

# North Carolina GOP Leaders to Promote Same-Sex Marriage

Amy Hruby, Staff Writer

The North Carolina state legislature returns September 12th for the convening of a new session during which Republican leaders in the House of Representatives have announced they will push for a state constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage--possibly making North Carolina the final state in the Southeastern US to pass such an amendment.

In an August 30th press conference, House Speaker Pro Tem Dale Folwell was quoted by the News and Observer as saying "It's time we settled this issue. People in favor of this will live or die by how the people of North Carolina feel about it. ... Power needs to be pushed away from this building and back to the people." North Carolina currently has a law that defines marriage as between a man and a woman, but House Majority leader Paul Stam argued that the readings of equal protection laws to include same-sex couples make a state constitutional amendment necessary to resolve the ambiguity in North Carolina (as reported by The Washington Post). He further asserted that "in countries around the world where they have legitimized same-sex marriage, marriage itself is de-legitimized ... About a fourth of the world allows polygamy. Polygamy would be next."

In opposition to the proposed amendment, House Minority leader Joe Hackney released the following statement to the News and Observer: "This proposed constitutional amendment runs against the tide of history, and has become a form of hate speech. Modern corporations do not tolerate this kind of discrimination and neither should our state. But many of

us recognize this unneeded amendment is not about rights or morality. It is part of the Republican political strategy to drive Republicans to the polls in 2012 while suppressing Democratic voting through voter ID legislation and cutbacks in early voting." NC Democratic Party Chairman David Parker shared a similar sentiment, saying "The Republicans in the General Assembly have made it clear that their intention is to turn back the clock on our economy by pushing divisive social issues—talk about misplaced priorities. This amendment will only stifle job creation and hinder our economic recovery."

After the legislature reconvenes in September, both the House and the Senate must pass a constitutional amendment with a three-fifths vote before it can be sent to the voters. The Republican party did gain control of the legislature in January, but they will still need support from some Democratic legislators for the amendment to be approved. If it is passed legislatively, voters will likely see the amendment on ballots in November 2012.

**For more information, see these articles:**

[http://projects.newsobserver.com/under\\_the\\_dome/gop\\_leaders\\_push\\_for\\_samesex\\_marriage\\_ban](http://projects.newsobserver.com/under_the_dome/gop_leaders_push_for_samesex_marriage_ban)

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/aug/30/gop-leaders-push-to-have-marriage-defined-in-nc/>

# Tata in Talks for Reassignment

Molly Ashline, Staff Writer



image via wcpss.net

According to an article published in the News and Observer by Thomas Goldsmith and Hueng Kui on August 16th, Tony Tata, the superintendent of Wake County schools, revealed the results of a reassignment poll which gave families the option of choosing from a list of elementary schools their children could attend in Wake County. Overwhelmingly, families chose the schools based on proximity not merit. These results will be important for Tata if he considers revising his pro-diversity reassignment plan before he brings it before the board for approval.

Tata's plan includes giving the opportunity for students in low-scoring schools to attend high-achievement schools, though schools may be far away. It also includes allowing students to choose from magnet schools in the area, yet Tata still wants to spare a percentage of seats for application students.

His plan—colorfully called the "blue plan"—gives priority to students living closer to the school of their choice and is supposed to support academic growth in the county, as stated by the Wake County Public Schools website. Tata faces an opponent to his ambitious plan though. The only Democrat on the board, Keith Sutton, prefers the green plan. This design would assure that all schools in the county would not drop below a ten percent deviation for academic success below the average. Most members of the board, however, tend to side with Tata.

When Tata joined Wake County in December, after a short, unsuccessful stint in DC schools as a purchasing agent, many believed

that he would not support diversity programs in schools. As a retired Brigadier General, Tata was a conservative choice for Wake County. He has evidently proven many wrong since his initial ideas about this blue plan in March. Still, his history in education may leave some people skeptical about his future success in his relatively new North Carolina setting. While serving in DC, Tata had a record of lax customer service and late book deliveries among other complaints, according to an article published in February 2010 in a Washington Post article by Billy Turque. Tata will have to overcome this sketchy history in his career in Wake County to gain more support among his constituents and among the students he serves.

Despite this prospect of greater diversity in Wake County schools, there still remain many questions about what the outcome of the board decision will have on the students, on their performance, on the budget, and on the schools in general. For instance, will the levels of proficiency in the schools actually be positively altered due to this change? What effect will these seemingly constant reassignments have on the students? How much will such a big adjustment cost, and in turn, how much will that increase the burden on taxpayers? In the most highly populated county in North Carolina, will a man with very little educational experience do what is in the best interest for everyone or will he simply weaken Wake County schools? The decision of Tata's plan will be reached by 2012, and whether that decision is for the better or not will be evident soon enough.

## What's Up In Raleigh: 9/7-9/21

Collected by Ashleigh Phillips

8-10: Hopscotch Music Festival @ participating downtown venues

15-18: Sparkcon @ participating downtown venues

7: Terry Brooks @ Quail Ridge Books & Music

9: Paperhand Puppet Intervention @ NCMA

13: Okkervil River with Wye Oak @ Lincoln Theater

17: NC State vs. South Alabama @ Carter Finley Stadium

Inflouential @ Pour House

18: Lupe Fiasco @ Raleigh Amphitheater

19: Raleigh Drum Circle @ Lake Johnson

21: Fleet Foxes with the Walkmen @ Raleigh Amphitheater

Schooner and Practice Boyz @ Slim's Downtown

Nov 6: The Screwtape Letters @ Raleigh Memorial Auditorium

Wolf Parade and Ogre You Asshole @ Lincoln Theater

Nov 9: Soft Company and Bear Hands @ Kings