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## Republican Voter Fraud? Ballot worries cloud outcome of North Carolina Congress race

By Gary D. Robertson  
RALEIGH (AP) - Although a mere 900 votes separated two North Carolina congressional candidates, the trailing Democrat conceded the race weeks

ago. But as the Republican prepared to go to Capitol Hill, election investigators are worried something fishy went on with absentee ballots. Now, North Carolina

election officials have agreed to hold a public hearing into alleged "numerous irregularities" and "concerted fraudulent activities" involving traditional mail-in absentee ballots in the

9th Congressional District, apparently in two rural counties.

The state elections board voted 7-2 on Nov. 30 to hear evidence by Dec. 21 before deciding whether to certify the result. Republican Mark Harris leads Democrat Dan McCreeby by 905 votes from nearly 283,000 cast in eight south-central counties reaching from Charlotte to near Fayetteville.

The hearing will ensure "the election is determined without taint of fraud or corruption and without irregularities that may have changed the result of an election," board member Joshua Malcolm, a Democratic member, said in his motion.

If board members find enough problems that could have altered the outcome or cast doubts on the election's fairness, they could order a new election, which could not take place until after the new session of Congress convenes Jan. 3, creating a temporary vacancy.

Also on Nov. 30, The Associated Press retracted its call of a winner in the 9th District. The AP, which had called the race for Harris on Nov. 9, said it is treating the board's action as if the race has proceeded to a recount. AP does not call winners in any election that is subject to a recount.

Democrats already won enough House seats nationwide in November to take back the chamber. But a Democratic victory in the 9th District would flip a seat that has been held continuously by Republicans since 1963.

The board's public vote came after a three-hour closed door meeting, with two Republican members joining all Democrats and the lone unaffiliated member in voting to hold the hearing. The state Republican Party had vowed to go to court if the board didn't certify Harris' victory Nov. 30. The board finalized nearly all other Nov. 6 election results earlier this week.

McCreeby conceded the race the day after Election Day, when Harris led by less than 1,900 votes. McCreeby reaffirmed his decision a week later when more counted ballots cut the margin by half. But just ahead of Friday's (Nov. 30) hearing, McCreeby said it's critical to determine now whether wrongdoing occurred.

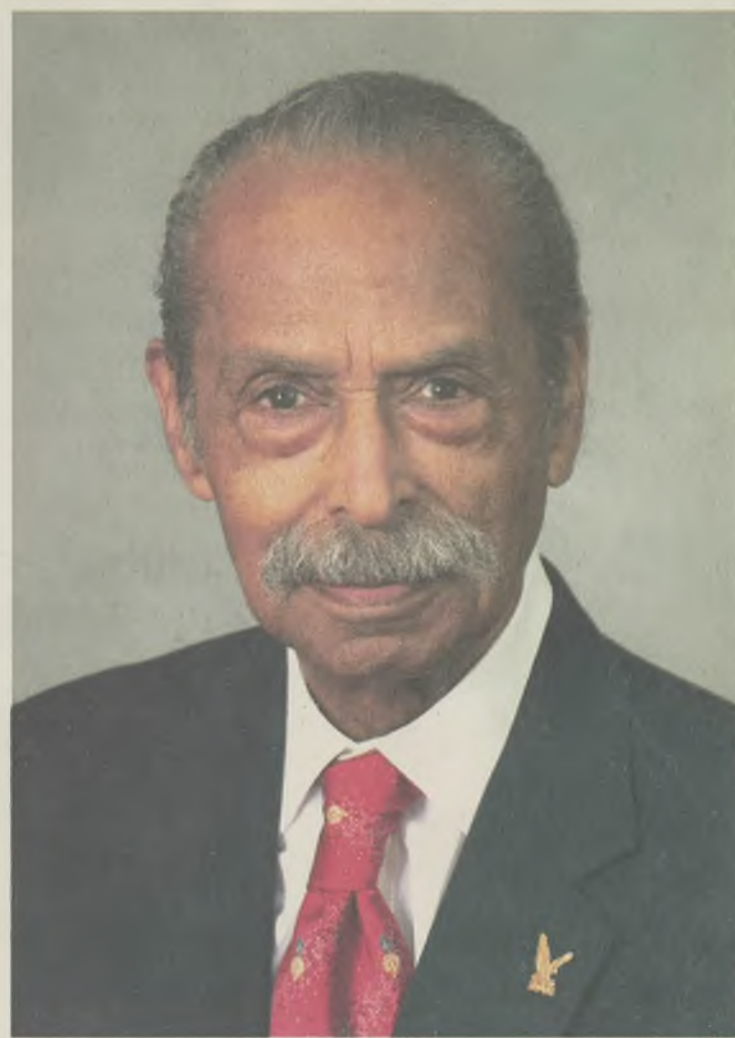
"We must do everything we can to protect the integrity of our ballots and the sanctity of our elections because our democracy depends on it," McCreeby said in a statement.

