2021-2022 North Carolina Budget Priorities for Conference Committee

The National Association of Social Workers North Carolina (NASW-NC) promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social workers and seeks to enhance the effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families and communities through its work and advocacy. NASW-NC represents over 5,000 members in North Carolina. The NASW-NC state budget response is designed to support and advance the role of the social work profession and advance sound social policies in adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

NASW-NC supports, applauds and advocates for the following in the final budget proposal:

• Restoring the education-based salary supplements for teachers and instructional support personnel. Additionally, we support the provision to provide eight weeks of paid parental leave.
• Require telehealth services as outlined in HB 149 Improving Access to Care Through Telehealth.
• Inclusion of HB 608 Dignity for Women Who are Incarcerated.
• Various funds going to support substance misuse and recovery services. These funds will help address the state’s rise in opioid overdoses and rise in substance misuse.
• Extending Medicaid to postpartum birthing parents with incomes equal to or less than 196% of the federal poverty level.
• Funding for rapid rehousing services for individuals and families at risk of homelessness due to COVID-19.
• Pay raises for state employees.
• Allowing a parent to retain Medicaid eligibility when their child is temporarily placed in foster care.
• An increase in hourly wages of direct care workers.
• Funding for rural broadband.
• Funding individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to access services through the State’s Medicaid Innovations Waiver.
• Funding for the Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG), which provides in-home and community-based services for older adults and their unpaid primary caregivers.

NASW-NC opposes:

• Allocating funds to crisis pregnancy centers/pregnancy resource centers. Instead, funds should be directed to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Women and Children’s Health Section for distribution to healthcare organizations that work to improve maternal and infant health, work to reduce maternal and infant mortality, and provide comprehensive and medically accurate reproductive health care.

What is still needed:

• The House and Senate budgets fail to close the North Carolina health insurance coverage gap by not expanding Medicaid. We ask that this be included in the final proposal.
• The House and Senate budgets fail to increase funding for school social workers to better address the behavioral health and socioeconomic needs of students in public schools. Recurring funds are needed.

NASW-NC is happy to answer any questions or provide additional information.

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