

# OPINION

## THE CHRONICLE

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### Our Mission

The Chronicle is dedicated to serving the residents of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by giving voice to the voiceless, speaking truth to power, standing for integrity and encouraging open communication and lively debate throughout the community.

## Work to get Connect NC on the ballot

Gov. Pat McCrory came to Winston-Salem on Thursday, June 11, to pitch his \$2.85 billion Connect NC bond proposal at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU). It has two parts. One part covers roads, including some in the Winston-Salem area. The other covers infrastructure, such as buildings on the state's historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), including WSSU.

The governor says he is looking at the future, trying to obtain money for the state to be more competitive with nearby states, such as South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. He calls the bond proposal money investments into areas that need boosts. The state's highways need repair and new ones are needed, and the state's colleges, universities and community colleges need help with infrastructure as they train students for the 21st century challenges ahead. The money proposed for the state's five HBCUs would go to infrastructure in STEM areas: science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The proposal includes two bonds of about \$1.5 billion each — one for roads, the other for infrastructure.

Over \$200 million is included in the infrastructure bond proposal for major improvement plans at facilities of all of the state's HBCUs. The governor is proposing that WSSU receive \$53.9 million for a new, larger science building. WSSU's printed material says the building will be "a hub of innovation, discovery and application that will attract and support faculty and students with diverse academic interests," such as biology, chemistry, physics and the health sciences. The material says the Biomedical Research Infrastructure Center will be in the new building so that all the sciences laboratories will be near each other. This will encourage more collaboration between faculty and students.

"In order for North Carolina to produce highly

The following are members of the Forsyth County State Legislative Delegation:

|                         |     |             |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------|
| *Sen. Joyce Krawiec     | (R) | District 31 |
| * Sen. Paul A. Lowe Jr. | (D) | District 32 |
| * Rep. Debra Conrad     | (R) | District 74 |
| * Rep. Edward Hanes Jr. | (D) | District 72 |
| * Rep. Julia C. Howard  | (R) | District 79 |
| * Rep. Donny Lambeth    | (R) | District 75 |
| * Rep. Evelyn Terry     | (D) | District 71 |

skilled graduates, our universities and community colleges must provide students and educators the resources to do so," the governor said in a statement. "The Connect NC bond proposal allots \$734 million to improve our state's universities and community colleges. This will increase the quality of education received by our students, and, in turn, increase the quality of our workforce."

The new WSSU building would be a great asset to the university. The university already has a great reputation for its nursing program. The new building would enhance its entire sciences program, which would prepare students for the jobs ahead, many of which haven't been created yet.

The Connect NC has hurdles to overcome before the bond money can flow to any college, university and road, however. First, it has to be put on the ballot for North Carolinians to vote on it. The governor is asking citizens to contact their lawmakers to tell them to push for a vote on the bond proposal this year, probably in November. He says the lawmakers in the General Assembly are hesitant to put it on the ballot because they have not heard from citizens who say that's what they want. He is urging everyone to contact lawmakers to make sure they know that Connect NC should be on the ballot.

We also urge citizens to do that. A lot is riding on the bond proposal. Not only is money for WSSU included, but money for various roads in the area and the new loop around Winston-Salem is included, too. The governor's office says the proposed transportation bond would pay for 27 permit-ready highway projects throughout North Carolina that have completed environmental documents.

In addition, the bond would fund the paving of 176 unpaved secondary roads totaling 113 miles.

No tax increase is needed to fund the bonds, the governor's office says.

A ballot vote on Connect NC is worth pushing for. Not only will it promote democracy now, but, if it passes, then it will also help to create a more competitive North Carolina in the future.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Override of veto of Senate Bill 2 draws disgust

To the Editor:

Senate Bill 2 is unconstitutional, and will undoubtedly be challenged in court. This bill, which will now become law, is discriminatory and treats gay and lesbian couples as second class citizens. We are more determined than ever to achieve full equality for LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered] people in North Carolina and to ensure that LGBT youth know that they are not alone.



Ferrara

Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara  
Executive Director  
Campaign for Southern Equality  
Asheville

This law is nothing more than state sanctioned discrimination. It is a terribly misguided attempt to rewrite what equal protection under the law means. Equality and fairness are not principles that are decided on a case-by-case basis, dependent upon who happens to be working the counter on a particular day. Neither the United States Constitution nor the North Carolina Constitution permit any such thing. It is terribly unfortunate that this many elected officials don't understand that.