Board members have said little publicly about what they're examining. But the focus appears to be on Bladen County, located partially in the district, and adjoining Robeson County, which is entirely in the district. The board confirmed it seized some Bladen absentee ballot applications and ballot envelopes the day after the election.

In separate sworn affidavits released Nov. 29 by the state Democratic Party, two county residents said an unidentified woman came to their homes, telling each of them she was supposed to collect absentee ballots in the area. The residents said the woman took their ballots, which weren't sealed in their envelopes as required by law.

"Because of the way she presented herself, I thought she was legitimate," Emma Shipman, one of the residents, wrote in an

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REP. H.M. "MICKEY" MICHAUX JR.

### N.C. Rep. H.M. "Mickey" Michaux Jr. to Address NCCU Graduates at Fall Commencement Exercises

North Carolina House Rep. H.M. "Mickey" Michaux Jr. will deliver the keynote address for the 132nd Commencement Exercises at North Carolina Central University (NCCU) on Dec. 8. The ceremony will take place at 9 a.m. in McDougald-McLendon Arena.

The university will award approximately 680 graduates of the university's doctoral, master's, bachelor's and professional programs. The number of graduates makes this class among the largest for a December graduation ceremony at the university.

NCCU will recognize Timothy Adekoya as the sixth graduate of its Ph.D. program in Integrated Biosciences. After earning bachelor's and master's degrees in pharmacology at the University of Lagos in Nigeria, Adekoya relocated to the United States to pursue a Master of Science in biology at Middle Tennessee State University and his doctorate at NCCU. His dissertation is entitled "Effect of activator of G-protein signaling 3 (AGS3) on prostate tumorigenesis."

Michaux was first elected to serve in the N.C. House of Representatives from 1972 to 1977 and was re-elected in 1984, serving until his retirement at the end of the 2018 session. He was the longest serving member in the N.C. House of Representatives of the N.C. General Assembly.

Among his many notable achievements as a lawmaker were advocacy and support of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and protection of voting rights.

In 1977, he was named by former President Jimmy Carter as the first African-American to serve in that position in the South.

Born in Durham, N.C., Michaux attended NCCU (then North Carolina College), receiving his bachelor's degree in 1952 and a juris doctorate with honors in 1964. He completed further graduate work in business administration and economics at NCCU and in psychology and biochemistry at Rutgers University.

Michaux is a former member of the NCCU Board of Trustees, NCCU Foundation Inc. Board of Directors and served for three terms as the national president of the NCCU Alumni Association.

For more information on the 132nd Commencement Exercises, please visit [www.nccu.edu/commencement](http://www.nccu.edu/commencement).

### Navy ship named after Medal of Honor recipient in Boston

BOSTON (AP) - A U.S. Navy destroyer that will be named for a Navy pilot from Massachusetts who received the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Korean War arrived in Boston on Monday, Nov. 26, ahead of an official commissioning ceremony.

The future USS Thomas Hudner cruised past Castle Island before docking at the Flynn Cruise Port Terminal.

The commissioning ceremony is scheduled for Dec. 1 at the terminal.

The Navy's newest Arleigh Burke-class destroyer will be named in honor of Lt. j.g. Thomas Hudner, a Fall River native and longtime Concord resident who was awarded the Medal of Honor for crash-landing his plane to try and save the life of Ensign Jesse Brown during the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in December 1950.

Hudner and Brown - a Mississippi native and the Navy's first black combat pilot - were on patrol when Brown's Corsair was struck by ground fire from Chinese troops and crashed.

Brown was trapped in his burning plane and Hudner intentionally crash-landed in freezing temperatures and tried unsuccessfully to pull Brown free. Hudner was evacuated by a helicopter and Brown died in his plane.

