



Mayor Allen Joines thanks first responders for all they do during a remembrance ceremony held last week to honor those who lost their lives during the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

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remember and thank our first responders every day.”

While the terror attacks touched people in every corner of the country, not many are haunted by the events on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, as Marianela Melendez, a New York native who worked inside the World Trade Center on that unforgettable day. Melendez mentioned while standing outside the building smoking a cigarette she and other co-workers noticed a plane flying extremely low.

“When we looked up a second time, the plane had run into the building,” she continued. “I was distraught and scared. If it wasn’t for the first responders, I don’t know what I would have done that day.”

As tears began to flow down her face, Melendez said the attacks scared her so much that she decided to move to North Carolina, where she has been since 2005. She said, to this day she still has a fear of being around tall buildings.

“I haven’t been back to New York City since I left. I even missed my mother’s funeral because I was scared to go back there,” said Melendez. “I would love to go back but I just can’t do it. It has been really hard.”

Melendez said although she still has some fear, the birth of her twin daughters and help from AmeriCorps, a civil society program sponsored by the government, is where she found the strength to go on.

“AmeriCorps helped me a lot. They taught me that I can become somebody that is strong again,” she continued. “The terrorist tried to scare us that day but now I know it’s important that we stand up and show them what we are all about as Americans.”

ID

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with “surgical precision” to suppress their votes, which included cutting early voting days from 17 to 10, and not allowing Sunday “Souls to the Polls” voting.

The appellate court reinstated the 17-day early voting period, but left the scheduling of hours, sites and Sunday voting up to the state.

In Forsyth County, all three BOE members concurred that there would be no Sunday voting, so the state board didn’t consider the issue for Winston-Salem early voting.

The state BOE last Thursday, in finalizing the early voting plans of 33 counties, decided to maintain only one Sunday of voting in Hoke, Richmond and Craven counties, though counties like New Hanover, which successfully voted on Sunday for the first time ever last March

ing, shortening the total early voting period from seventeen to ten days. As a result, the law also eliminated one of two “souls to the polls” Sundays in which African-American churches provided transportation to voters.”

