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## Moral Monday Comes To Durham



Flanked by Rev. Jimmie Hawkins of Covenant Presbyterian Church and Rev. Curtis Gatewood of HJK on J, Rev. William Barber tells the crowd that voting is a must for 2014.

### Moral Monday Brings Together People from across NC to Talk Voting and Voter Registration at Second Moral March to the Polls Rally in Durham

Hundreds of people from across the state joined the North Carolina NAACP and the Forward Together Movement for the second Moral March to the Polls rally in Durham today where speakers from the local community pressed the crowd to organize their communities, register new voters and vote in November.

"I bring you a message of hope from a strange place," said Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, president of the NC NAACP, as he took the stage. "This morning, I stood with the Republican mayor of Belhaven and the community in Washington D.C. to say enough to states refusing the Medicaid expansion on the basis of partisan ideology. If a white Republican mayor and a fast-food worker and a doctor and the black, independent president of the NC NAACP can come together on expanding Medicaid, then we can certainly come together to take North Carolina to higher ground."

It was the first time Moral Monday had come to Durham, and the crowd was fired up, chanting and cheering along with the speakers. Nearby, Moral Freedom Summer volunteers manned the voter registration table. From its start at 5:30 pm to the last song around 7 pm, the rally focused on the vote.

"One year after the Voting Rights Act was passed, two older women denied the right to vote in Mississippi," Dr. Barber told the crowd. "They went down to Jackson for a hearing to get back their vote. On the way back from Jackson, they were killed. I met the niece of one of those ladies. She told me, 'When I hear people trying to go back on voting rights, it breaks my heart. My aunt died for that right.' It was the blood that shamed the nation and forced people to do the justice that they said they could not do."

Moral leaders then stressed the fundamental importance of the vote to representative government, particularly for African Americans.

"The fight for justice is never irrelevant," said Rev. Curtis Gatewood, HKonJ Coalition Coordinator with the NC NAACP. "We are not going to have the old Jim Crow. We are not going to have the new Jim Crow. We've been there, done that, got the T-shirt. The ballot is our ticket on the midnight train to justice, and we are not going to back down now."

Rabbi John Frieman of the Judea Reform Synagogue told the story of his great-grandmother and her discovery of democracy when she moved to America from Lithuania.

"When my grandmother found out that she could vote in America, she fell in love with this country," Frieman said. "Whether you were Democrat or Republican, it was American to vote. In North Carolina today, our government doesn't see it that way."

Young people brought front and center as they spoke about the NCGA's attempts to suppress their votes through HB 589. Cuts to early voting, the elimination of same-day and pre-registration, the requirement of a photo ID but barring student IDs, the shift of polls off of college campuses - all of these make it harder for college students to vote, UNC student Elizabeth Brown told the crowd. (Continued On Page 2)

### Historically black colleges face uncertain future

Jerome Bailey Jr.

(AP) - Three days before Payton Wilkins returned home to Detroit last May with a bachelor's degree, his cousin was arrested for selling heroin and crack cocaine.

"Before I came to college I was hanging out with him so it's a really good chance I would be in prison right now," said Wilkins, 24, the first person in his family to graduate from college. He had no college plans until his mom made him apply to Dillard University, a private historically black school in New Orleans.

For generations, such colleges and universities have played a key role in educating young African-Americans like Wilkins.

But facing often steep declines in enrollment, these schools are struggling to survive. In the last 20 years, five historically black colleges and universities - or HBCU's - have shut down and about a dozen have dealt with accreditation issues.

South Carolina State University, that state's only public historically black higher education institution, had its accreditation placed on probation last month after the school was cited for financial problems.

Morris Brown College, a 133-year-old private institution in Atlanta, filed for bankruptcy in August 2012 and has received court approval to sell some of its property.

Last year, North Carolina elected officials flirted with the idea of merging Elizabeth City State University, a public historically black college, with another institution after its enrollment had dropped by 900 students in three years.

An outcry from supporters saved the school and stirred up support from the state's Legislative Black Caucus last month.

Historically black colleges once were the only option for most black students, who made up almost 100 percent of their enrollment in 1950. That began to change in the 1960s, as many doors that once were shut to blacks were opened.

Now that black students have a much wider choice of schools, only 11 percent of African-American college students choose a historically black college or university.

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### NC budget hole grows based on new tax cut analysis

RALEIGH (AP) - North Carolina income tax collections for 2014 are expected to fall \$205 million short of earlier projections following Republican-backed tax cuts approved last year.

A memo from the legislature's Fiscal Research Division says the wages of North Carolina's workers haven't grown as fast as originally forecast, resulting in the projected cost of the 2013 tax cuts rising from \$475 million to \$680 million. The analysis did not include projected sales tax revenues, which could climb to offset the less than expected money from sales taxes.

The new estimate comes as Republican leaders are trying to negotiate an end to the state's budget impasse while searching for the millions needed to raise salaries for public school teachers. The 2013 reform plan lowered the individual tax rate for all earners to 5.8 percent, with the biggest cut going to the state's wealthiest taxpayers. Top income earners had paid 7.75 percent under the old tiered tax system, while working class taxpayers paid 6 percent.

Rep. David Lewis, chairman of the finance committee in the state House, said the changing projections should not be used to infer whether the GOP-backed tax cuts are working. When approved last year, Republican leaders confidently predicted the tax cuts would stimulate the state's economy, generating greater tax revenues in the long run.

"I think that eight months into tax reform is a little too early to judge," said Lewis, R-Harnett. "It's going to take some time."

Legislators were supposed to have a new budget in place by July 1, the start of the new fiscal year. But negotiations between GOP leaders in the House and Senate have dragged on for weeks with few indications of progress.

Speaker Thom Tillis dismissed the state House on Friday saying that the chamber was not expected to hold any sessions next week, a strong indicator no deal is imminent.

Many of the state's top GOP leaders are scheduled to attend the annual conference of the American Legislative Exchange Council that starts Tuesday in Dallas, Texas, and lasts into the weekend. North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory is on the agenda to speak at the opening luncheon of the conservative group.

