

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.

What does Roy Cooper have to hide?

Attorney General Roy Cooper's office took action on April 7. The office responded to Calvin Michael Smith's motion to the North Carolina Supreme Court seeking an evidentiary hearing. Smith asserts in his petition that former Winston-Salem Police Department police officer Arnita Miles gave a materially false affidavit that the state procured and used against him. Smith wants a hearing to determine whether the state obstructed justice.

What did the attorney general's office argue in its response? For one, that Smith's motion is improper because he is not on death row.

The attorney general's office claims there is no N.C. law that allows a defendant to file motions to vacate or reconsider Motions for Appropriate Relief orders in trial court. The office does acknowledge, however, that the Supreme Court has authority to invoke "its supervisory authority" to change some of the way it operates.

Why won't the attorney general ask the court to allow the evidentiary hearing in order to get to the truth? Does he have something to hide?

Calvin Michael Smith, 44, was convicted in 1997 of the 1995 assault of Jill Marker, an assistant manager at the former Silk Plant Forest store on Silas Creek Parkway.

The Silk Plant Forest Truth Committee of Winston-Salem has issued a statement on the opposition to the evidentiary hearing:

"It is deplorable that Attorney General Roy Cooper has once again opted to defend the wrongful conviction of Calvin Michael Smith. In this latest instance, Cooper filed to oppose a hearing that would expose how prosecutors created and used against Calvin an affidavit they still do not deny is materially false.

"Relying strictly on legal maneuvers, rather than the truth, Cooper is willfully defying two meticulously documented, independent reviews that concluded there is 'no credible evidence' Calvin was present at the scene of Jill Marker's brutal beating in 1995.

"Since assuming the case in 2008, Cooper has borne direct responsibility for the continued violation of Smith's civil rights and lost freedom - and for any other crime committed by Jill's assailant, who remains unaccounted for."

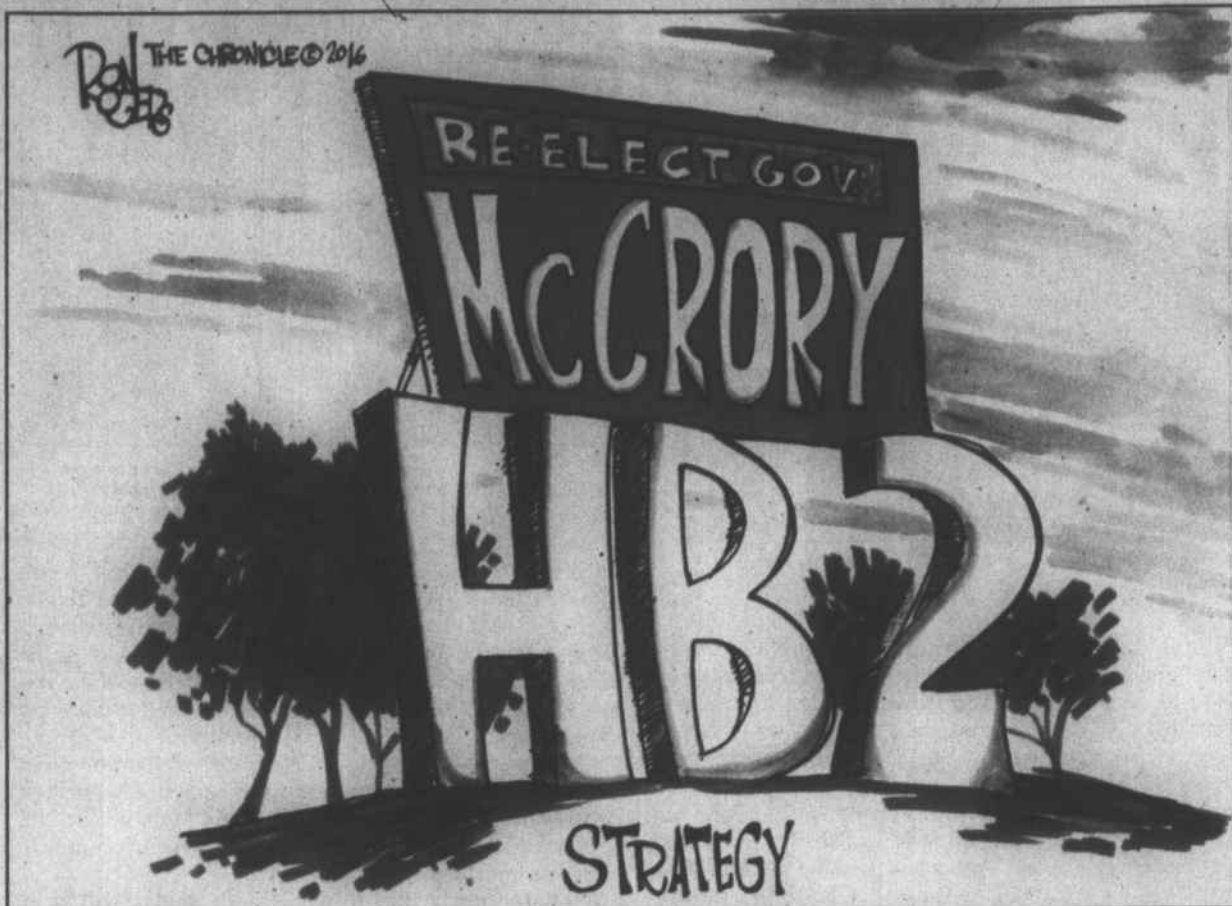
Cooper is running for governor of North Carolina. The Smith case will remain alive throughout the campaign unless he changes his actions toward it.

