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Chicago businessman and philanthropist Dr. Willie Wilson (at podium) gives remarks during a press conference about Rep. Danny Davis' "Bail Fairness Act of 2018" on Capitol Hill as Rep. Dwight Evans (D-Pa.) looks on. (Freddie Allen/AMG/NNPA)

2 of 3 men who helped desegregate university have now died

By Martha Waggoner

RALEIGH (AP) - Two of the three men who successfully challenged racial segregation as undergraduates at North Carolina's flagship university have now died in less than a month.

John Lewis Brandon, 80, died Tuesday at a hospital outside Houston of complications from cancer, his son Christopher Brandon said Wednesday.

On Dec. 29, LeRoy Frasier died at a New York City hospital. His brother Ralph Frasier lives in Jacksonville, Florida.

The three were students at Hillside High School in Durham when they applied to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1955. They were rejected until a federal court judge ordered their admission.

In the decades since, the school has taken steps to make amends by inviting them to speak and naming scholarships after them.

Brandon didn't talk much about his time at UNC-Chapel Hill, his son said. But Christopher Brandon said he could tell that his father appreciated a dinner the school held to honor him and the Frasier brothers, and he liked being back in North Carolina.

"He has a very strong love of home," Brandon said.

Four black students had been admitted to the law school when the Frasier and Brandon applied, but no black undergraduates had been accepted. After his brother's death, Ralph Frasier recalled how their legal challenge came about.

He said a group of white UNC-Chapel Hill students who opposed segregation approached the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs to find black students willing to fight it. The group then met with the principal of the all-black Hillside High School to find students whose families were strong enough to endure the pressures of such a fight. They chose Brandon and the Frasier brothers.

None of the three graduated from the school. Christopher Brandon said his father got a master's degree from the University of Texas-Clear Lake and worked at Dow Chemical. Both Frasier brothers graduated from what is now North Carolina Central University, a historically black school in Durham.

In addition to his son, Brandon's survivors include his wife, Margie Yarborough Brandon, and a daughter, Tracye Brandon.

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Racial comment: College men's tennis player suspended

BOONE (AP) - A white men's college tennis player has been suspended after a black opponent tweeted that his on-court rival told him "at least I know my dad" during their weekend match.

Appalachian State University in North Carolina issued a statement Monday saying Spencer Brown, who's white, was suspended indefinitely after Sunday's match with North Carolina A&T State University, a historically black college. Appalachian State apologized in its statement, calling the conduct "derogatory and offensive."

John Wilson, the black player who is also A&T's senior class president, said Brown made other offensive comments during Sunday's NCAA Division I match. The tweet included a photo of Brown.

A school spokeswoman says there'll be no additional comment. A recording heard on a call to Appalachian State's men's tennis coach said his number was disconnected.

Trump wants Jay-Z to know black jobless rate at record low

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Donald Trump is urging his followers to inform rapper Jay-Z that "because of my policies," unemployment among black Americans is at the "LOWEST RATE EVER RECORDED!"

The president's tweet Sunday appears to be in response to a CNN interview in which the rapper said the president's vulgar comments about African countries and Haiti were "disappointing" and "hurtful."

Jay-Z said on the debut episode of "The Van Jones Show" on Saturday that lower unemployment among blacks doesn't make up for the president's attitude. Jay-Z says, "It's not about money at the end of the day," and it "doesn't equate to happiness."

Asked about the president's tweet as he attended the Grammys Sunday night, Jay-Z's producer No I.D. says the back-and-forth is "a conversation that needs to occur."

North Carolina Democrats had cash advantage entering 2018

RALEIGH (AP) - North Carolina's two major political parties brought in lots of money during the second half of 2017, but Democrats had a large cash advantage entering this year's elections.

The state Republican Party's report at the state elections board said it raised \$2.1 million for the six months ending Dec. 31, compared to \$1.4 million the Democratic Party raised. But a strong first six months means Democrats had \$2.4 million in the bank starting January. The GOP had \$982,000.

Democrats have been energized thanks to new Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper and opposition to President Donald Trump. Cooper is raising money to help legislative candidates end the GOP's veto-proof majorities.

The GOP benefited from \$890,000 coming from the founder of a Durham private investment firm who's given millions to other Republican groups.

North Carolina bridge named for pioneering jurist

ELLERBE (AP) - A bridge in North Carolina has been named for a judicial pioneer.

Ceremonies were held on Jan. 23 renaming a bridge over Interstate 73/74 in Richmond County for Judge Henry E. Frye, who grew up in the county.

