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THE TRUTH UNBRIDLED

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## After Stopping Obama Appointment to Judship, Burr, Tillis Now Ready to Fill Seat in Eastern N.C.

Farr gets another crack at North Carolina federal judgeship

By GARY D. ROBERTSON  
Associated Press

RALEIGH (AP) - The chief private attorney who defended North Carolina redistricting maps and a voter identification law authored by Republican state legislators that got struck down is getting another chance at a federal judgeship vacant for more than 11 years.

The White House announced Thursday that President Donald Trump intends to nominate Thomas Farr as a U.S. District Court judge for a region covering 44 counties from Raleigh to the coast. Farr has backing from both of North Carolina's Republican U.S. senators - a key requirement to advance a president nominee from a particular state.

Farr "is widely respected as one of the best legal minds in North Carolina," Sen. Thom Tillis said in a release. Sen. Richard Burr added: "His wealth of experience will serve North Carolina well."

If confirmed by the Senate, Farr would fill the judgeship he was initially nominated to in 2006 by President George W. Bush and again in 2007. Farr's nomination never got a vote in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The position has sat empty since the end of 2005, with the departure of Judge Malcolm Howard to semi-retirement status, making it the longest federal judicial vacancy in the country, according to data on a federal court website. Farr declined comment.

The vacancy was steeped in state politics and race even before Farr's latest nomination.

President Barack Obama had nominated two black female attorneys to fill Howard's vacancy - first federal prosecutor Jennifer May-Parker, then former state Supreme Court Justice Patricia Timmons-Goodson - but neither received a hearing or vote. In each case, North Carolina black leaders urged senators to confirm, saying it was important to have an African-American jurist in a region of the state with a sizable black population. Farr is white.

Burr wouldn't support Timmons-Goodson's nomination and blasted Obama for what he called a "transparent attempt to turn the Eastern District vacancy into an election season stunt." Burr was running for re-election last year.

Farr, a labor and constitutional law attorney, and other lawyers at the Ogletree Deakins firm were hired by GOP leaders in charge of the General Assembly to defend in court congressional and legislative boundaries originally approved in 2011. The boundaries helped expand Republican majorities in future elections. Farr later helped defend a wide-ranging 2013 voting law that required photo identification to vote, reduced the number of early voting days and eliminated same-day registration during that period.

The voters and civil rights groups that sued alleged the boundaries were illegal racial gerrymanders designed to pack black voters in certain districts, while in turn making surrounding districts more white and Republican. For voter ID, the state NAACP and others alleged the restrictions would make it harder for black and poor people to vote. Republicans countered the maps were fair and legal and the voting changes designed to build citizen confidence in elections.

After initial rulings that upheld the maps and voting law, federal courts last year struck down both U.S. House and General Assembly districts, requiring them to be redrawn. And the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals threw out photo ID and early voting changes, alleging legislators targeted black voter "with almost surgical precision."

Democratic U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield, who represents many eastern counties, urged senators to "carefully scrutinize the record of Thomas Farr and determine if he can impartially serve as a judge in cases involving voting and civil rights."

"This appointment simply maintains the status quo in a district with a large population of African American citizens," Butterfield added.

## Tuskegee Syphilis Study descendants to seek settlement money

By JAY REEVES  
BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) - Descendants of hundreds of black men who participated in the infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study want a judge to give them any money remaining from a \$9 million legal settlement over the program.

The head of an organization for descendants of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, Lillie Tyson Head, says the money could help fund college scholarships the group provides.

Members would like to develop a memorial garden dedicated to the men, and Head says some of the funds could also go to a county-owned museum in Tuskegee, Alabama, that is separately seeking the settlement money.

A final decision will be up to a judge. About 600 men were involved in the study, in which hundreds of men suffering from syphilis were purposely left untreated.

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A news release from Burr and Tillis highlighted Farr's lengthy legal career and designation by the American Bar Association as "well qualified" when nominated in 2006.

