how this will impact the next school year. An essential resource for serving our families going forward is adequate staffing. This means more personnel in the key areas that have been cut in North Carolina over recent years: teacher assistants, EC teachers and teacher assistants, social workers, counselors, and psychologists, among others. North Carolina communities are witnessing in real time the social safety net that public schools truly are. Before schools even closed it was evident that North Carolina public schools were running near bare minimum staffing to meet student needs. When schools reopen, the foreseeable learning gaps and social-emotional needs will require adequate staffing. It is essential that you prioritize funds to expand staffing in NC schools. As a classroom kindergarten teacher, I know that students will return to school with a broad range of experiences and academic exposure during their time away from school. Effective instruction will require differentiated, targeted instruction, family partnerships, and social-emotional support. The staffing model under which we've been operating is not sufficient to meet those needs. I am imploring you to improve the support that current and future student families receive by adequately staffing our schools with a dedicated teacher assistant for each elementary classroom and expanded school-based SEL teams of EC teachers and teacher assistants, social workers, counselors, and psychologists.</p>
03/30/2020 11:03 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections &	Mrs Susan Ricker	<p>Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail</p> <p>Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November</p> <p>Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
	Public Safety) Working Group		plans that reflect the needs for the fall election Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina
03/30/2020 11:07 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms Ann Henley	We know that, even if the rate of infection slows in the summer, the likelihood of a resurgence of COVID 19 in the fall is great. The only way to ensure elections take place on November 3 is to institute a vote-by-mail system in North Carolina. Failure to provide mail-in ballots will jeopardize our democratic system.
03/30/2020 11:43 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Jerry Markatos	As we guard public health and democratic process it is urgent for NC to make very broad access to mail-in or absentee ballots available to all North Carolina voters.
03/31/2020 12:26 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Jennifer Bihn	Please allow voting by mail to ensure that all citizens can safely vote this November.
03/31/2020 02:12 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms Edith Simpson	It is important to plan now to ensure that all North Carolinians have access to free and fair elections as guaranteed by our NC Constitution. Now more than ever we will need easier access to Vote by Mail and Early Voting, and resources should be directed to our counties so they can achieve these ends. Thank you for your service during this difficult time.
03/31/2020 07:43 AM	Economic Support Working Group	Ms Alexandra Sirota	<p>Dear Speaker Moore and Members of the House Select Committee on COVID-19,</p> <p>The Budget &amp; Tax Center applauds your leadership for taking the initial steps toward a legislative response to meet the needs of North Carolinians during this unprecedented moment as we collectively aim to mitigate the harms of COVID-19. Our team stands ready to support you, the Committee, and every member of the NC General Assembly in its work to ensure the health and safety of all North Carolinians during this challenging time. We know that you, like us, are attuned to the economic challenges facing those across our state, as well as the need for an adequate and equitable response to this pandemic.</p> <p>Our work at the Budget &amp; Tax Center to advance smart public investments that connect more people to economic opportunity and the supports to achieve greater well-being is informed by rigorous policy and data analysis, engagement with people directly impacted by poverty and exclusion, and assessments of the long-term needs of our state to ensure that all communities can thrive.</p> <p>In our work to date cataloguing the ongoing and potential impacts to people and communities of COVID-19, it is clear that quickly mobilizing state and federal dollars to respond in a timely and aggressive manner is critical — first, to contain the spread of COVID-19 and meet public health needs with the necessary health care, including medical supplies, and supports to social distancing requirements, and second, to stabilize the economy and minimize the economic harm to people and communities.</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>While we, along with our parent organization the North Carolina Justice Center, will provide additional recommendations in subsequent communications with working group members. The priority areas we have identified are based on the principles of equity, adequacy, and sustained smart investments that will help our response now and build a strong infrastructure for the future. These include making sure our health-care systems and front-line workers in health care, child care, food service, and logistics, for example, have protections and needed supplies while people have access to health care and treatment; that our unemployment insurance system has the staffing and technology to respond to unprecedented claims; and that the state rules for the program are fixed to provide adequate wage replacement, making sure people can safely shelter in place and practice social distancing without putting their economic security at risk.</p> <p>The Budget &amp; Tax Center stands ready to work with you toward public health and economic solutions that will strengthen our communities in both the immediate and long term so that every person in our state can be healthy and secure. We urge the Committee to propose a balanced approach to financing immediate attempts to slow the spread of COVID-19 and buffer against the secondary but real economic effects to farmers, small businesses, and people who are struggling to meet their basic needs.