

Democratic candidates for governor spar over voting law at forum

BY GARY D. ROBERTSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS
RALEIGH -- Attorney General Roy Cooper's rival for the Democratic nomination for North Carolina governor said Friday night

of the law requiring photo identification to vote starting with this election continued Friday in Winston-Salem. It ended Monday.

The state NAACP, U.S. Justice Department and others sued to overturn the law. A lawyer from Cooper's office sits at the defense table helping represent the state.

"My opponent sitting with me today, he's been in court with the Republicans fighting on behalf of them and against the NAACP, the League of Women Voters, the people of North Carolina on a constitutional issue that he does not have to represent the state on," Spaulding told more than 150 people in attendance.

Cooper defended himself during the forum, organized by the African-American and Hispanic caucuses within the state Democratic Party. He said it's his duty as attorney general to defend the state's laws in court. Cooper says he's personally opposed to

the law and urged Republican Gov. Pat McCrory in 2013 to veto it.

The 2013 election law already reduced the number of early voting days from 17 to 10 and has eliminated same-day registration during the early voting period.

"One of the reasons I'm running for governor is I am sick and tired of the laws that are being passed by this governor and this General Assembly," Cooper said. "As governor, I can work toward public policy to make sure we do change these things."

Spaulding said Cooper should have refused to represent the state on constitutional grounds. Cooper did decline in 2014 to defend the state's constitutional amendment barring gay marriage once a federal appeals court struck down a similar amendment in Virginia.

Cooper appears to be a favorite in the gubernatorial primary over Spaulding, a former legislator and



Photo provided by Cash Michaels

Attorney General Roy Cooper, left, and Democratic rival Ken Spaulding engage at a forum on Friday, Jan. 29, in Raleigh

state Board of Transportation member. While Spaulding reported raising \$22,000 in the second half of 2015, Cooper's campaign took in \$2.9 million. But Spaulding, also an attorney who helped create large Durham commercial development projects, believes he can win with strong support from fellow black voters, who have been known to cast one-third of the Democratic primary vote or more. He's labeled Cooper an establishment candidate.

The winner of the primary is likely to take on McCrory, who faces two challengers in the GOP primary, including former state Rep. Robert Brawley. Spaulding also criticized Cooper for refusing last year to seek a retrial in the case of a Charlotte police officer in the shooting death of an unarmed suspect.

The first trial ended in a deadlocked jury. Cooper said last August that prosecutors agreed a retrial would "not yield a different result."

When offered a chance by a forum moderator to respond to Spaulding's comments, Cooper declined.

The Democratic Party's U.S. Senate candidates also took questions later Friday. Former state Rep. Deborah Ross of Raleigh, Spring Lake Mayor Chris Rey, Durham businessman Kevin Griffin and Ernest Reeves of Greenville are running for the nomination. They all want to replace Republican incumbent Richard Burr.

CAMPAIGN 2016

it's wrong for Cooper to defend in court a wide-ranging election overhaul law approved by Republicans that lawsuits claim discriminates against minority voters.

Ken Spaulding of Durham, meeting face-to-face with Cooper for questions in their campaign leading up to the March 15 primary, has hammered the four-term attorney general because his office is representing the state in elections litigation and said Cooper could have refused. A federal trial on a portion

QEA honors greats, wins and provides fun for youth

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Quality Education Academy honored three "Great Men" at its pre-game ceremony on Saturday, Jan. 30.

QEA honored Warren "Big Time" Reynolds, who coached basketball at N.C. A&T State University, Delta State University, Shaw University, and Bowie State University. Reynolds, who has

over 400 career wins, had never been formally recognized, and QEA's ceremony was a first for him.

QEA honored its CEO and superintendent, Simon Johnson, for over two decades of tireless service to the children of the Triad.

Johnson's vision to expand the academic program of college preparatory coursework and college dual enrollment with

Forsyth Technical Community College to include such extra-curricular activities as track and field, basketball, cheerleading, swimming, and soccer has granted greater options for QEA's 500 students in grades kindergarten through 12th.

The legacy of Johnson, who is co-founder of Quality Education Institute and Academy, now

includes student opportunities in band, dance, chess, chorus, 4-H, theater, Lego League and Crosby Scholars.

QEA also honored Tom Muse, who dedicated 35 years to Parkland High School coaching basketball. Muse was honored for his service and inspiration to countless youth in our community.

After the "Great Men"

ceremony, QEA's Fighting Pharaohs pummeled Word of God Christian Academy's Holy Rams 78-62. Senior Deshawn Corprew scored 42 points to lead the way.

More than 700 fans packed out the QEA gymnasium, cheering on the "Triad" over the "Triangle" and the evening ended with great, clean fun for many middle and high school

youths.

Last Saturday, QEA's "upper landing" transformed into a victory after-party, where over 100 teens enjoyed a dance, food and fun. The schools' upcoming 20th annual "Bestowal of Blessings" ceremony, open to the entire community on Feb. 25, will be followed by its annual "Black and White Ball" for high school students.

2016 CIAA BASKETBALL GAMES

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL			
FEB 10	SHAW	5:30 pm	
Play for Kay - Breast Cancer Game			
FEB 20	LIVINGSTONE - Senior Day	2 pm	
MEN'S BASKETBALL			
FEB 10	SHAW	7:30 pm	
Coaches Versus Cancer			
FEB 20	LIVINGSTONE - Senior Day	4 pm	

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Disclaimer: There are a limited number of tickets available in each section. Therefore, tickets will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. If your request cannot be met, you will be contacted by the WSSU Ticket Office.

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Ticket Category	Price
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