Frye was one of the first black lawyers in the South to serve as assistant U.S. attorney, and was later elected to the state legislature. He was named to the state Supreme Court in 1983 by then-Gov. Jim Hunt and served 17 years, as the court's first black associate justice. He was named chief justice in 1999 before he retired the next year.

The bridge was previously known as the Green Lake Road Bridge.

Rep. Danny Davis Introduces Bail Reform Bill

By Lauren Victoria Burke (NNPA Newswire Contributor)

During a recent press conference on Capitol Hill, Rep. Danny Davis (D-Ill.) said that at any given time there are roughly 500,000 people sitting in local jails waiting for their day in court.

"These are people who have been charged with a crime, but are not convicted," said Davis. "Many of the people waiting in jail are forced to wait simply, because they cannot afford to post bail."

On January 18, Davis introduced the [Bail Fairness Act of 2018](#) to alleviate some of the burdens associated with the cash bail system.

The Chicago congressman was joined on Capitol Hill by Reps. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) and Dwight Evans (D-Pa.) and Chicago businessman and philanthropist Dr. Willie Wilson. The four of them were flanked by two large posters; one poster read: "Taxpayers Spend \$17 billion on Pre-trial Detentions"; the other poster simply said, "Bail Fail" in large letters. Wilson said that he has paid the bails of non-violent Cook County Corrections inmates who were too poor to bail themselves out.

Davis' legislation would require states to release individuals charged with a non-violent misdemeanor on non-monetary conditions prior to their court date.

Civil rights groups and lawmakers are increasingly putting pressure on businesses operating in the cash bail system and becoming more vocal about problems in the industry.

As more cities begin to do away with the cash bail practice, some federal legislators are taking notice. Senators Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) and Cory Booker (D-N.J.) have voiced similar concerns regarding the problems of money bail in the Senate. In September 2017, Harris joined with Republican Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) on the Pretrial Integrity and Safety Act. The bill would overhaul America's bail system just as Rep. Davis' legislation hopes to do.

A May 2017 report by Color of Change and the ACLU entitled, ["Selling Off Our Freedom: How Insurance Corporations Have Taken Over Our Bail System"](#), outlined the for-profit incentives behind the bail system in America.

The report revealed that there are fewer than 10 companies involved in the administration of over \$14 billion in bonds posted by for-profit bail each year. The bail industry collects approximately \$2 billion in profit, annually.

"The result of bail corporations' control is that millions of people are no longer free: people stuck in jail and families stuck in debt to create profit for these corporations," the report read. The study also pointed out that, "the national median for bail for a felony arrest is now \$10,000, while the Federal Reserve has found that nearly half of Americans would be unable to pay for an unexpected expense of \$400."

The United States remains number one in the world in the rate of incarceration, with over two million people behind bars, in large part, because poor people are unable to pay their way out of incarceration. The money bail system disproportionately impacts the poor. There are currently over 43 million Americans living under the poverty line; nearly 30 percent of African Americans live in poverty.

"The original purpose of bail was to serve as an incentive to return to court when a person is arrested, released, and their case proceeds. However, the current money bail system has little to do with this original intent...people with money can almost always buy their way to freedom, regardless of the charges against them," wrote ACLU Deputy National Political Director Udi Ofer on December 11, 2017.

Rep. Davis has continued to focus on justice reform issues during his 20 years in Congress. Davis' "Second Chance Act" was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2007. The legislation assisted formerly incarcerated individuals to successfully re-enter society.

In November 2016, after his 15-year-old grandson was murdered in Chicago, Rep. Davis pushed for more funding for neighborhoods struggling with poverty. His focus was on the "10-20-30" policy proposed by South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn. The "10-20-30" plan would focus cash on 10 percent of all government funding to be allocated to areas where 20 percent of the residents have lived in poverty for over 30 years.

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Likely gubernatorial candidate Forest touts fundraising

By Gary D. Robertson

RALEIGH (AP) - The latest fundraising numbers released by likely 2020 North Carolina gubernatorial candidate Dan Forest could make fellow Republicans think twice before getting into the race with him.

The lieutenant governor's campaign committee said this week he had raised more than \$3 million during 2017 for the committee and two other political groups, including a "super PAC" that promoted Forest during this successful 2016 re-election bid.

That group, an independent expenditure committee called Truth and Prosperity, received only one donation last year, a \$1 million contribution in late December from a private investment firm executive, according to a report filed with the state elections board. Committees had until Jan. 26 to turn in reports for the six months ending Dec. 31.

An email to supporters announcing the 2017 figures had Forest taking credit for raising money for all three committees.

"We issued a public statement to be transparent with the general public,"