</p> <p>Here are three core approaches to the fiscal impacts of COVID-19 that we hope will guide the work of the Committee and the NC General Assembly more broadly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First, leverage Federal dollars for their intended purpose and for maximum and equitable impact. Federal funds represent nearly a third of the public dollars invested in North Carolina. Federal funds, as in prior recessions, will ideally comprise the majority of dollars for the long-term response so that we can sustain investments in needed infrastructure and services and stabilize households and the economy. Congress has already passed legislation directing dollars toward states, including \$150 billion that states and local governments can draw down right away to meet virus-related costs. It is estimated that this will result in roughly \$3.5 billion for North Carolina's state investments and \$481 million for local governments. While critical, this is likely to be too little to stabilize budgets throughout the COVID-19 response and to meet the increased expenditures necessary to meet the needs in communities and for families. North Carolina should join the chorus of states calling on our federal delegation to continue to provide additional resources, especially for families most impacted by COVID-19.</li> <li>• Second, deploy existing State funds to strengthen the infrastructure of response and make public systems more durable in sustained support of the well-being of all. This should be done in consideration that Rainy Day Funds may need to be available for a natural disaster and that the unappropriated balance is the result of not having a budget that keeps up with the needs of a growing state. As of February 29, 2020, the Savings Reserve balance totaled \$1.17 billion. Use of these dollars should be restricted to meeting the immediate needs of people impacted by the coronavirus epidemic who need assistance meeting basic needs, including accessing food, maintaining housing, and receiving the health-care services they need. As of Friday, March 13, the unappropriated General Fund balance totals \$2 billion. These funds should be put toward long-term</li> </ul>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>rebuilding of public infrastructure that will put people to work and be a boon for the economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third, special Trust Funds or other dedicated capital dollars should be driven toward employment stabilization and critical infrastructure needs at this time. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, North Carolina had approximately \$4 billion in the state Trust Fund as of the 4th quarter of 2019. These funds should support fixes to the state's unemployment insurance system to ensure that it reaches those who are impacted by COVID-19 and not served by the new federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, as well as go toward fixes in the wage replacement calculations and duration of the program.</li> </ul> <p>Capital dollars should continue to be deployed to keep people at work as long as social distancing practices allow. North Carolina has a backlog of physical infrastructure that needs upgrading, and keeping people employed in this time who can safely work is critical. Importantly, broadband has never been more clearly needed in communities across the state. It is critical to drive existing public dollars that can't be safely spent on other projects at this time to invest in this infrastructure that keeps those who can work remotely connected to jobs or supports students' continued learning at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finally, we urge you to stand ready to expand the state's capacity to invest in ways that don't make our tax code more upside-down. North Carolina has already incurred significant costs associated with slowing the spread of COVID-19. As economic activity plummets, state revenues will be significantly lower than projected. While it is unclear whether existing federal and state funds will be sufficient, it appears likely, given the abrupt and expansive slow-down in the economy, that new capacity to meet needs will be required. Should that need arise, we stand ready to offer sound, equitable revenue options that will also support our ability to invest long-term.</li> </ul> <p>We look forward to a bi-partisan process and quick movement to advance solutions that support the immediate and long-term well-being of every North Carolinian— and we will urge Senator Berger and Senate members to do the same. We hope that work in both chambers and productive engagement with the Governor and agency leadership will ensure a robust and equitable response to this crisis that is guided by people-first principles.</p> <p>We will be sending additional recommendations to the working groups in the coming days to inform your work. Please contact me at <a href="mailto:alexandra@ncjustice.org">alexandra@ncjustice.org</a> to discuss these guiding principles and specific recommendations regarding fiscal policy in greater detail.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>



Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			Alexandra Forter Sirota Director, Budget & Tax Center
03/31/2020 07:45 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Dr. Susan Weaver	I support of a comprehensive vote-by-mail system as part of our state's COVID-19 contingency-planning around November's general election. We need for every voice to be heard in these critical times. NC should lead in being inclusive and transparent.
03/31/2020 08:50 AM	Economic Support Working Group	Ms Annie Caulkins	My daughter, in Durham County, has applied for unemployment. She can't get into the site to do the weekly register because the site crashes with the thousands trying to access it. Seems to make sense to waive this step or use a different method for registering. Perhaps a form that can be emailed or mailed in? Install more servers? The capacity of unemployment's technology does not seem to match the need to access it. Please do something!! Annie Caulkins Orange County
03/31/2020 09:35 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	9107546005 Anne Cotton	I believe that to ensure the health and safety of the Voting Public, there can be no delay in planning to vote by mail. To get the mechanisms in motion takes time. Therefore, the process needs to begin Now.
03/31/2020 09:38 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	DR Gary Smith	Thank you for taking voting in the time of Coronavirus seriously. As you do your work, Please include the following in your solutions. 1. Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail 2. Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November 3. Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election 4. Ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina Thank you.
