

League opposes Bush Clean Skies Initiative

BY ELIZABETH DOUGHERTY
STAFF WRITER

A collection of environmentalists, legislators and businessmen fear North Carolina's progress in reducing air pollution will be undermined by President Bush's Clear Skies Initiative.

Appalachian Voices Business League, a pro-environment business group, led a press conference Tuesday at the N.C. General Assembly to voice their concerns.

Bush submitted the act to Congress in July 2002. The Clear Skies Initiative takes a market-based approach to reducing pollution, setting a nationwide cap on particular emissions and allowing industries to trade emission rights.

Opponents said the federal legislation will be more lenient than the N.C. Clean Smokestacks Act, which passed the state legislature in 2002 with an overwhelming bipartisan majority in both chambers.

The law mandated power plants decrease smog- and haze-forming emissions by 75 percent by 2012.

Sen. Martin Nesbitt, D-Buncombe, said the law was a logical step in protecting the health of North Carolinians. "It's not something you have to do — it's something you should do," he said.

N.C. officials said the Clear Skies Initiative could weaken pollution standards in "upwind" states such as Tennessee and Virginia, whose emissions have a large impact on North Carolina's environment.

"We can't help ourselves," Nesbitt said. "The good Lord determines which way the wind blows."

In a March 2004 press release, Gov. Mike Easley said the strict laws

North Carolina has put in place are weakened by polluted air drifting from other states. He demanded a federally enforced change.

"The time has come for (the Environmental Protection Agency) to level the playing field and make other states take responsibility for their contributions to this problem," Easley said.

State Attorney General Roy Cooper lodged a formal protest with the EPA in March 2003, calling on the agency to take action against polluters in 13 states.

Appalachian Voices contends that the Clear Skies Act would prevent the state from filing such complaints.

Appalachian Voices is working this week to gather support from N.C. lawmakers to express concern to North Carolina's U.S. senators, Elizabeth Dole and Richard Burr.

They had collected more than 50 legislators' signatures by Tuesday for a letter calling on Burr and Dole to oppose the Clear Skies Act.

Doug Heye, a spokesman for Burr, said the senator is "generally supportive" of the federal legislation but has reservations about undermining the positive steps taken by the Clean Smokestacks Act.

The fate of the Clear Skies Initiative will be determined by the Senate Committee of Environment and Public Works.

Will Hart, committee majority spokesman, said negotiations between committee members were ongoing Wednesday. A hearing is scheduled for today.

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

CHANGE

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of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Gender identity is an individual's internal sense of being a man or a woman, according to a glossary published by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. This term is often used in reference to transgender individuals.

GLAAD describes gender expression as the external expression of a person's gender identity, typically through behaviors described as stereotypically male or female.

Looking back on a 92-page climate report on LGBTQ issues that he received in 2002, Provost Robert Shelton said he thinks the administration needs to revisit its findings.

"We need to redouble our efforts," Shelton said. "This isn't something you do once and it's over."

Some students said the administration needs to improve upon changes made in response to suggestions from the original report — especially the sexuality studies minor.

The new minor opened to students in fall 2004, but members of GLBTSA said the program is underfunded and understaffed.

GLBTSA Treasurer Zach Howell noted that it is not yet listed on the registrar's Web site.

"It's the hidden minor at UNC," Howell said. "Why, after a year of having this minor on campus, has

no administrator thought to list it on the registrar?"

GLBTSA co-chairman Alex Ferrando said a boost in funding for the sexuality studies curriculum would increase the number of classes that could be taught. More students then could take the classes to fulfill perspectives and come out with a new understanding of sexuality.

Howell said it is important for students to take a fresh look at the way society treats the LGBTQ community.

"Things like saying 'That's so gay' create a negative atmosphere," he said. "Those are the seedlings of hate in a heterosexual society."

On campus, students can undergo Safe Zone training, a 4-hour ally development program that teaches people how to foster a safe environment for LGBTQ individuals.

"One thing everyone can do is get more involved in the LGBTQ movement," Caldwell said. "It's not just for the LGBTQ community. It's for everyone."

GLBTSA members said more students — especially leaders of organizations and RAs — need to go through such training.

"In some ways the allies are a key ingredient to changing the climate at UNC," Caldwell said. "When allies say things to their friends like 'Hey, that's not cool,' it's really helpful."

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CRIME

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rassed now at this point that they're going to be looked down upon for saying something now."

Stockwell maintains that six or seven men in their 20s attacked him just after 2 a.m. Friday. He said he was walking from Cosmic Cantina to meet a friend at La Residence when he was confronted by several men who yelled at him. "They pushed me, and they were pretty scary, so I took off running," he said.

