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## GOP Won't Answer Why Black State Monument Cut From Budget

By Cash Michaels

CashWorks Media

Before the NC General Assembly adjourned its long session last Friday, Republican legislative leaders House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate Pro-tem Phil Berger were asked in writing why they cut a proposed \$200,000 from the compromise \$23 billion budget for the African-American "Freedom Monument" project slated for the state Capitol grounds, and instead earmarked \$5 million – 25 times as much – to a new \$65 million NC Civil War Museum in Fayetteville, scheduled to open in 2020.

Neither Moore or Berger responded to the written requests for comment sent to their offices one day before both houses of the legislature adjourned.

The only Republican lawmaker who did respond to the press inquiry was one of the budget-writers, state Rep. Donny Lambeth [R-Forsyth], but that was to say that only Moore or Berger could answer.

"This was negotiated after the full [committee] chairs finished all the budget work that was asked of us. I can see if I can get you a statement from the Speaker," Lambeth emailed back, but no statement from Speaker Moore was forthcoming.

The museum, or "center" as it is normally referred by its Winston-Salem-based fundraiser, has already raised approximately \$27 million – all but \$7 million from government funding from Fayetteville, Cumberland County, and now the state legislature.

When completed, it will replace the current Museum of the Cape Fear, a state-owned, state supported facility.

The Freedom Monument, planning for which began in Republican Gov. Pat McCrory's administration, would also be a state-owned, state-funded memorial. After various hearings were held about the project across the state, a summary report was written for the advisory committee of the NC Historical Commission and the NC African American Heritage Commission.

The draft summary of that report said that, "Schoolchildren, it should be remembered, are a prime audience, as they constitute a major segment of the visitors to the Capitol."

"The monument should make an impact on all visitors, young people included," the draft report continued. "The monument is intended for all citizens, not solely for African Americans. The monument should present a public face to newcomers and should encapsulate the African American experience in North Carolina. It is the intent of the sponsoring bodies that the monument should be historical and commemorative in nature. While it must be aesthetically pleasing, it should complement other monuments on the grounds and be grounded in North Carolina history"

The Freedom Monument project is now without public funding as originally proposed last March by Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper in his budget.

A spokesperson for the NC Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources, which oversees the project along with both commissions, said Gov. Cooper's proposed appropriation was to complete the planning and design on the monument Gov. McCrory once said was an "...appropriate way to recognize the contributions of African-Americans to North Carolina's history..."

The project now has no timeline or appropriation, "but we are moving forward," the NCDNCR spokesperson assured.

Ironically, the primary fundraiser for the NC Civil War Center, David Winslow of The Winslow Group, said, "Some of the same volunteers who are working on the monument project are also working with [us], and I know they were disappointed."

Winslow continued that he heard that Gov. Cooper "...is committed to finding the \$200,000 from the budget. So I hope they will be able to proceed ahead sooner rather than later."

According to a 2015 WUNC.org report, there are 230 Civil War monuments in North Carolina "outnumbering state monuments commemorating any other event."

Perhaps the tallest Confederate Monument in North Carolina is directly in front of the State Capitol Building in Raleigh, dedicated in May, 1895 and towering 75 feet facing Hillsborough Street. Costing \$22,000, the legislature appropriated \$20,000 towards the project.

One of the prominent figures to help dedicate that monument was Alfred M. Waddell – a former Confederate colonel, and one of the white supremacist leaders of the 1898 Wilmington race massacre.

In contrast, the number of African-American monuments North Carolina has statewide, according to docsouth.unc.edu – just 33.

The elimination of funding for the Freedom Monument only reinforced the bad taste Democrats and others already had for a bruising legislative session where the Republican majority, without apology, imposed their will on a Democratic governor they vowed to show little regard for.

"I'm troubled that Republican legislative leaders neglected to fund an African American heritage monument on State Capitol grounds," Gov. Cooper said in a statement. "This monument is long overdue, which is why I prioritized it in my budget proposal. This is just another example of legislative Republicans with the wrong priorities."

Noting that the GOP decision to scrub the funding for the Freedom Monument was "disappointing," Sen. Paul Lowe (D-Forsyth) opined, "The General Assembly should be leading the way in showing that North Carolina is committed to progress and celebrates the rich history of African-Americans."

"Instead, my Republican colleagues have once again decided to ignore the history of the people they serve. I hope that we are able to find common ground to fund a project that is long overdue," Sen. Lowe concluded.

Non-elected officials, however, did not spare the rod. Duke University Prof. of Public Policy Dr. William Darity, Jr. bluntly said, "We are living in a moment where we are getting a glimpse of what life would have been like under a Confederate States of America."

Picking up from Prof. Darity's clue of an Old South mentality at work in the legislature, civil rights attorney All McSurely, who is white, said, "The Berger-Moore secret white caucus recognizes its days are numbered. Their politics, based on abject denial of the effects of southern systems of racism and poverty... have cruelly punished black and white poor and working people across North Carolina and the South. They apparently have convinced themselves that the 30-35% base of "white" voters, if they can just curry their votes with racial code-words and policies, will keep them in power forever."

Finally, NCNAACP Pres. Rev. William Barber, outraged by the Republican-led legislature's overall policies towards the poor and communities of color, called GOP rule "...illegal and out of control."

"Whether it's the regressive budget or denying health care or voter suppression, this legislature is out of touch with democratic principles and our deepest moral values. With every action, they expose their love for failed policies of the past and their desire to take North Carolina backwards," Rev. Barber said.