03/31/2020 09:39 AM	Health Care Working Group	Mrs Anne Miller	To members of the Health Care Working Group of the COVI-19 special committee: Thank you for everything you are doing to serve North Carolina during this uncertain time. As a volunteer with the American Heart Association, I am sending recommendations for your committee to consider as you work to strengthen our response to this virus. Individuals with cardiovascular disease are at higher risk of adverse health outcomes from COVID-19. •Please close the health insurance coverage gap - it is critical to increasing access to affordable, accessible health care for those at risk of exposure to COVID-19. Over 1 million North Carolinians do not have health insurance, and at least 400,000 have no options for health care coverage. Patients in the coverage gap are less likely to get the health care they need. •Please continue to expand access to and availability of telemedicine services during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that patients can easily access health care expertise while practicing safe social distancing.  Thank you for your commitment to improve the health of North Carolinians during this difficult time.

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>If you do submit a comment, please send Kim VanVeen an email, and let her know that you were able to submit the comments. We appreciate everything you do to help build a healthier North Carolina!</p> <p>We hope you and your families stay safe and healthy during this uncertain time.</p>
03/31/2020 10:00 AM	Health Care Working Group	Mr Richard Wolfe	It is essential to maintain have a credit election process for all North Carolina voters especially the elderly by allowing secure and safe ballot by mail.
03/31/2020 10:16 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms. Helen	<p>I have read the letter that the State Board of Elections sent to the Governor and legislative leaders. It contains many excellent recommendations for how NC can respond to the COVID-19 crisis and maintain access to free and fair elections. It is important that we preserve the health of our Democracy from the ravages of the virus. I am not as educated as the Board of Election, but below are my requests as a concerned citizen of North Carolina.</p> <p>I encourage you to make it easier for all NC voters to vote by mail. I know that Florida has such a program in place and that it has been very effective. We should also give counties the means and the flexibility they need to tailor early voting to the circumstances.</p> <p>As a former poll worker (and one in the high-risk group), I will not be planning to work at the polls. We will need to recruit poll workers. That will require you to provide some resources that counties have not budgeted for. As the Board of Elections notes, increasing the pay from the minimum wage of 7.25 an hour would be a good idea. I certainly did not work those long days at the polls—first as a poll worker, and later as a judge—because I would be well-compensated for my time. Expanding the age range, as the Board suggests, would be a good way to introduce younger people to the nuts and bolts of the democratic process.</p> <p>Finally, I am concerned about transparency during these unprecedented times. I ask you to make sure that all remotely conducted NC government meetings are open to the people of NC.</p>
03/31/2020 10:28 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Mark Taylor	<p>Thank you for working to preserve Democracy in these challenging times.</p> <p>I'm very concerned with making sure our upcoming election fair and unencumbered. I urge the following:            Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail            Provide counties the resources to recruit more pollworkers for November            Give counties the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election            Also, ensure any and all government meetings that occur remotely during this time are fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina</p>
03/31/2020 10:34 AM	Education Working Group	Head of School Adam Greer	<p>I'm Head of School of a private school in Greensboro, NC (The Covenant School). We're currently serving some 141 students in grades k - 7th. We would greatly appreciate a waiver of the following:            Annual standardized testing</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>Annual testing for our families receiving the Opportunity Scholarships School calendar (although our students are working full-time from home, submitting work, and doing well!).</p> <p>Thanks so much,</p> <p>Adam Greer</p>
03/31/2020 10:36 AM	Education Working Group	Coach Holly Jo Sensenich	I have been engaged in working. But being an elective teacher, Physical Education teacher, or a teacher who sees large numbers of students and does not have a way of direct communication (google classroom) with students, what should we be doing? I have been in touch with other teachers and put out lessons for review through them. Is there anything more?
03/31/2020 10:38 AM	Education Working Group	Teacher Robert Vencill	How to handle student who reject online virtual learning.?
03/31/2020 10:52 AM	Health Care Working Group	Dr. Jessica Schorr Saxe	<p>The current pandemic blasts through a bullhorn what should have been obvious: that people need health care. Not only do they need it as individuals, but to protect the health of all of us. Do everything you can to make health care available to everyone in North Carolina. Expanding Medicaid is an obvious beginning. Those who are recently unemployed and uninsured should immediately become eligible for Medicaid. Merge NC Health Choice with Medicaid so that those children get uninterrupted care. Remove other bureaucratic obstacles to healthcare coverage, regardless of immigration status, keeping in mind that the health of our state is only as good as its weakest link.</p> <p>Access to sick leave and leave to care for family members is critical so sick or exposed people aren't forced to work, endangering their own health and that of others. Other social supports, such as access to food, housing stability, and child care contribute to the health and general welfare of North Carolinians.</p>
03/31/2020 11:21 AM	Education Working Group	Mr. Willingham	Concerned about the continued close contact of students/staff at Youth Development Centers without social distancing procedures being utilized.
03/31/2020 11:22 AM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms Carolina Candelaria	<p>Dear working group: Please Make it easier for all NC voters to have the ability to cast a ballot by mail.</p> <p>Provide counties the resources to recruit more college age pollworkers for November, and the flexibility they need to create, and more funds to support, early voting plans that reflect the needs for the fall election.</p> <p>Also, please video all government meetings that occur remotely during this time so they can be fully open and transparent to the people of North Carolina. Thank You and please take care of each other and stay safe</p>
03/31/2020 12:14 PM	Health Care Working Group	Mrs. Jennifer Krause	Please please ACT to cover the uninsured in North Carolina. Expanding Medicaid is the right move to make sure that people who are in extremely vulnerable positions, and those who lose?jobs can still get affordable health coverage to stay healthy, and?be ready to work again after the crisis is over.?Thank you for your action.