## Judge: Barber, others still can't visit Legislative Building

RALEIGH (AP) - The president of North Carolina's NAACP will remain barred from the state Legislative Building until a case involving his arrest during a May sit-in is resolved.

The Rev. William Barber was among more than 30 protesters charged with second-degree trespassing. A magistrate set the prohibition, but an NAACP attorney told a Wake County judge the blanket ban was unconstitutional by preventing citizens from petitioning lawmakers. A prosecutor disagreed.

District Court Judge Michael Denning modified the orders for Barber and eight others considered.

Denning told attorneys by email late Wednesday that Barber and four others still won't be allowed to return to the building until their cases are over. Another four can visit unless a legislator invites them for a certain time and stays with them.

## NC governor promises Dems win would lessen gerrymandering

RALEIGH (AP) - North Carolina's governor promises Democrats would give up the right to draw political districts that help their candidates and hamper Republicans if they regain legislative power.

Multiple media organizations report Gov. Roy Cooper made the promise to end gerrymandering during the state Democratic Party's annual gathering Saturday in Raleigh.

Cooper says if Democrats win General Assembly majorities in 2020 they'll transfer to an independent, nonpartisan commission the power to shape districts for seats in the legislature and Congress.

The legislature redraws election districts every decade after the national census.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled more than two dozen legislative districts were illegally designed on racial grounds. A federal court plans a hearing later this month to decide when new North Carolina legislative districts should be redrawn and new elections held.



Capitol Police Officer David Bailey

## NCCU Blood Drive to Honor Alumnus, Capitol Police Officer David Bailey

While a student at North Carolina Central University, alumnus David Bailey assisted with numerous blood collection events on campus. Now, the NCCU community is holding a special American Red Cross blood drive in his honor.

Bailey, 32, a member of the U.S. Capitol Police Force, was on duty June 14 when a shooter opened fire during Congressional softball practice in Alexandria, Va. He has been hailed since for his bravery in helping to subdue the suspect.

"This year, our annual summer blood drive is being held in honor of David Bailey's dedication to the university motto 'Truth and Service,'" said Lois Pettiford, assistant in the Department of Public Health Education, which sponsors the blood drive. "He demonstrated those traits as an undergraduate student and as an Eagle alumnus."

Bailey, who graduated in 2007, frequently helped organize blood drives at the Alphonso Elder Student Union, recruiting his Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. brothers to pitch in, as well, Pettiford said.

"He would assist with setting up the blood drives and, often, with closing them down after finishing classes for the day," Pettiford said. "Thanks to David and the other Alphas, we often exceeded our goals."

NCCU has been recognized by the American Red Cross on multiple occasions for outstanding blood drive collections.

"Historically, this university has been a model collector of blood donations, particularly of minority blood, and is recognized by the Red Cross as a model," said Seronda Robinson, chair of the Department of Public Health Education.

Many colleges and high schools skip such events in the summer months because most students are away, but NCCU has made a point to continue the drives every summer, Robinson added.

"The Red Cross is appreciative of our summer drives because that's the time when there is a great need due to automobile wrecks and other accidents, yet there aren't as many donations coming in," she added.

The July 25 drive at NCCU honoring Bailey will take place Student Union from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and is open to the public. Nearby parking will be available.

Almost anyone who is healthy, weighs more than 110 pounds and is 18 - or 17 with parental consent - is eligible to give blood.

Contrary to widely held beliefs, use of prescription or non-prescription drugs, smoking, or having professional tattoos do not prohibit donors from giving participating. The phlebotomy staff will screen all donations for the presence of HIV and those results are confidential, Robinson added.

Volunteers can learn about upcoming blood drives in their area, make appointments and track their donations through a new app available by texting BLOODAPP to the Red Cross at 90999. "For people who say they don't donate because they don't know how their blood is used, this gives them the answer - whether it was a car accident or some other incident," Robinson said. "It's important to give blood, especially this time of year."

For more information, please contact the Department of Public Health Education at 919-530-6422.