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## Minority advocates say Trump's budget will hurt their causes

By Jesse J. Holland

WASHINGTON (AP) - Advocates for minority communities say President Donald Trump's proposed budget answers the question he famously posed to black Americans during his campaign: "What the hell do you have to lose?"

His \$4.1 trillion spending plan for the budget year beginning Oct. 1 generally makes deep cuts in safety net programs, including Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program and Social Security's disability program.

"Here is the reality: Many poor black families and brown families and Asian families and indigenous families will be devastated by this budget," said Bishop Dwayne Royster, founder of Philadelphia's Living Water United Church of Christ.

The White House said its budget would put the country back on track for a healthy economy.

"We're not going to measure compassion by the amount of money that we spend, but by the number of people that we help," White House budget director Mick Mulvaney said this past week.

Critics decry the priorities in Trump's budget, which Congress is unlikely to pass as submitted. Still, it will serve as a guidepost for what the White House wants lawmakers to deliver to the president.

"It is an attack of unimaginable cruelty on the most vulnerable among us, the youngest, the oldest, the poorest, and hardworking people who need a little help to gain or hang on to a decent middle-class life," Hillary Clinton said May 26.

Trump's budget would slash Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, which provide health insurance for millions of poor families, by \$616 billion over the next decade. It would cut the food stamp program by \$191 billion over the next decade and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program by \$22 billion.

"Great nations are known by how they care for the old and the vulnerable, not by how much they can take away from them to give to their wealthy friends," NAACP Chairman Leon W. Russell said.

Several people pointed to the targeting of the Education Department for a 13 percent cut as particularly troubling.

That "will undoubtedly hurt our most vulnerable children, especially those from low-income and working-class Black families, who rely on access to special education programs, well-trained teachers, smaller class sizes, literacy grants, and before and after school programs-all of which will be at risk for cuts or elimination," said Jacqueline Cooper, president of the Black Alliance for Educational Options.

The head of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham, D-N.M., said Trump's budget "wastes billions of dollars on a costly and ineffective border wall and deportation force" while proposing cuts to programs that have been essential to helping Hispanic families.

The budget seeks \$2.6 billion for border security technology, including money to design and build a wall along the southern border. Trump repeatedly promised voters during the campaign that Mexico would pay for a wall, a notion that Mexican officials have rejected.

NAACP officials said Trump's proposal would gut civil rights enforcement in the federal government.

It would defund and cut at least 10 percent of key civil rights enforcement positions across the government, including positions at the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Legal Services Corporation, which helped more than 2 million low-income individuals with legal representation last year, advocates said.

"I am not sure what is more insidious - regurgitating the sham of old trickle-down theories of economics or purposely refusing to adequately fund civil rights positions necessary to protect individuals from voter suppression, job discrimination or police brutality," Russell said.

The budget does maintain the same funding for historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions from President Barack Obama's administration. It reinstates year-round Pell Grants and increases charter school spending, which the Thurgood Marshall College Fund "can utilize to build and strengthen K-12 pipeline initiatives that operate on several HBCU campuses," said the fund's president, Johnny Taylor.

But United Negro College Fund President Michael Lomax noted that HBCUs will be hurt in other ways.

"In fact, the proposed budget would cut federal financial aid lifelines that thousands of HBCU students depend on to attend college and earn their degrees," Lomax said.

Native American groups, who say their needs are perpetually underfunded, say the cuts would worsen their plight.

"Tribes have had to endure too many budget cuts over the years as it is, but this proposal cuts even deeper," said Fawn Sharp, president of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, which represents 57 Native American tribes in Oregon, Washington, Alaska, California, Montana and Idaho. "It is so severe that it's absolutely illogical and unreasonable."

## Racist flyers posted on poles, cars near nation's capital

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) - Racist flyers were found on utility poles and car windows in a community near the nation's capital, prompting a police investigation.

Local news media outlets report that the flyers with racist messages targeting African-Americans and immigrants were found in Alexandria, Virginia's Del Ray neighborhood. Alexandria Police say they are investigating who's behind the flyers, which included a web address of a white nationalist group.

Mayor Allison Silberberg tells WRC-TV that the city's residents "denounce hate speech and hate crimes and discrimination in all forms."

WTOP reports that community members countered the flyers with their own messages. One person wrote "Love lives here" in chalk on the sidewalk. Another person posted a sign that read: "Hi Neo-Nazis! You can't change Del Ray."



NCCU Students look for careers in math and physics. (NCCU Photo)

## New Programs Lead to Top Careers in Math and Physics

Two new undergraduate programs in the Department of Mathematics and Physics will provide students with individualized learning experiences tailored to their specific career and research interests.