03/31/2020 12:18 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Mrs. Jean Wheelock	Please act swiftly to cover the uninsured in North Carolina. Expanding Medicaid right now will bring billions in federal funding, and make sure that people who lose?jobs can still get affordable health coverage to stay healthy, and?be ready to work again after the crisis is over.??Thank you.

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
03/31/2020 12:26 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Pam McLamb	I am concerned as to the pandemic's effects on the November election. We must be planning now how to hold the elections in NC & US-wide rather than not be fully prepared and be faced with undemocratic circumstances or potentially postponing due to COVID-19-related concerns. Curb-side voting for all? Mail-in balloting? Expansion of early voting to avoid crowds? Info marketing campaign to educate all about procedures? Advance recruiting & remote training of poll workers? Additional funding for the 2020 elections? Please put on your thinking caps and provide strong, clear messaging to the American public about what to expect in November.
03/31/2020 12:42 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms. Aylett Colston	<p>Dear Representatives,</p> <p>I write to ask that the you consider amending N.C.G.S. § 10B-3 of the Notary Public Act to allow for "remote online notarization" which allows a signer to personally appear before the Notary at the time of the notarization using audio-visual technology over the internet instead of being physically present in the same room.</p> <p>With coronavirus, it is anticipated that many North Carolinians will want to vote via "absentee by mail." Currently, an NC voter must mark their absentee ballot in front of either two witnesses or a notary public. For voters who live alone and are impacted by COVID19, remote online notarization would be one way to ensure that they could cast a ballot that would be counted.</p> <p>Several states already allow remote online notarization, and several more have temporarily allowed remote authorization during this pandemic. See: <a href="https://www.nationalnotary.org/notary-bulletin/blog/2020/03/states-emergency-action-remote-notarization">https://www.nationalnotary.org/notary-bulletin/blog/2020/03/states-emergency-action-remote-notarization</a></p> <p>Remote notarization will not address every challenge for voting in November, but it could be one way to help.</p> <p>Thank you for all of your efforts on behalf of North Carolinians during this difficult time.</p> <p>Sincerely, Aylett Colston</p>
03/31/2020 12:44 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mrs. Jenafur Maher-Bernard	Please allow all voters to vote by mail in upcoming elections while dealing with the COVID-19 virus. Please provide funding for early voting and finally please make all meetings and conversations concerning the elections and COVID-19 be open to the public. If meetings are being held online allow the public to attend and comment. We need everything to be done out in the open to be sure it is done fairly, accurately and according to the law. There have been too many cases of person gain and corruption surfacing recently. Thank you.
03/31/2020 12:47 PM	Health Care Working Group	Leah Byers	<p>Members,</p> <p>North Carolina is facing an unprecedented health challenge with the COVID-19 virus. We at the Civitas Institute hope that as you formulate a legislative response, you will consider how to best open up our state's healthcare supply by providing relief from burdensome regulations. The following policies provide a good starting point towards that objective.</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>First, the General Assembly should codify and expand upon the waiver of the state's Certificate of Need (CON) regulations issued by Department of Health and Human Services and the North Carolina Emergency Management Division.</p> <p>The waiver loosens regulations on hospital beds for existing CON holders. The General Assembly should extend the waiver to include all facilities and equipment currently covered under CON restrictions. Expanding the total supply of healthcare – even non-COVID related services – could help mitigate the impact of this crisis. The pandemic may be less likely to overwhelm provider capacity if non-coronavirus patients can be treated at alternative facilities, such as ambulatory surgery centers.</p> <p>Second, the General Assembly should expand the scope of practice for both pharmacists and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN). Florida recently passed legislation to allow pharmacists to test and treat for the flu, strep throat, and other non-chronic conditions. Providing North Carolina pharmacists with the same freedom would be a simple way to free up other healthcare providers to treat COVID-19 patients, and would provide patients a safer way to deal with their medical needs with less risk of being exposed to COVID-19 themselves by going into a hospital or doctor's office.</p> <p>APRNs, such as nurse practitioners or certified registered nurse anesthetists, have long advocated for loosening the restrictions on their ability to practice within the full scope of their training. The supervisory physician requirements are overly burdensome and can prevent qualified healthcare professionals from even volunteering during times of crisis. The language from the SAVE Act, filed in 2019 as House Bill 185 with broad bi-partisan support, could go a long way to expanding the scope of practice for APRNs.</p> <p>Finally, the legislature should expand the state's telemedicine capacity. The governor's out-of-state healthcare licensing reciprocity should be expanded by the legislature to include the provision of telemedicine. The legislature should also resist the urge to over-regulate telemedicine through burdensome parity or coverage mandates. Many insurance companies are currently electing toward reimbursement parity for telemedicine during this crisis, and it should be up to insurance companies to negotiate reimbursement terms with providers in the future as well.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