What will a Governor Cooper do to North Carolinians as the leader of the state? Will he follow the lead of the Republicans in the General Assembly and throw away compassion and reason when looking at laws that hurt rather than help those who need help? Will he rubber-stamp the actions of the Republicans as the current governor does?

A new attorney general will be chosen in November. The supporters of Calvin Michael Smith should look at the attorney general race and work to help the person who can help Smith while keeping pressure on a wanna-be governor.



Smith



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Me, myself and Darryl Hunt

To The Editor:

Not many people in this world today can honestly say that they actually know someone who has mentally, spiritually and physically, walked in their shoes.

Me, myself, can, with honor, dignity and respect, say that I do know someone who has walked in my shoes and traveled the same path as I have, and that person is Mr. Darryl Eugene Hunt.

For 19 years Darryl Hunt endured the injustices of racism, wrongful imprisonment and the mental anguish



Hunt

of being an innocent person labeled as one who committed a heinous crime, while for 19 1/2 years I myself have endured the same. On December 24, 2003, Darryl Hunt was formally released from prison, and as the order by Judge Cromer was being spoken in Forsyth County Superior Court freeing Darryl, I was watching it on television in the prison day room. While watching, I studied Darryl's reaction and saw in his eyes and in the tears racing down his cheeks the relief and the release of the many years of frustration, loneliness, fear, exhaustion and anxiety. Those were the same feelings and emotions that I have yet to be able to release.

Through Darryl Hunt, a part of me had been freed along with him, because when he spoke about wrongful convictions, it was me speaking also. When Darryl spoke of injustice and inequality occurring within what he always called the "Forsyth County Hall of Injustice," it was me speaking, and when Darryl Hunt passed away, a part of me also went to the other side.

Words cannot even attempt to

explain the feelings of being incarcerated for a crime you know you did not commit, and like Darryl once stated after being denied justice himself by the courts, "Every time I get denied or tuned down by the courts, I feel like I'm being discarded by the system."

I myself often wonder why nobody within the justice system will step up to the plate and do what's right when it comes to my own wrongful conviction, but then again I'll think about something Darryl said back in 2014, more than 10 years after his release. He stated, "I could never understand why the courts turned me down, but now that I've been out and working with the system on the local level and national level, I get it. It's the political will of someone who wants to be in power."

As one who has been wrongfully imprisoned myself for almost two decades, I can and must tell the world that when politics and money supersede justice and the right thing to do, everyone should be frightened. From my own experience, I can assure you that being wrongfully imprisoned leaves a scar that no form of surgery can make go away. Only seeing justice prevail against injustice and equality prevail over inequality can help heal the nasty scars of being accused.

Darryl Hunt came home and witnessed the same injustice that was done to him over 30 years earlier still rearing its ugly head in Forsyth County and that drove him to fight even harder against it.

I met Darryl Hunt in the summer of 2002 at Salisbury Correctional Institute and we talked for two whole days. But while still in the midst of fighting for his own freedom, Darryl took the time to embrace me and promised me that if and when he ever gained his freedom, he would reach back and extend his hand to me and that's what he did. Darryl was a man of his word and for that I salute him.

If anything, we should all have learned the true meanings of unconditional love, caring, forgiveness and peace from Darryl Eugene Hunt.

I place Darryl Hunt in the category of one of the true drum majors for justice, but Darryl was not only a drum major, he played all the instruments in the band.

Kalvin Michael Smith-El
Forsyth Correctional Center

Wake Forest University

Faculty adopt resolution Against HB2

To The Editor:

"The faculty of Wake Forest College at Wake Forest University oppose North Carolina House Bill 2, enacted on March 23, 2016, which is contrary to our University-wide commitment to diversity and inclusion. The law specifically prevents cities from legally protecting sexual and gender minorities from discrimination, while also preventing transgender people from accessing public restrooms safely. The faculty believe that the bill will negatively affect our current LGBTQ faculty, administrators and students and their friends and family and may negatively affect recruitment of faculty, administrators and students. In addition, as the law prohibits K-12 public schools and publicly-funded universities and colleges in North Carolina from having multi-stall, multi-sex bathrooms, it could jeopardize federal funding for the schools attended by many of our family members, friends and neighbors. Thus, we urge our local government officials to take an active stand against the law, and we urge the North Carolina General Assembly and the Governor to repeal House Bill 2."

The resolution is the latest show of support for the LGBTQ community and demonstration of Wake Forest's commitment to inclusivity and diversity everywhere.

On March 24, more than 200 Wake Forest students, faculty, staff and alumni gathered for a moment of solidarity on the steps of Wait Chapel hosted by the Wake Forest's LGBTQ Center. On March 25, Wake Forest University issued an official statement in response to HB 2:

"Wake Forest University's commitment to diversity and inclusion remains unwavering and our non-discrimination statement includes protection for gender identity and sexual orientation. The new law does not apply to private institutions and will not impact Wake Forest's employment practices, educational programs or campus activities in any way. Wake Forest underscores its commitment to creating an inclusive environment for all members of the University community as well as visitors to our campus."

Faculty, Undergraduate College
Wake Forest University

We Welcome Your Feedback

Submit letters and guest columns to letters@wschronicle.com before 5 p.m. Friday for the next week's publication date.

Letters intended for publication should be addressed "Letters to the Editor" and include your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep letters to 350 words or less.

If you are writing a guest column, please include a photo of yourself, your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep guest columns to 550 words or less. Letters and columns can also be mailed or dropped off at W-S Chronicle, 617 N. Liberty St., W-S, NC, 27101; or sent via our website, www.wschronicle.com.

We reserve the right to edit any item submitted for clarity or brevity and determine when and whether material will be used.

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