India Arie seen at the 2017 Essence Festival at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome on Friday, June 30, in New Orleans. (Photo by Amy Harris/Invision/AP)

## Over half of hate crimes in US go unreported, report says

By Sadie Gurman and Russell Contreras

WASHINGTON (AP) - Most victims of hate crimes don't report them to police, according to a new study that advocates say reinforces their fears that the Trump administration's tough rhetoric and policies will make more people afraid to come forward.

More than half the 250,000 hate crimes that took place each year between 2004 and 2015 went unreported to law enforcement for a variety of reasons, according to a special report on the issue from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Hate crimes were most often not reported because they were handled some other way, the report said. But people also did not come forward because they didn't feel it was important or that police would help, according to the report.

"I think this report shows the kind of fear that is going on in our communities," said Patricia Montes, executive director of the Boston-based immigrant advocacy group Centro Presente. She and other advocates are concerned that Latino immigrants, in particular, may be reluctant to call police to report a hate crime for fear of being deported, particularly since the Trump administration is ramping up immigration enforcement across the country.

"Donald Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric also will prevent more immigrants from reporting crimes to police," Montes said.

The report comes as the Justice Department officials gathered with advocacy groups and experts on June 29 to discuss hate crimes, including ways to better document them. Officials have long lamented a lack of solid data on the problem.

But Attorney General Jeff Sessions told the group his department remains committed to investigating and prosecuting such offenses as part of his larger priority of helping cities fight violence.

"Hate crimes are violent crimes," Sessions told the group. "No person should have to fear being violently attacked because of who they are, what they believe or how they worship."

The report released June 29 is based on a survey of households and is one of several studies that aim to quantify hate crimes.

It cites racial bias as the top motivation, representing more than 48 percent of the cases between 2011 and 2015. Hate crimes motivated by ethnicity accounted for about 35 percent of those cases, and sexual orientation represented about 22 percent. Almost all of those surveyed said they felt they were experiencing a hate crime because of something the perpetrator said.

Hispanics were victimized at the highest rate, followed by blacks.

The new survey shows the limits of hate crime reporting, said Brian Levin, director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, California State University.

"Many victims don't report hate crimes because of personal and institutional reasons," Levin said. While some victims' distrust of police keeps them from coming forward, Levin said, some LGBT victims may opt not to report a hate crime for fear of losing a job or being outed to family.

Members of the Muslim community are reluctant to come forward for fear of retaliation and because police don't always classify their experiences as hate crimes, said Ibrahim Hooper, of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

That's because law enforcement officials still grappled with what constitutes a hate crime.

Levin said many large cities are claiming they had no hate crimes - calling into question the reliability of federal hate crimes data that are based on voluntary submissions from police departments. "We have Columbus, Ohio, reporting more hate crimes than the state of Florida," he said.

Eric Treene, the Justice Department's special counsel for religious discrimination, told a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing in May that incomplete numbers stymie officials' ability to fully understand the problem.

But he said the department is committed to prosecuting hate crimes, even as critics have blamed the Trump administration's tough rhetoric and policies for a spike in such offenses. Civil rights groups said investigating and prosecuting hate crimes alone would be insufficient.

The Trump administration must show "through action and its megaphone, its full and unflinching commitment to preventing hate-based violence and harassment that hurts our communities and destroys the fabric of our nation," said Vanita Gupta, former head of the Civil Rights Division and president of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

Contreras reported from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

North Carolina  
NAACP leader says  
he'll stay for rest of  
term.

RALEIGH (AP) - The leader of the NAACP in North Carolina says he will remain in the role until his term ends in October, rather than step down this month as planned.

The Rev. William Barber said June 24 he will remain president until his replacement is elected at the NAACP's convention. He announced plans last month to leave the post in June after 12 years at the helm to concentrate on a poor people's campaign organizing in states nationwide.

State NAACP leaders last week called on Barber to reconsider, saying he's needed as a "unifying voice" following U.S. Supreme Court's decisions that upheld lower-court rulings that Republicans illegally drew dozens of districts based on race after the 2010 Census.

Barber reiterates he will not seek another term as president, but he will stay his entire term "for the stability of the movement in these transitional moments."

Barber said the Supreme Court's decisions and the possibility of drawing new lines and a potential special election this year "were not in the landscape" when he made his initial announcement.

"We are living in serious times, and because I have heard a call from people who are committed to these serious times, I'm willing to do my part," he said.

Leaders of the new Poor People's Campaign said in a joint statement they support Barber's decision, saying what happens in North Carolina "will be vital to a moral revolution" across the country.

Barber had already planned to remain on the NAACP's national board of directors and remain as pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro.

Park bench  
remembers  
civil rights icon  
Julian Bond

WASHINGTON (AP) - A bench memorializing the life of civil rights icon Julian Bond has been placed outside a community center.

The Washington Post reports D.C. officials, former members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and friends and family gathered outside the Chevy Chase Community Center for a dedication ceremony June 26.

A plaque on the bench reads "In Memory of Julian Bond, 1940-2015, 'Race Man,' a Life Dedicated to Civil Rights."

Bond's widow, Pamela Horowitz, says Bond always talked about wanting a bench. She hopes people go there to reflect on how to make the world a better place.

The dedication comes after D.C. Transportation Director Leif A. Dornsjo said in an email in May that he had second thoughts on the bench.