03/31/2020 12:52 PM	Education Working Group	Mr George Brooks	<p>Justing wonder, how all of my students will be able to keep up with our transition for face-to-face to a new virtual environment.</p> <p>Well, our parents step up to become home-schoolers to help students with these transitions.</p> <p>Most of my students are not coming online to meet during my virtual office hours.</p>
03/31/2020 12:53 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ms. Wendy Marsh	<p>North Carolina's future depends upon leaving party politics and fear of retribution from the White House to pursue a bold and sustained response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We must ensure that all people across the state, regardless of who they are, where they work, or where they come from are protected in this moment.</p> <p>Now is the time to show true leadership by directing state-level dollars to families and</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>people; to ensure our public programs—from education to healthcare to early childhood to social services—are supported to respond to this moment and sustain our collective well-being in the future.</p> <p>This means legislators must act quickly to fix the state’s unemployment insurance, ensure people have access to paid sick leave, and provide the supports to young children and families to put food on the table and a home in which to shelter in place. Your leadership is needed and we know that it will matter so much in this moment that you strengthen our collective institutions. We can afford to do it...AND WE CANNOT AFFORD TO NEGLECT THIS DUTY.</p>
03/31/2020 01:15 PM	Health Care Working Group	Mrs. Elisabeth Pennington	<p>Please move rapidly to expand Medicaid coverage before the peak of COVID-19 in NC. No one should have to go without health care, especially in the midst of a health crisis. Given the number of individuals being laid off from their jobs, even more people in our state are joint the ranks of the uninsured. We are all in increased danger because individuals without access to health insurance are often reluctant to seek medical care due to their inability to pay. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
03/31/2020 01:18 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Ivy Johnson	<p>March 31, 2020</p> <p>North Carolina House of Representatives House Select Committee on COVID-19, Continuity of State Operations 16 W Jones St. Raleigh, NC 27601</p> <p>Dear Working Group Members,</p> <p>We are a group of advocates and organizations who work on behalf of persons currently incarcerated in North Carolina and their friends and loved ones. We write regarding the unprecedented current global health emergency and the dire situation facing our state’s prisons and jails. Our greatest fears and concerns are for the health and safety of the 35,010 people incarcerated in state prisons and the 14,000+ correctional staff working to better community safety. We have recently learned just how dire the situation is within correctional facilities and how ill-equipped correctional and medical staff are to handle an inevitable COVID-19 outbreak.</p> <p>For example, we learned the following from Governor Cooper’s March 26 letter to the Sheriff’s Association and from DPS’s own data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 2,000 prison staff positions are vacant. (“Overview of Prisons” PowerPoint, March 20, 2018, NCDPS, slide 4)</li> <li>• As of January 2019, the vacancy rate for correctional officers was “between 18 and 19 percent.” (“Strategy to Improve Prison Safety and Security,” May 21, 2019, NCDPS, slide 15)</li> <li>• 27.7 percent of RN positions are vacant. (“Healthcare Staffing at North Carolina State Prisons” PowerPoint, September 18, 2019, NCDPS, slide 3)</li> </ul>



Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28.6 percent of Physician positions are vacant. ("Healthcare Staffing at North Carolina State Prisons" PowerPoint, September 18, 2019, NCDPS, slide 3)</li> <li>• 15.3 percent of CNA II positions are vacant. ("Healthcare Staffing at North Carolina State Prisons" PowerPoint, September 18, 2019, NCDPS, slide 3)</li> <li>• Approximately 25 percent of the current prison staff is over age 50. ("Overview of Prisons" PowerPoint, March 20, 2018, NCDPS, slide 4)</li> <li>• There are more than 2500 persons incarcerated over the age of 60 across the state. 60 is the age identified by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as being particularly vulnerable to COVID-19;</li> <li>• The Division of Prisons medical facilities at Central Prison and North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women do not have ventilators, a medical tool needed to treat as many as 10% of those who contract COVID-19;</li> <li>• There is a shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available to correctional officers and the supply chain for this essential protective gear is compromised;</li> <li>• There are no state facilities available for incarcerated patients to go who exhibit symptoms of or test positive for COVID-19.