Jake Sussman  
Tin Fulton Walker & Owen  
Charlotte

### Governor vows to uphold respect for public office

To the Editor:

Regarding Senate Bill 2: It's a disappointing day for the rule of law and the process of passing legislation in North Carolina. I will continue to stand up for conservative principles that respect and obey the oath of office for public officials across our state and nation.

While some people inside the beltline are focusing on symbolic issues, I remain focused on the issues that are going to have the greatest impact on the next generation such as creating jobs, building roads, strengthening education and improving our quality of life.



McCrory

N.C. Gov. Pat McCrory  
Raleigh

### Greensboro redistricting plan tramples democracy

To the Editor:

Sen. Bob Rucho's Senate Redistricting Committee took a rushed, hushed vote on Wednesday [June 10], setting the stage for a major fight with the people of Greensboro. It presently has three at-large City Council seats and five single district Council seats. The Greensboro mayor votes on every issue and elections for City Council are hotly contested, since there is no run-off.

Apparently, some of the anti-democracy faction on Jones Street in Raleigh think they know how to govern Greensboro better than its own citizens. This faction wants to make it harder for minorities and working people to have influence with their votes, and Senator Rucho appears to be their front man in Raleigh. He wants a Senate Bill that matches House Bill 263 that would eliminate at-large seats and establish seven single-member districts; limit the power of the mayor, allowing her/him to vote only in case of ties; establish a run-off election, creating incentives for back-room deals. The N.C. NAACP, in consultation with our legal team, supports the people of Greensboro, who strongly oppose these anti-democracy steps to dilute the minority vote. One person's vote is equal to another's.



Rucho

By opening the way for new districts, Rucho and his race-based computer map-maker can draw maps to divide and dilute minority voters. They have already split the campus of North Carolina A&T University into different districts. Soon minorities and other vulnerable voters will have no say in how their city is governed. If Rucho's behind-the-scenes maneuvering can get the Anti-Democracy in Greensboro bill passed, it is likely other large cities with sizable minority populations will be targeted.

Senator Rucho ran rough-shod over his own colleagues in his Committee hearings. Perhaps he is upset that the U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled against race-based redistricting maneuvers by some of his counterparts in the Alabama legislature. They packed black voters in certain areas, and diluted the voting powers of others, snatching their present ability to vote for a candidate of their choice. The U.S. Supreme Court found race-based redistricting schemes unlawful. At any rate, he would not permit

his colleagues — elected members of the House and Senate — to even comment. He cut off fellow senators from commenting and debating his race-based bill. Cities in North Carolina do not like it when someone down on Jones Street starts to take away their local powers. And people of color clearly don't like it when the voting rights our grandparents fought and died for are suddenly snatched from us with parliamentary tricks.

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II  
President, N.C. NAACP  
Durham

### Don't miss NBTF and experiences it brings to area

To the Editor:

For the sake of full disclosure, I have been associated with the National Black Theatre Festival since 1991, two years after it was founded by the late Larry Leon Hamlin. I have participated as a theatre-goer, a member of the fundraising committee, a member of the Marvstia Society and a member of the NCBCRC board of directors.

My memory bank is full to overflowing with experiences I owe solely to the fact that the Festival comes to Winston-Salem every other year. I rode in an elevator with a very friendly Denzel Washington and his family; I sat mesmerized as Chester Gregory recreated the life of Jackie Wilson; I chatted with the lovely and accomplished Vanessa Bell Calloway at a celebrity reception; I was transported back in time by the musical stylings of the Soul Crooners; and I found myself dining in the same local restaurant with Sydney Poitier.

Thousands of local residents have shared similar experiences, but many others have not. If you have not attended the National Black Theatre Festival, mark your calendar for August 3-8. You can get information about the many plays that will be performed, times, locations, ticket prices and more at [www.nbtf.org](http://www.nbtf.org).

We are extremely fortunate to have an event of international scope in our community. The Festival would not be possible without dozens of financial supporters — civic, corporate, city, county and individual. To all of you, thank you for believing in Larry's vision and Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin's hard work to keep it alive.

Do yourself a favor: Don't let another year pass without taking advantage of this incredible opportunity.



Singleton

John Singleton  
Kernersville