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## Kamala Harris says AG William Barr representing president, not US

By Errin Haines Whack

DETROIT (AP) - Capping a week in which her testy exchange with Attorney General William Barr went viral, Sen. Kamala Harris on May 6 told a crowd of thousands gathered at a dinner hosted by the country's oldest NAACP chapter that Barr "lied to Congress" and "is clearly more interested in representing the president than the American people."

The Democratic presidential candidate was the keynote speaker May 6 at the Detroit NAACP Fight for Freedom Fund dinner, attended by a mostly black audience of nearly 10,000.

As of May 6, 4.8 million people had watched the C-SPAN video circulating on Twitter of Harris questioning Barr, catapulting her into the spotlight amid the crowded field of more than 20 Democrats and hammering a campaign theme that she is the candidate to "prosecute the case against Trump."

During her remarks, Harris also said her approach to the 2020 race is about challenging notions of electability and who can speak to Midwesterners.

"They usually put the Midwest in a simplistic box and a narrow narrative," Harris said. "The conversation too often suggests certain voters will only vote for certain candidates regardless of whether their ideas will lift up all of our families. It's short sighted. It's wrong. And voters deserve better."

Harris's appearance in Detroit highlights an underappreciated variable in Democrats' 2016 losses across the Great Lakes region: declining support from black voters.

Michigan gave President Donald Trump his closest winning margin of any state, with the Republican finishing 10,704 votes ahead of Hillary Clinton. Much of the narrative focused on Clinton losing ground from Barack Obama's 2012 marks in many small-town and rural counties dominated by middle-class whites.

Biden has been leading the polls, with a majority saying he has the best chance to defeat Trump. A Quinnipiac poll from last week showed Biden leading among Democratic candidates with 38 percent, while Harris was fourth with eight percent.

Yet it was heavily African American Wayne County, home to Detroit, where Clinton saw her single largest and most consequential dropoff. She got 78,004 fewer votes in the county - the anchor of Democrats' statewide coalition - than Obama received in 2012, meaning that her Wayne County deficit from Obama was more than seven times the statewide gap separating her from Trump and Michigan's 16 electoral votes.

Harris told the largely African-American audience that as president, she plans to double the Justice Department's civil rights division, hold accountable social media platforms disseminating misinformation and cyberwarfare and address economic inequality for families and teachers.

Called "the largest sit-down dinner in the country," boasting 10,000 attendees, this year's dinner comes amid an already busy primary season, as Democrats are eyeing the battleground state of Michigan. Fellow 2020 Democratic contender Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey was last year's keynote.

The Detroit NAACP chapter is the civil rights organization's largest, and the city will host their national convention in July, where most 2020 Democrats are expected to appear. The Rev. Wendell Anthony, Detroit chapter president, said May 6 that "our very lives, our freedom" are riding on the 2020 election.

"This is about the soul of America," Anthony said. "There's some people that want to take us back 50 years. We ain't going. They win when we don't show up."

Anthony said that while Harris' appearance was not an endorsement, the energy at the dinner was "a signal to the nation that we are concerned about what's happening in the country" and warned that "the stakes are too great for anybody to sit this out."

Associated Press writer Bill Barrow contributed to this report from Atlanta



Miss North Carolina Cheslie Kryst, left, gets crowned by last year's winner Sarah Rose Summers, right, after winning the 2019 Miss USA final competition in the Grand Theatre in the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nev., on Thursday, May 2, 2019. Kryst, a 27-year-old lawyer from North Carolina who represents some prison inmates for free, won the 2019 Miss USA title Thursday night in a diverse field that included teachers, nurses and members of the military. (Jason Bean/The Reno Gazette-Journal via AP)

## NAACP wants NC Supreme Court to hear amendments case

RALEIGH (AP) - A civil rights organization wants North Carolina's highest court to step in and settle a legal fight over whether two constitutional amendments approved by voters last year should have been voided by a lower court.

Lawyers for the state NAACP filed a petition on May 1 asking the state Supreme Court to take up their lawsuit now, instead of letting another appeals court weigh in first.

The state Court of Appeals already has set aside temporarily the February ruling by Wake Superior Court Judge Bryan Collins, who threw out amendments that voters approved in November mandating photo voter identification and lower caps on income tax rates.

Collins agreed with NAACP leaders who argued the 2018 legislature had been "illegally constituted" through gerrymandered districts and lacked the power to propose the amendments.

## North Carolina lawyer Cheslie Kryst named Miss USA 2019

By Scott Sonner

RENO, Nev. (AP) - A 27-year-old lawyer from North Carolina who represents prison inmates for free won the Miss USA title Thursday night, May 2, describing herself as a "weird kid" with a "unibrow" who's now part of the first generation of truly empowered women.

Asked in the final round to use one word to summarize her generation, Cheslie Kryst of Charlotte said "innovative."

"I'm standing here in Nevada, in the state that has the first female majority legislature in the entire country," she said at the event held for the first time in Reno. "Mine is the first generation to have that forward-looking mindset that has

inclusivity, diversity, strength and empowered women. I'm looking forward to continued progress in my generation."

New Mexico's Alejandra Gonzalez, the first runner-up, and Oklahoma's Triana Browne, the second runner-up, helped highlight the diversity of the competition on stage as the three finalists along with Kryst, who is African American.

Browne said she's a proud member of the Chickasaw Nation whose father is white and mother is African American. She's in a partnership with Nike to promote a brand that celebrates Native American heritage. Gonzalez, whose mother immigrated to the United States from Mexico, founded a non

profit that teaches children the importance of being literate.

Nevada's Tianna Tuamohe- loa, who made it to the final five, was the first woman of Samoan descent to compete in the event that dates to 1952. Savannah Skidmore, a former state basketball champion from Arkansas who has a second-degree black belt in Taekwondo and is pursuing a law degree, also made the final five.

Kryst and Gonzalez faced each other holding hands during the moments before the winner was announced, then embraced with the news.

Kryst said she didn't feel nervous as she advanced through the elimination rounds.

"I just kept hearing my name

get called," she said. As she waited for the winner to be announced, "All I could think was, 'This is really cool.'"

Kryst earned a law degree and an MBA at Wake Forest University before becoming a civil litigation attorney who does pro bono work to reduce sentences for inmates. In a videotaped message played during the two-hour event at a hotel-casino, she told a story of when a judge at a legal competition told her to wear a skirt instead of pants because judges prefer skirts.

"Glass ceilings can be broken wearing either a skirt or pants," Kryst said.

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