</li> </ul> <p>A recent press release from NCDPS explained that these conditions have grown even worse in recent months with the statewide prison staff vacancy rate rising to 21 percent, requiring NCDPS to suspend operations at three prisons. In his letter to the NC Sheriff's Association regarding "this unprecedented crisis," Governor Cooper acknowledged our state's correctional facilities do "not have the capability to take on all high medical need offenders at this time." This incredibly troubling information illustrates the substantial risk incarcerated persons are facing and highlights the substantial risk facing correctional staff every day they show up for work. Furthermore, these conditions present safety risks to people in prisons and correctional staff not just directly via the risk of contracting the virus, but also due to the further erosion of staffing that will necessarily accompany an outbreak and will have a profound impact on the ability of corrections officers to maintain security within the prisons.</p> <p>We are in a critical moment for mitigating the inevitable devastating effects of this global pandemic. Every hour that goes by without action is an hour the situation becomes more dire. We urge the General Assembly to act immediately to protect the health and safety of incarcerated persons and the correctional staff who work to secure and otherwise care for them. We will draw on the best practices of other states to recommend the specific measures we believe are necessary, and the ways in which we, as a coalition, stand ready to help. We will send a follow up letter with specific requests prior to the second meeting of the working group. For questions or assistance, please respond to Daniel Bowes at the NC Justice Center. Daniel can be reached via email at <a href="mailto:danielb@ncjustice.org">danielb@ncjustice.org</a>. Thank you for your leadership confronting COVID-19 in North Carolina.</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
		Chantal Stevens, Interim Executive Director ACLU – NORTH CAROLINA LEGAL SERVICES	Mary Pollard, Executive Director NORTH CAROLINA PRISONER
		Daryl V. Atkinson, Esq., Co-Director Director FORWARD JUSTICE	Dennis Gaddy, Executive COMMUNITY SUCCESS INITIATIVE
		James Williams, Attorney EMANCIPATE NC Tarrah Callahan, Executive Director CONSERVATIVES FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM Attorney CENTER FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND Daniel Bowes, Director, Fair Chance RESPONSIBILITY, NORTH CAROLINA JUSTICE CENTER	Dawn Blagrove, Executive Director Theresa A. Newman, Co-Director Jamie Lau, Supervising PROFESSIONAL DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
		Thomas K. Maher, Executive Director Policy Brandon Garrett, L. Neil Williams Professor of Law CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND JUSTICE, DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW	Molly Gill, Vice President of FAMM
03/31/2020 01:19 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Robert Petters	Please consider implementing the following: 1. All NC voters should be able to vote by mail. 2. Adequate funding for all poll workers for this November. 3. Flexibility and funding for all counties to provide early voting sites. 4. All remotely held government meetings be fully open.
03/31/2020 01:43 PM	Health Care Working Group	Dr. Paul Gilbert	Please, please expand Medicaid now to allow those who are losing their jobs to have access to health care. Please.
03/31/2020 01:46 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Dr. Patrick Quinn	We need to 1) have masks available for everyone (not just healthcare workers and the already ill, 2) educate people to wear masks in all public places, and 3) make testing for active disease and residual antibodies readily available. These three steps will be the fastest way to get everyone back to work. If we do this ASAP, we will be able to release workers back to work faster and provide the most positive community impact on reducing illness and fatalities from this disease in the short and long term. Please make NC a leader in an effective intervention for this crisis by advocating for these steps. (Recommendations that these three things are not effective steps ,are driven solely by the absence of masks and tests. Please put maximum effort into fixing these shortages Run the following rationale by any competent Public Health Expert to see if they think these steps have merit.)  Masks reduce exposure to virus infection. (It is the huge viral exposures that are

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			devastating healthcare workers.) Data from Germany, which is doing large-scale testing indicates there may be many more asymptomatic and low symptomatic people. These people likely received a low exposure (by chance factors). These individuals are both a risk and a benefit. They are a risk because they are the source of the exponentially increasing infection rate. Unless we take action, like a mask in public, (some of us may get low exposure) but others may get higher exposure and high risk individuals will be overwhelmed even at low exposure. These individuals are a benefit, if they can develop antibodies to get us to herd immunity (greater than 80%-90% of the population with antibodies). The bottom line is wearing any mask (even a surgical or homemade mask) in public, will reduce your exposure and therefore reduce your risk of serious illness or spread to high risk individuals. The best practice would be N-95 masks for everyone. Covid-19 appears to have a lower mutation rate than seasonal influenza. This would be great, but even if this is not the case, getting to herd immunity on this strain will give us more time to prepare for the next onslaught, if that does occur. - Patrick C. Quinn, PhD, MHA
