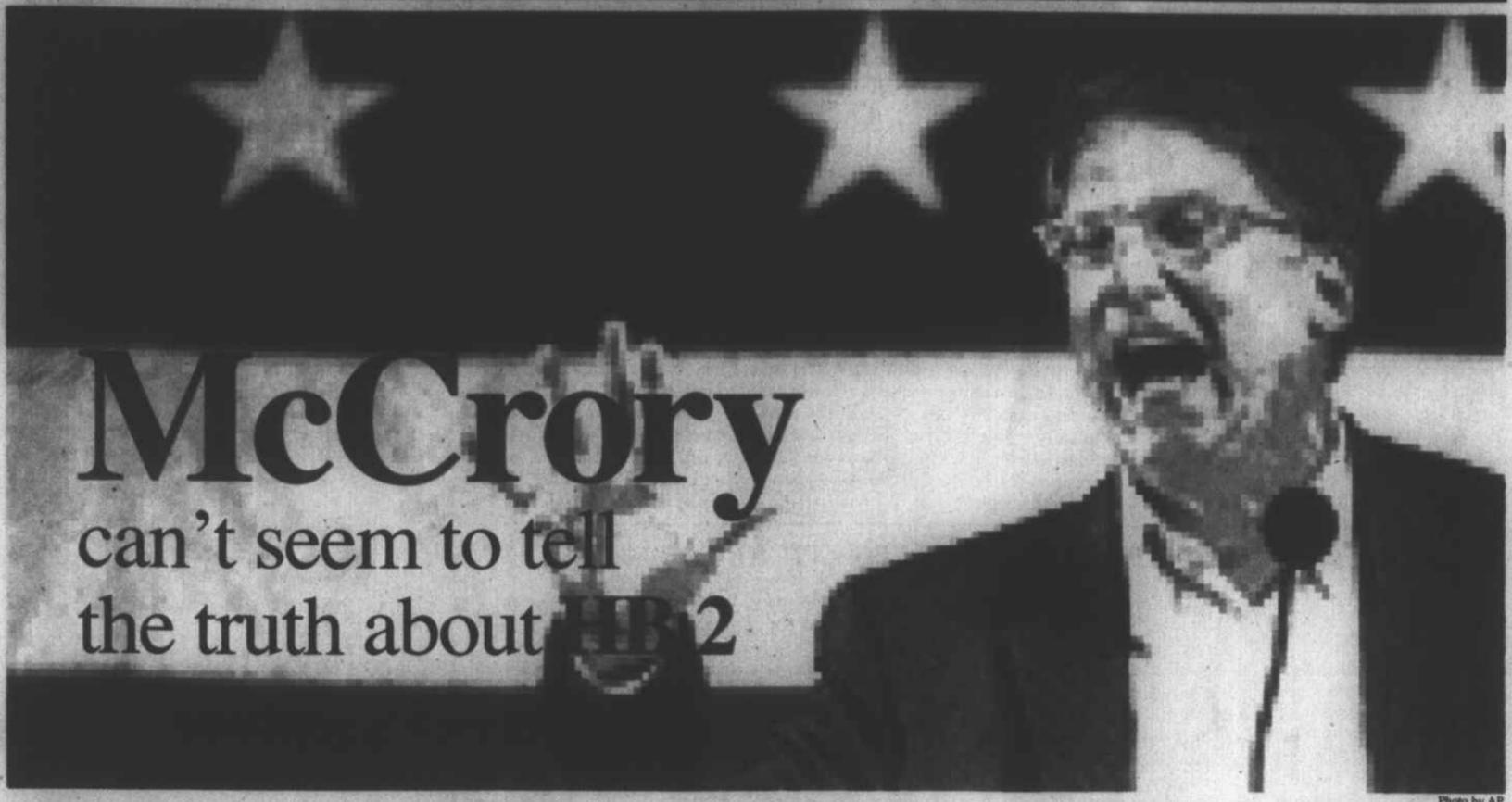


FORUM



McCrory can't seem to tell the truth about HB 2

Photo by AP



Chris Fitzsimon
Guest Columnist

Another week, another round of falsehoods from Gov. Pat McCrory about HB2, the sweeping anti-LGBT law HB 2 he signed in March that is costing the state thousands of jobs and tens of millions of dollars in private investments and tourism revenue.

This time McCrory went on "The Kelly File" on Fox News to defend the law that is now defining his administration.

