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President Trump Continues to Deride African Nations Civil Rights Groups, U.S. Lawmakers Condemn Trump's "sh--hole countries" Remarks

By Freddie Allen (Editor-In-Chief, BlackPressUSA.com/ NNPA Newswire)

Trump made the comments during a meeting with Republican and Democratic congressmen about immigration reform and President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

— The New York Times reported: "When Mr. Trump heard that Haitians were among those who would benefit from the proposed deal, he asked whether they could be left out of the plan, asking, 'Why do we want people from Haiti here?'"

—Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Cedric Richmond said that the Diversity Visa Program "greatly benefits immigrants from African countries and provides an opportunity for them to achieve the American Dream."



PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP

Civil rights groups and lawmakers on Capitol Hill condemned "racially hostile comments that President Donald Trump made during a recent meeting about immigration reform with Democrats and Republicans at the White House.

The New York Times reported: "President Trump on Thursday talked at an immigration deal that would include protections for people from Haiti and some nations in Africa, demanding to know at a White House meeting why he should accept immigrants from 'sh--hole countries' rather than from places like Norway, according to people with direct knowledge of the conversation."

The U.S. congressmen that attended the meeting, according to The New York Times, included: Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.); Senator Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.); Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.); Senator David Perdue (R-Ga.); Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.); Representative Robert W. Goodlatte (R-Va.).

Trump's disparaging comments received quick condemnation in the civil rights community and across the political spectrum.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., the president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association tweeted: "It is a glaring contradiction that as the US is preparing to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr as a national holiday, President Trump utters racist statements against Africa and people of color."

In a statement about the President's comments posted to her Twitter account, Rep. Mia Love (R-Utah), the only Republican serving in the U.S. House of Representatives of Haitian descent, said that his "behavior is unacceptable from the leader of our nation."

Love continued: "My parents came from one of those countries but proudly took the oath of allegiance to the United States and took on the responsibilities of everything that being a citizen comes with. They never took a thing from our federal government. They worked hard, paid taxes, and rose from nothing to take care of and provide opportunities for their children. They taught their children to do the same. That's the American Dream."

Love added that Trump must apologize to "the American people and the nations he so wantonly maligned."

Rep. Cedric Richmond (D-La.), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said that President Trump's comments are yet another confirmation of his racially insensitive and ignorant views.

"It also reinforces the concerns that we hear every day, that the President's slogan Make America Great Again is really code for Make America White Again," said Richmond.

Richmond continued: "All of the reservations we have had about negotiating with him on immigration are well-founded. President Trump is clearly more concerned with ending the future flow of immigrants from Africa and the African diaspora than providing relief to Dreamers who came here through no fault of their own. Unfortunately, there is no reason to believe that we can negotiate in good faith with a person who holds such vile and reprehensible beliefs." (Continued On Page 2)



Some youth at Unity March celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. See MLK coverage next week.

GOP vows to fight ruling on North Carolina House districts

By Gary D. Robertson and Jonathan Drew

RALEIGH (AP) - A federal court's decision to strike down North Carolina's congressional map has cast uncertainty over the state's 2018 U.S. House races and thrust the state into a national debate over reducing the role of partisanship in drawing electoral districts.

The state's Republican leaders vowed to seek a delay to the court's order that they draw new districts in the coming weeks. Because partisan gerrymandering cases from other states are before the U.S. Supreme Court, the justices may postpone the effect of the North Carolina ruling.

Either way, Tuesday's (Jan. 9) court decision is expected to affect how the state picks members of Congress. New maps would send candidates scrambling and could create a more favorable environment for

Democrats, who hold only three of the state's 13 U.S. House seats. But even if the redrawing is postponed, a political scientist says resentment of "greedy" Republican maps could aid left-leaning candidates now armed with blunt language from federal judges.

"The General Assembly enacted the plan with the intent of discriminating against voters who favored non-Republican candidates ... and no legitimate state interest justifies the 2016 Plan's discriminatory partisan effect," U.S. Circuit Court Judge Jim Wynn wrote in the majority opinion.

North Carolina's Republican legislative leaders said they would quickly appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, seeking to delay its implementation.

"We obviously disagree with the ruling," House Speaker Tim Moore told reporters, "and will take it up to the highest court available."

By contrast, another federal court ruled Jan. 10 that Pennsylvania can keep its congressional map, rebuffing voters who argued it constituted partisan gerrymandering.

In the North Carolina case, all three judges agreed partisan motives behind the districting plan violated the Constitution's equal protection provision because it took the power to elect representatives away from the people. One judge dissented from the majority's conclusion that the map also violated the First Amendment rights of Democrats in each district.

The ruling was hailed by Democrats and voting rights activists including the Rev. Anthony Spearman, leader of the state NAACP, who called it "a mammoth decision."

The judges ordered the General Assembly to approve another set of districts by Jan. 24. Candidate filing for the November congressional elections begins Feb. 12, with primaries set for May. The judicial panel wrote it would hire a special master to draw lines simultaneously in case the legislators don't, or if the judges decide the legislature's next edition of the map doesn't meet constitutional muster.

Sen. Ralph Hise of

Mitchell County, the Senate's Redistricting Committee chairman, said it seemed impossible to draw new maps by the judges' deadline given all of the new restrictions placed on legislators by Tuesday's (Jan. 9) 200-page ruling.

The North Carolina plaintiffs are part of a chorus of voting rights activists nationwide asking the high court to declare for the first time that voters' constitutional rights can be violated by districting plans that entrench one party's control. A Supreme Court ruling could change the way that electoral districts are drawn around the country.

The justices heard arguments in the fall over partisan gerrymandering in Wisconsin state legislative districts and could rule in coming months. The high court also agreed to hear a Maryland case over partisanship in that state's congressional map.

Election law experts wouldn't be surprised if the high

court granted North Carolina Republicans a delay, partly because of difficulties fitting the case into its current term and fast-approaching electoral deadlines. Still, they said it's difficult to predict the justices' next step.

"In election cases often times when you're dealing with an impending deadline you try to keep the status quo," said Rebecca Green, a law professor who leads the election law program at William & Mary Law School. "Here, it's hard to tell what to do because if there's an unconstitutional map, allowing it to proceed is unfair. It does more damage."

Meanwhile, the ruling puts Republicans in a tight spot. It marks the second time this decade that the GOP's congressional boundaries in the state have been thrown out. In 2016, another federal panel tossed out two majority black congressional districts initially

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Official: School named for Ben Carson an affront to Detroit

DETROIT (AP) - The Detroit Board of Education has adopted a policy that would allow it to rename schools that are named after living people, and one member suggested the first change should go to a school named after former Republican presidential hopeful Ben Carson.

Under the new policy, the board can rename a school if the education community believes the existing name no longer represents the area's culture or population. Future structures can only be named after people who have died.

No action was taken to change any names at a recent meeting, but board member LeMar Lemmons told The Detroit News before the meeting that the board should consider renaming Dr. Benjamin Carson High School of Science and Medicine because it was chosen by Detroit's former emergency financial manager, Robert Bobb, not the elected board.

"From my perspective, everything the EFM did needs to be further revisited," Lemmons said.

Lemmons said he also takes issue with Carson's conservative politics.

"When you align yourself with Trump, that is a direct affront to the city of Detroit and the students of Detroit," he said.

Carson, a pediatric neurosurgeon who is now secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, was born in Detroit.

The school's website says "the school aims to honor the contributions Dr. Carson has made not only to the global medical community but also as a role model for Detroit students with aspirations and interests in science and medical fields."

The school was named after Carson in 2011, before he became HUD secretary.