03/31/2020 01:49 PM	Health Care Working Group	Ms. Kelly Prelipp	<p>Dear COVID-19 Committee Members,</p> <p>In this time of crisis it is imperative that you expand Medicare benefits to all those eligible under the federal Affordable Care Act. It has been a cruel state policy that has barred North Carolina's expansion thus far. Now is the time to right that wrong, and I urge you to do so quickly.</p> <p>In addition, in order to lessen the spread of the pandemic and to save lives, this committee must work to remove any financial barriers that the public might have to seeking testing and receiving treatment. The government at all levels — federal, state and local —needs to make access to this care free of charge to patients.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Kelly Prelipp Charlotte, NC</p>
03/31/2020 01:56 PM	Health Care Working Group	Peter Noris	<p>People First Message</p> <p>I am asking you to pursue a bold and sustained response to the COVID-19 that makes sure people across the state regardless of who they are, where they work or where they come from are protected in this moment.</p> <p>We need your leadership to drive state level dollars to families and people and ensure our public programs—from education to healthcare to early childhood to social services—have what is needed to respond to this moment and sustain our collective well-being in the future.</p> <p>Please move quickly to fix the state's unemployment insurance, ensure people have access to paid sick leave, and provide the supports to young children and families to put food on the table and a home in which to shelter in place. Your leadership is needed and we know that it will matter so much in this moment that you strengthen our collective institutions. We can afford to do it and cannot afford not to. ALSO: The NC Legislature</p>

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			<p>needs to expand Medicaid now!</p> <p>Public Health Message</p> <p>Your leadership on the COVID-19 response in North Carolina is critical to containing the spread of this novel virus and protecting everyone's health.</p> <p>I hope you will propose bold policies and investments that make sure our healthcare professionals have the protection and supplies to combat this virus safely, that broaden access to free testing and treatment, and that allow everyone the ability to practice social distancing and stay home from work without loss of income and while maintaining their basic needs.</p> <p>We know that to protect the public's health we need to make sure our healthcare system serves everyone. This means we need to close the coverage gap, provide access to care for all people regardless of immigration status, and make sure we are driving resources and support to those people most excluded historically in our policy response.</p> <p>Protecting public health and containing COVID-19 will require our state to make investments in our healthcare, healthcare workforce and the supports to healthy living that we need now more than ever. ALSO: The NC Legislature needs to expand Medicaid now!</p> <p>Economy Message</p> <p>North Carolina's economy is only as strong as the economic security of people living on low incomes and in poverty. I urge you to make sure that people whose work and wages are at risk are the first needs that you address in your response.</p> <p>It is only by making sure people have income or wage replacement that they can stay in their home and put food on the table, and small businesses employing people in our community—like child care centers and retailers—can be supported.</p> <p>We must act with urgency to bolster programs and policies that serve as economic shock absorbers so families and communities can weather the coming storm. This response should not pursue flawed policy agendas that would give tax breaks to big companies without accountability to people nor further enrich the already wealthy.</p> <p>We urge you to lead North Carolina in this moment with a vision for what the economy needs—a focus on what people need to be well. ALSO: The NC Legislature needs to expand Medicaid now!</p>
03/31/2020 01:59 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Stay at Home Order Joan Bryan	Too many businesses are being considered "essential"!!!! Too many businesses are slipping by the rules and going to work when they could be home working! People are buying flowers and plants - remodeling bathrooms (even advertising specials on tv!) home decor stores, real estate agents... hotels! And why supply essential personnel letters of law enforcement isn't enforcing?
03/31/2020 02:05 PM	Economic Support	Daniel Thomas	. Allow anyone who loses their healthcare insurance to immediately enroll in Medicaid,

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
	Working Group		even for just 6-12 months or until the economy rebounds. This will provide tremendous support to many desperate North Carolinians and bring millions of Federal dollars to help support our state healthcare facilities during this pandemic.
03/31/2020 02:05 PM	Health Care Working Group	Ms Karyn Reott	You simply must expand medicaid. There is no time to lose, and this safety net is mandatory! We know COVID-19 will hit the poor the hardest, as they have most of the essential services jobs, and are least able to protect themselves. Send help!
03/31/2020 02:07 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Juanette Thomas	. Allow anyone who loses their healthcare insurance to immediately enroll in Medicaid, even for just 6-12 months or until the economy rebounds. This will provide tremendous support to many desperate North Carolinians and bring millions of Federal dollars to help support our state healthcare facilities during this pandemic.