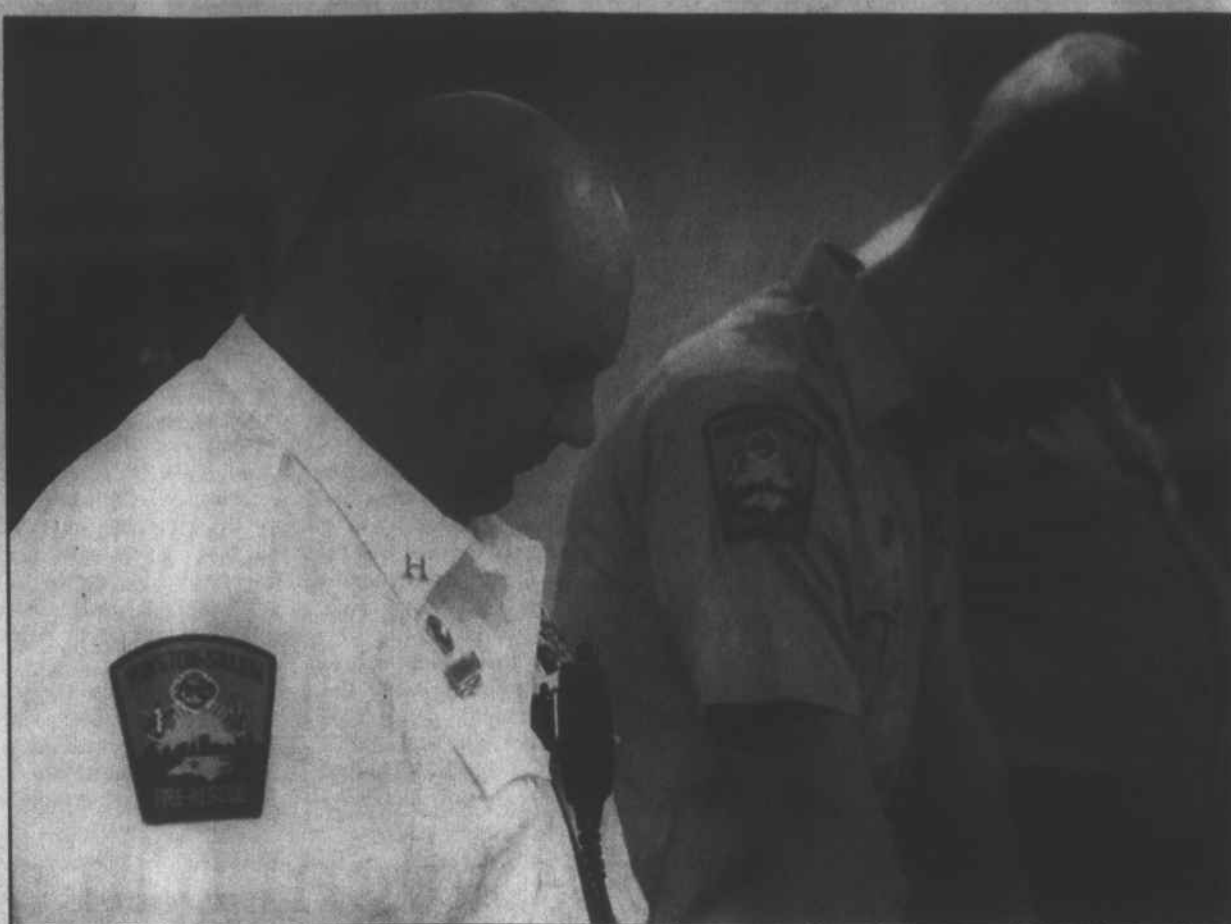
Still, top Republicans, like N.C. GOP Executive Director Dallas Woodhouse, have been caught urging Republican-led local BOEs to fashion their early voting plans and schedules in a way that likely helps Republicans, including the elimination of Sunday voting where possible.

According to attorney Irving Joyner, chair of the N.C. NAACP Legal Redress Committee that joined in coalition with other civil rights attorneys to fight the voter ID law, the appellate court’s intent was that Sunday voting be reinstated in counties where it had been struck down or limited.

“The SBOE had received this message several times,” Joyner said. “They were warned before last Thursday’s hearing, during that hearing and reminded after the session concluded. Because they were aware, some notable reversals in plans from several counties were achieved. As for the others, we are measuring the possible effects with the hours that were established. When you add them up, however, more hours are available for early voting during this election than ever before. While everyone did not get Sunday voting hours, there were more Saturday hours added to the total available hours.”

Bob Hall, executive director of the nonpartisan Democracy N.C., said the Republican leadership “... encouraged their members to get rid of Sunday voting where it existed before...”

Joyner’s remarks, along with published reports, strongly hint that civil rights advocates will be back in court to complain that the Republican-dominated state and several local BOEs ignored the spirit of the federal appellate court voter ID ruling in ignoring the need for Sunday voting in many counties with significant black populations.



Members of the Winston-Salem Fire Department pray during a remembrance ceremony held to honor those who lost their lives during the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.



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for the primaries, were denied the opportunity again by their own BOE, and the state.

“The loss of Sunday voting was a blow,” Deborah Dicks Maxwell, the NAACP chairwoman in New Hanover County, told The Journal in Wilmington in a statement Sunday evening. “I was informed that because we did not have Sunday voting in 2012, we were not considered this time. Someone died for our right to vote and we will exercise it,” Maxwell continued.

What is clear is that not allowing Sunday voting for the fall general election is in direct contradiction to the spirit of the July 29 U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling (later upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court).

In that historic ruling, the appellate court wrote: “African-Americans disproportionately used the first seven days of early voting. After receipt of this racial data, the General Assembly amended [the voter ID law] to eliminate the first week of early vot