Host Megyn Kelly talked to McCrory about the bathroom part of the HB 2, ignoring the provisions of the law that prohibits local governments from protecting LGBT people from discrimination or enacting minimum wage ordinances, bans workers illegally fired for their race, religion, sex, etc. from suing in state court, and establishes a statewide nondiscrimination standard that does not include sexual orientation or gender identity.

Kelly did force to McCrory to admit that allowing transgender people to use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity does not pose a safety risk, as Sen. Phil Berger and other supporters of HB 2

keep alleging.

McCrory claimed it was all about privacy and that controversy was all the fault of President Obama and groups on the left and misreporting by the national media like the New York Times. It's always someone else's fault.

At the end of the interview, McCrory said that PayPal, which cancelled a planned 400-job facility in Charlotte after McCrory signed HB 2, was hypocritical because it operated in states that have the exact same nondiscrimination standard as North Carolina.

But that is simply not true. Many states do have nondiscrimination laws that fail to include protection for LGBT people but list sex as a protected category, which federal courts and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have interpreted to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

HB2 that McCrory signed includes "biological sex" instead, making sure that LGBT people are not protected.

Lawmakers went out of their way to make sure that businesses in North Carolina could fire or deny services to people because they are gay.

That was not an accident. Last week the head of the N.C. Values Coalition, the primary lobbying force behind HB 2, said

that protecting LGBT people from employment discrimination "undermines freedom."

That is who McCrory is standing with in his testy defense of HB 2, folks who want to deny basic civil rights to LGBT people in North Carolina.

GOP House members worried about HB2

McCrory is not the only one on the hot seat. Many GOP legislators are feeling the heat too, judging by reports about a recent closed door meeting of House Republicans, where several members expressed concern that the outcry over HB 2 is hurting their reelection chances.

Reportedly, there are some Republicans who wouldn't mind seeing the law repealed and many more who want it changed to take some of the pressure off. Senate leaders appear in no mood to do either, guaranteeing that HB2 will continue to dominate the news about the session and play a major role in the November elections.

McCrory not "dreaming big"

The only other legislative issue that made news last week was McCrory's

budget proposal for 2016-2017, which includes a teacher raise and a few important investments in mental health and expanded care for seniors.

But McCrory is being roundly criticized by lawmakers from both parties for not including a raise for state employees in his spending plan, only a one-time bonus that is not counted toward their retirement. State retirees receive no cost of living adjustment at all in McCrory's proposal.

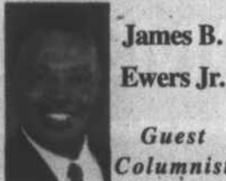
A spokesperson for Raleigh's most well-known right-wing think tank was defending McCrory's weak budget proposal in an appearance on a local television show and came up with the quote of the week, saying, "It's good that McCrory is not dreaming big."

No problem there - not from this governor.

URL to article: <http://www.ncpolicywatch.com/2016/04/29/the-follies-252/>

Chris Fitzsimon, founder and executive director of N.C. Policy Watch, writes the daily Fitzsimon File, delivers a radio commentary broadcast on WRAL-FM and hosts "News and Views," a weekly radio news magazine that airs on multiple stations across North Carolina. Contact him at chris@ncpolicywatch.com.

Happy Mother's Day to my mom and to mothers everywhere



James B. Ewers Jr.
Guest Columnist

Celebrating Mother's Day should be something that we do each day. [It will be on Sunday, May 8, this year.] My mother passed away many years ago now, yet I carry her spirit with me wherever I go.

