

# 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.

### GUEST EDITORIAL

## Sanity must rule on HB 2: Repeal it

North Carolina's Republican leadership is in a blinking contest with the U.S. Justice Department and there is plenty at stake, as much as \$3 billion a year of federal dollars that are shared among the 17-member UNC system and the state's public schools, including urgently needed money that comes to Robeson County.

The issue is House Bill 2, which most folks are weary of reading and hearing about. It was a crisis contrived by the City of Charlotte – were transgender people really struggling to find a place to do their business? – that provoked a clumsy overreaction from this state's lawmakers, including those representing this county who are having buyer's remorse.

Supporters of the legislation can defiantly laugh about not allowing the federal government to bully our state, but the potential consequences are real, and the state's educational systems, both primary and secondary, stand to lose money they can't afford to do without.

The Justice Department last week announced it was suing North Carolina, saying the bill violates the Civil Rights Act, therefore putting those federal dollars in jeopardy. Gov. Pat McCrory responded by suing the federal government, so it appears we are at an impasse.

While the state prepares to spend what could add up to a lot of money in a legal fight it is likely to lose, North Carolina's economy, which has been rebounding under GOP leadership, continues to suffer a single cut at a time, some deeper than others, but all robbing people of income.

We know that some companies have decided to take their jobs elsewhere, some rock musicians have canceled performances, and there is a threat that the NBA franchise in Charlotte will leave North Carolina.

All because of a bill that addressed a problem that didn't exist, but also took detours to include making it more difficult for some to claim discrimination in the workplace, and even meddled with the minimum wage.

There is growing support in the General Assembly to revisit House Bill 2.

We don't know if the momentum is sufficient to get HB2 rolled back sufficiently that it would prevent more damage to our economy. The issue now seems to be ego-driven, and the North Carolina lawmakers clinging hardest to HB2 as it now exists appear more concerned about winning the blinking contest than keeping this state's economy on its upward trend.

The time has arrived when sanity must rule and Republicans in leadership positions, including McCrory, need to remember that they will pay a big price at the polls if they continue to push North Carolina down this plank. It's a matter of time before HB2 is a bad memory and the Republicans can make themselves the same in November if they don't flush this bathroom bill.

The Robesonian of Lumberton



N.C. General Assembly legislative building.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Woman gives different perspective on Black Lives Matter

To the Editor:

I would like to give a different perspective on Black Lives Matter. Perhaps, the vision most see is the African-American male being overly (and rightfully so) concerned about his life in the concrete jungle of the inner city. I am an African-American woman that went through a harrowing experience in the corporate jungle (working world) & I am still recovering (emotionally) 16 years later.

Long story short, while working in Charlotte, N.C., I had a small misunderstanding with my new coworkers. A supervisor agreed to facilitate mediation. It turned out to be a set-up. Protocol was not followed and my personal space was violated numerous times.

The result was an anxiety-riddled breakdown. The breakdown included numerous trips to psych wards and over 100 different psych. medications, yet nothing was ever done to my offender.

My supervisor condescended to me, using language she thought that I wouldn't understand; she patted my leg and treated me like a child. I grew up thinking that we've made so much progress as people of color and as women, but I have come to see that things are as bad as they were 50 years ago.

It's sad to have to remind individuals that Black Lives Matter in the workforce as well as the streets.

Lynette Staplefoote  
 Winston-Salem

### Taxpayer compensation to any candidate would be reckless

To the Editor:

The bungling of ballots in the South Ward's March election, which has led to a new election between John Larson and Carolyn Highsmith,

is regrettable. It has also created understandable frustrations and inconveniences for both candidates.

What is not so understandable is that Ms. Highsmith is requesting "compensation" for the voting errors to the tune of \$1 per certified vote cast. Surely not! What a reckless precedent-setting action this would be! Can you just imagine all the things candidates of the future would expect tax-payer compensation for! It would be never-ending.

If Ms. Highsmith wants compensation for the errors, then maybe she should look to her supporters to help indemnify her, but certainly not to the tax-paying public. The tax-payers are underwriting the expense of the new election; that's enough.

I am not in the South Ward and therefore don't have "a dog in this fight," but, if I were, I'd certainly think twice about the merits of a candidate expecting personal payment for the mistakes affecting the March primary.

If she is already asking for money for this mistake, what lies ahead should she be elected?

Kaye Brandon  
 Winston-Salem

### We have got work to do to counter K-12 disparities

To the Editor:

Sixty-two years ago today [May 17], the Supreme Court took a monumental step to correct the precedent established in Plessy v. Ferguson of "separate but equal." The landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision struck Plessy down and held that "separate was inherently unequal."

At that time, segregation was the law and subjected generations of students of color to inferior education, dilapidated facilities, and significantly reduced resources in order to fulfill a racist and oppressive agenda.

After the Brown v. Board decision, it took years of resistance and federal action to integrate schools. But now six decades later, we have seen public schools seemingly regress back to the segregated state we saw during the Jim Crow era. Overt racism has now turned to

institutional racism creating structural barriers that have countered the positive impact of the Brown v. Board decision.

Racial and socioeconomic segregation in public schools has nearly doubled since 2000 and has occurred primarily in schools where more than 75 percent of the students are Black or Hispanic and eligible for free or reduced lunch. What's more alarming is that three out of five high-poverty schools have high concentrations of students of color.

Folks, there is a problem with our education system and we need to take immediate action to restore our promise to provide equal access to educational opportunity.

The CBC has been fighting to address not only the racial wealth gap, but also the achievement and opportunity gaps that continue to widen. These gaps pose dire economic consequences

for communities of color – we must work to counter these disparities and also to address the school-to-prison pipeline which disproportionately affects African American students.

Friends, we have work to do.

I want to thank my colleagues Ranking Member John Conyers and Ranking Member Bobby Scott for their leadership in calling for this GAO report. It will require deliberate decisions and efforts to achieve true equity in education and equality for all students in our schools. I call on my colleagues in the House and the Senate to join us in our efforts to create better schools for our youth.

U.S. Rep. G. K. Butterfield (NC-01)

Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus  
 Washington, D.C.

Note: On May 17, CBC Chairman G. K. Butterfield (NC-01) gave remarks at a press conference to commemorate the 62nd Anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education and unveil a new Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on contemporary racial and socioeconomic segregation and disparities in K-12 public schools.



Rep. Butterfield

## We Welcome Your Feedback

Submit letters and guest columns to [letters@wschronicle.com](mailto: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](http://www.wschronicle.com).

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