The new Computational and Engineering Mathematics (CEMA) concentration blends computer science, physics and engineering for computational modeling, analysis and prediction involved in scientific and engineering applications. CEMA graduates work in careers such as informatics, modeling and simulation, artificial intelligence, cryptology, advanced computing and others.

Engineering Physics combines the study of mathematics, physics and engineering to prepare students to explore the forefront of new technologies. The degree may lead to careers in software development, computer design, development of novel materials, lasers, applied sciences and more.

"Students who complete either of two programs will graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in a variety of work settings," said Mohammad Ahmed, Ph.D., recruitment coordinator for the Department of Mathematics and Physics. "Not only will they have cutting-edge coursework and laboratory experience, but opportunities for internships and to attend conferences with some of the top professionals in the field."

The Department of Mathematics and Physics also offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Science degree and a dual-degree Three + Two Program in Physics and Electrical or Mechanical Engineering in partnership with North Carolina State University.

"Students can customize their classes to prepare for graduate school, seek teacher licensing or enter the workforce directly," Ahmed said, adding that scholarships are available for qualifying students.

The 2016 CareerCast.com annual Jobs Rated report named data scientists as the top career based on income, working conditions, and job satisfaction. Other math-related jobs in the top 10 were statistician, mathematician and actuary.

## Analysis: Rep's 'lynch' remark part of broad cultural battle

By Emily Wagster Pettus

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) - Mississippi state Rep. Karl Oliver drew bipartisan condemnation with a recent Facebook post saying Louisiana leaders should be "LYNCHED" - in all caps - for removing Confederate monuments. But, social media being what it is, the white Republican from Winona was also praised by people who said he stood courageously against political correctness.

Oliver's post was made May 20, after New Orleans pulled down three Confederate monuments and one monument to white supremacy. New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said in a speech May 19 that the monuments represented "the cult of the Lost Cause," which sought to "rewrite history, to hide the truth, which is that the Confederacy was on the wrong side of humanity."

"To literally put the Confederacy on a pedestal in our prominent places in honor is an inaccuracy recitation of our full past, it is an affront to our present and it is a bad prescription for our future," said Landrieu, the white Democratic mayor of a culturally diverse, majority-black city.

It's worth noting that Oliver's legislative district in the Mississippi Delta includes the tiny community of Money, where black teenager Emmett Till was kidnapped and lynched in 1955.

In his May 20 Facebook post, Oliver wrote: "The destruction of these monuments, erected in the loving memory of our family and fellow Southern Americans, is both heinous and horrific. If the, and I use this term extremely loosely, 'leadership' of Louisiana wishes to, in a Nazi-ish fashion, burn books or destroy historical monuments of OUR HISTORY, they should be LYNCHED!"

The freshman lawmaker removed his post after it had been online more than a day and a half, and he issued a public apology after a stern phone call from Republican House Speaker Philip Gunn, who also revoked Oliver's vice chairmanship of the Forestry Committee.

"In an effort to express my passion for preserving all historical monuments, I acknowledge the word 'lynched' was wrong," Oliver said. "I am very sorry. It is in no way, ever, an appropriate term. I deeply regret that I chose this word, and I do not condone the actions I referenced, nor do I believe them in my heart."

The American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi called for an investigation of Oliver. Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel of the New York-based NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, called Oliver's post "shocking in its ignorance and abhorrent in its violence."

The Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus and the Mississippi NAACP said Oliver should resign. Democratic Sen. Sollie Norwood of Jackson, who is a caucus member, questioned Oliver's apology.

"I think it's irresponsible for him to apologize for something that he meant," Norwood said. "There is no place in public office for anyone who embraces that ideology and expresses such deeply demented thoughts."

Rep. Angela Cockerham of Magnolia, who is African-American and one of only two Democratic committee chairmen in the Republican-majority House, said she was "deeply troubled" by Oliver's post. She added: "As one who works across racial and party lines, it is my prayer that the healing process will continue in our state and that my House and Senate colleagues and I will work to build one Mississippi."

The fight about Confederate symbols is far from over.

Mississippi is still divided over its state flag, the last in the nation with the Confederate battle emblem.

Alabama Republican Gov. Kay Ivey last week signed a bill to protect longstanding monuments, including those honoring the Confederacy. It's a safe bet that a similar bill could be filed in Mississippi next year - but if Oliver is the main sponsor, the bill could struggle to survive.

Emily Wagster Pettus has covered Mississippi government and politics since 1994.