Hudner died last November at age 93. The 9,200-ton (9,348-metric ton) destroyer was built by General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine. It is 510 feet long (155 meters) and has a beam of 66 feet (20 meters).

It is commanded by Missouri native Cmdr. Nathan Scherry and has a crew of 310 sailors.



HP BUSINESS COMPETITION - From left to right are: Hollan Strepay, Zakiya Smith, and Danzel Whitted,

### NCCU Students Capture Second-Place Title At HP HBCU Business Competition

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) School of Business students took second place in the Hewlett-Packard (HP) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Business Challenge designed to inspire and encourage future business leaders.

HP partners with the National HBCU Business Deans Roundtable for the annual contest that asks students from 22 colleges and universities to devise a product concept to solve a specified business issue facing the international technology company. This year's problem involved a vertical workflow challenge.

The NCCU team that won second place in this year's contest was made up of Zakiya Smith, a senior marketing and entrepreneurship major; Hollan Strepay, a sophomore business management major; and Danzel Whitted, a senior computer science and business major. The students will travel to HP headquarters in Boise, Idaho, and Palo Alto, Calif., in 2019 to present their ideas to senior executives and also participate in live interviews for HP internships during their visit.

"We are so thankful to organizations, like HP, who demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion through opportunities like this to engage students with senior level executives and presenting case studies that broaden their scope and capabilities," said Anthony Nelson, Ph.D., Dean of NCCU School of Business. "We are very proud of our team and their hard work during the competition."

For its entry, the NCCU team chose to research the healthcare industry and develop a method to strengthen patient and nurse interactions. Their proposal, called HP Vitalwatch, would allow patients to have access to vital records in any setting. The proposal would significantly assist nurses in capturing data and ensure continuous access to information needed to track patient health.

"Participating in the HP Business Challenge was a wonderful learning experience," Strepay said. "The ability to work so closely with HP executives will empower me to become more well versed on business practices and product innovation."

### 1 child dead, 45 people hurt in Arkansas charter bus crash

By Jill Bleed

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) - One child was killed and at least 45 people were injured when a charter bus carrying youth football players from Tennessee rolled off an interstate and overturned before sunrise Dec. 3 in central Arkansas, authorities said.

Arkansas State Police said the bus crashed along Interstate 30 near Benton, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) southwest of Little Rock, while traveling to Memphis, Tennessee. Police said most of the injured were children who were taken to hospitals in Little Rock and Benton.

The elementary-school age players from Orange Mound Youth Association in southeast Memphis had played in a tournament in the Dallas area over the weekend, according to Memphis TV station WMC. Orange Mound is a historically black neighborhood that unites around its youth football teams, where kids train to be part of the highly competitive Melrose High School squad.

Damous Hailey was one of about a half-dozen adults on the bus. He told The Commercial Appeal newspaper that he was sitting directly behind the driver when the bus swerved then flipped "about 15 or 20 times," before stopping at the foot of a hill.

"When the bus started flipping, the kids were hollering, and we were trying to calm them down," he said in an interview from Saline Memorial Hospital, where he was taken to be treated for injuries to his right side and leg. "I was holding on, trying to make sure I didn't get thrown out."

Hailey said the bus was carrying players from about 10 Orange Mound Youth Association football teams who played in all-star squads that competed in Texas.

Sports teams and coaches believed affiliated with the organization have not returned phone calls and emails from The Associated Press Monday morning.

No information has been released about the severity of the injuries, and authorities haven't talked about what caused the crash that happened under the cloak of darkness. Live video from the scene showed the heavily damaged bus on its side on an embankment near some dense woodland, just at the crook of a sharp bend in the road. The bus was hoisted upright and pulled from the scene late Monday morning.

Police said the bus driver was being questioned by troopers. It is unclear if seat belts were provided for the bus passengers. Lawmakers in Tennessee tried but failed to introduce regulations in 2017 requiring seat belts in new school buses. The bus in Monday's crash was a charter bus.

Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock said it received 24 patients following the morning crash. The hospital said all the patients were in stable condition, though no additional information about the injuries has been released. The hospital said it has set up a family center so parents can reunite with their children. No information about the status of injured passengers being treated at hospitals elsewhere has been released.