03/31/2020 02:08 PM	Health Care Working Group	Ms. Patricia Rieser	<p>As a retired nurse practitioner, I urge the NCGA to focus on supporting people, public institutions, and a strong economy.</p> <p>*We must expand Medicaid NOW to make it easy for those who are losing jobs and becoming uninsured to access healthcare.</p> <p>*Allow anyone who loses their healthcare insurance to immediately enroll in Medicaid, even for just 6-12 months or until the economy rebounds. This will provide tremendous support to many desperate North Carolinians and bring federal funding to help support our state healthcare facilities during this pandemic.</p> <p>*Providing access to sick leave and leave to care for family members is critical so that sick or exposed people aren't forced to work, endangering their own health and that of others.</p> <p>*Other social supports, such as access to food, housing stability, and child care contribute to the health and general welfare of North Carolinians.</p> <p>I hope you will propose bold policies and investments that make sure our healthcare professionals have the protection and supplies to combat this virus safely, that broaden access to free testing and treatment, and that allow everyone the ability to practice social distancing and stay home from work without loss of income and while maintaining their basic needs.</p> <p>We know that to protect the public's health we need to make sure our healthcare system serves everyone. This means we need to close the coverage gap, provide access to care for all people regardless of immigration status, and make sure we are driving resources and support to those people most excluded historically in our policy response.</p> <p>Protecting public health and containing COVID-19 will require our state to make investments in our healthcare, healthcare workforce and the supports to healthy living that we need now more than ever.</p>
03/31/2020 02:10 PM	Continuity of State Operations (Emergency Services, Elections & Public Safety) Working Group	Mr. Lamar Proctor	I strongly support maintaining paper ballots and allowing voting by mail. Preserving a paper trail is the best method for ensuring election security, and voting by mail is the best method to allow all of us to vote without jeopardizing our health. As a voter, I oppose electronic voting; I do not trust it as votes can be tampered with and no paper trail exists to verify votes. As to voting by mail, a window similar to early voting should be established for votes by mail. This will allow the local BOE's to count ballots in a fair way. The state could mail out ballots to all registered voters in September and allow them to

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
			mail them back and have a drop box option at the local BOE to save on postage. All votes would need to be dropped off or be postmarked by election day. Results would be delayed, but that is a small price to pay to preserve the public health.
03/31/2020 02:14 PM	Education Working Group	Mr. John Brien	<p>Thank you for all the work you are doing in helping every citizen deal with the Covid-19 outbreak.</p> <p>I am writing to ask you serious consideration of the poor people. The poor have always suffered the most in any economic or public health crisis. It is my firm belief that they must be taken care of first. Please enact legislation that will eliminate evictions, foreclosures and arrests of people who are not able to pay their rent or mortgage and may be living on the street. If they have no home, how are they going to "stay in place"?</p> <p>Epidemics start with poor people but epidemics don't stay with poor people. They spread because disease does not recognize economic status. The working poor clean your office and home. They cook and serve your meals. They cut your grass. They stock the shelves of your stores and malls. Rent subsidies and ban on all evictions is the first place to start to help curb the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
03/31/2020 02:15 PM	Health Care Working Group	Virginia Coleman	<p>I am asking you to pursue a bold and sustained response to the COVID-19 that makes sure people across the state regardless of who they are, where they work or where they come from are protected in this moment.</p> <p>We need your leadership to drive state level dollars to families and people and ensure our public programs—from education to healthcare to early childhood to social services—have what is needed to respond to this moment and sustain our collective well-being in the future.</p> <p>Please move quickly to fix the state's unemployment insurance, ensure people have access to paid sick leave, and provide the supports to young children and families to put food on the table and a home in which to shelter in place. Your leadership is needed and we know that it will matter so much in this moment that you strengthen our collective institutions. We can afford to do it and cannot afford not to. ALSO: The NC Legislature needs to expand Medicaid now!</p>
03/31/2020 02:16 PM	Health Care Working Group	Mr Lamar Proctor	<p>I support Medicaid expansion now! This virus is the best example of why we need universal health coverage. Many North Carolinians are about to lose their jobs and by extension, their health insurance. That is terrifying for all of us. We are about to be saddled with debt and denials of treatment because we are poor or working-class without insurance. If we had universal health coverage, this would not be the case. Studies show it is actually cheaper. This virus should be showing all of us that naked capitalism is not enough to protect and serve humanity. We need strong social safety nets like universal health coverage to preserve the quality of life for all of our citizens. The only thing standing in our way is greed.</p>
03/31/2020 02:57 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Government Affairs Dir. David Huskins	<p>At some point the working group should hear from the state's railroads, particularly the shortlines, regarding the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the freight rail and passenger rail services and transportation logistics, including critical supplies movement and exploration of how railroads could assist with statewide mobilization efforts to contain the virus.</p>



Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
03/31/2020 02:59 PM	Economic Support Working Group	Mr. Sviatoslav Kendall	<p>I think it's very important to institute some sort of temporary rent/mortgage cancellation to help people survive the economic devastation brought upon us by this pandemic. Virtually everyone will experience some form of financial hardship due to the disruption of social distancing measures but I think there's a massive difference in severity between people paying rent/mortgages and the people/entities to whom they are making those payments. Furthermore, I think it would be a mistake to use means-testing to control who can benefit from an intervention like this because the most marginalized people who most need this kind of support are also the people least capable of navigating a government bureaucracy.</p> <p>Something else that I think is critically important is to provide internet service as a public utility. Whether people are working from home, looking for a new job because they got laid off or simply streaming video content to keep themselves occupied - internet service is a crucial need during this pandemic and everyone should have access to it regardless of their income. Furthermore, providing everyone with internet service would make it easier to ensure that vital public health information was disseminated far and wide through our most marginalized and vulnerable communities. As with rent/mortgage collectors, I believe that Internet Service Providers are far more capable of withstanding financial hardships brought about by the pandemic than the average North Carolinian and we should expect more from them than we do of ordinary citizens - (particularly their executive boards and shareholders).</p>