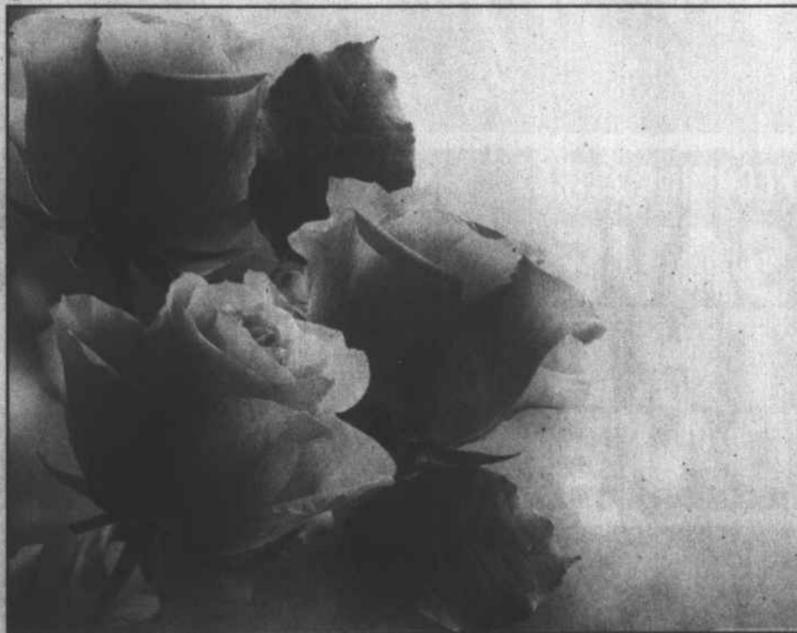
My mom was a deeply caring person, so maybe that was one of the reasons that she became a registered nurse. She was a member of the first graduating class of Kate Biting Reynolds Hospital in Winston-Salem NC. In those days nurses wore starched white uniforms and my mom had a black ribbon around her nurse's cap. She was a proud woman and her appearance was important to her.

While she worked various shifts, she made sure that she always took me to Sunday school. She didn't drop me off as she was always in the adult class or somewhere in the church. At any rate prior to going to church or for that matter anywhere, she always told me to "act like I have some sense" and to be respectful.

My father would simply look on in silent agree-

ment. I always thought that my mom was pretty tough and I think my dad thought so, too. Maybe it was because I was a boy but I thought there were times I could act out and get away with it when I was away from home. My advice to young children everywhere is never act out when you are away from your house. I am speaking to you from what I like to call some signature spanking experiences. On occurrences when I got out of line, my mom would receive a phone call, or even worse, a visit from one of the neighbors giving her the full report on my bad behavior. I do wonder sometimes if mothers in particular didn't have this underground system of communicating just between themselves. My neighborhood in Winston-Salem was pretty close knit, so word got to Mrs. Mildred Ewers pretty quickly. None of my spankings were put on lay-away. In other words, my mom didn't tell me she would spank me tomorrow or even within the hour. They were immediate and to my young mind almost life threatening.

She would instruct me to go outside in the backyard if the weather was OK to get a switch. We had a cherry tree in our backyard, so switches were always available. If the weather was severe, she would sim-



ply use a belt. I will tell you that both hurt!

My mom, in typical "old school" fashion, provided some commentary as she was spanking me. Afterward, she would send me to my room. Unlike children's rooms today, my room was spartan. It had a bed, a desk and a few pictures on the wall. Later, I was fortunate to get a radio. I really didn't like going to my room but I didn't have a choice.

Today for many children their rooms are palatial estates. They are equipped with a computer, a television and a CD player. Now is being repre-

manded and being sent to your room really punishment? Maybe the punishment should be to sit in the same room with an adult for an hour and read a book.

I always enjoyed watching my mom cook, and boy could she cook! Dishes like macaroni and cheese, chocolate cake, bread pudding, fried chicken, biscuits and Kool-Aid with lemon were always available.

My cooking skills were given to me by my mom. I would always have a role in my mom's kitchen. It might be to snap beans, to peel potatoes or to partici-

pate in the chicken cleaning. You see, for a time we had chickens in our backyard, so if you are "old school" you know what that involved; if you are new school just use your imagination.

I loved my mom, and there is not a day that goes by that I don't think about her in some way. Mostly I wonder what she would do in situations and the decisions that she would make.

For many years after her passing, I didn't go to church on Mother's Day. I simply couldn't take it emotionally. One of the traditions that took place back in the day was the

wearing of a rose on Mother's Day. Simply put, if your mom was living, you would wear a red rose and if your mom had passed away, you would wear a white rose.

I can tell you that it was devastating for me to lose my mom during my teenage years. There were many events that I didn't attend because I didn't have a mother. My Aunt Lois, my mom's sister, became the mother-figure in my life. As kind and loving as my dad was, I would have become a statistic without the love and guidance of my Aunt Lois.

Unlike with my dad, I was never able to become my mom's friend. If you are a teenager or younger, tell your mom daily in some way that you love her and behave yourself and "act like you got some sense."

Happy Mother's Day, mom.

James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D. is a former tennis champion at Atkins High School in Winston-Salem and played college tennis at Johnson C Smith University where he was all-conference for four years.

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