But the men caught him just outside of Top of the Hill, near the corner of Franklin and Columbia Streets.

Stockwell said one man punched him, prompting him to punch back. But the attacker's accomplices soon joined the fray, overcoming

Stockwell by sheer number.

He was on his cell phone at the time of the attack, he said, and after he dropped his phone, a woman picked it up and told the person on the line to come pick him up.

Stockwell, who returned to the site of the crime for a candlelight service Tuesday night, said he is pleased to see the community rally against violence.

"(People have gained) awareness that this still goes on in this area," he said. "When people go home, they can take that knowledge with them and that acceptance with them."

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact Chapel Hill Police at 968-2760.

City Editor Ryan Tuck contributed to this article. Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

DIVERSITY

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Faculty responses somewhat reflected those of students, with 11.7 percent reporting that they don't know if the University adequately addresses racism and 14.9 percent saying the same thing about homophobia.

But the survey showed that faculty and students have different perceptions of classroom comfort when discussing issues of diversity.

The majority of students, 62.9 percent, said they feel supported by professors, instructors and teaching assistants when expressing views in class. But only 48.3 percent of faculty answered that students in their classes seem comfortable when discussing diversity issues.

The assessment, which began in February, was guided by five core values developed by the task force in December: vision and commitment to diversity, the presence of diversity, educational benefits of diversity, responsible interactions and a supportive climate. The survey used questionnaires, focus groups and student interviews.

During the task force meeting officials also presented a pre-

liminary report from a survey that assesses how well individual departments and schools address diversity.

"It's intended to tell us to some degree what people say they are doing to promote diversity," Ervin said.

He noted that 75 percent of those schools and units questioned said they have adopted a published mission statement on diversity.

Three units surveyed have yet to submit reports.

Task force members have until their next meeting, on March 30, to comb through the results. Three subcommittees of the task force will present their interpretations at the March meeting.

He said the group hopes to deliver a report on the state of diversity at UNC to Chancellor James Moeser by April 29.

"We have to look at this more systematically and in depth," Ervin said. "I think what's exciting is to have some basis for understanding a little more about the campus community and what people think, feel and perceive."

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CHICKENMAN

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a toy remote-controlled car.

So Andrews went to Toys "R" Us in search of knickknacks.

"I put the chicken in the shopping cart," he said. "Talk about the Red Sea parting."

At the cash register, Andrews said, he placed a credit card between the toes of the chicken and let the chicken swipe the card to purchase the toy truck. "The whole place went ballistic."

He then went to a landfill and found a high chair and a basketball to use in teaching the tricks.

"They'll eat out of my mouth or give me a kiss," Andrews said, sticking a piece of bread into his mouth and holding a chicken. The chicken took a bite and landed a thank-you kiss on his lips.

"A chicken could bite your lip or mouth," he said, adding that it has happened before.

Andrews and his chickens have appeared in the N.C. Reptile and Exotic Animal Show and also were featured on the Animal Planet channel and in "Ripley's Believe It or Not."

He recently auditioned for the "Late Show with David Letterman" in New York, where he juggled two chickens in the air.

But Andrews said he isn't looking for fame. "It came out of me wanting to help other people," he said. "It came out of me wanting to encourage people."

The chickens also have been featured in parades, including one in which a chicken rode down Franklin Street on a Clydesdale horse.

"It's a family business," Andrews said, mentioning that his wife and 13-year-old daughter help out.

When Andrews married Ginger "the Chickenwoman" in 2001, he said the chickens had as much of a

role in the wedding as he did.

"The first thing down the aisle was a chicken on a remote-control truck," he said.

Andrews and his wife use the chickens in church mission work.

"We feel like there is a big void for people who don't have good quality Christian comedy," Andrews said. "You don't have to worry about us saying foul language. No pun intended."

Keeping with the religious mission, most of Andrews' chickens are named after people from the Bible.

"We call him Joseph because he has a coat of many colors," Andrews said, pointing to a rooster with multicolored feathers.

The chickens look to Andrews as a mother figure. When he shouts, "everybody," the chickens come running to their cage doors — a sign that it's time to go play.

"They sense trust," he said. "They sense a bond that we have."

But the Chickenman and his flock must find a new coop before April.

A nearby neighborhood is expanding, and the owner of his property said he has to move.

Andrews said he is having trouble finding a place that will allow 30 to 40 chickens on the property.

He is looking to work full time with the chicken shows but said he needs funds to operate.

Regardless of setbacks, the chickens will continue to fly. They already have shows booked at a chicken festival and a NASCAR event.

"After you do a program and see a smile on kids' faces, you don't care what you had to go through," Andrews said. "That's it in an eggshell."

And the chickens won't have to worry about landing in Andrews' frying pan — he's a vegetarian.

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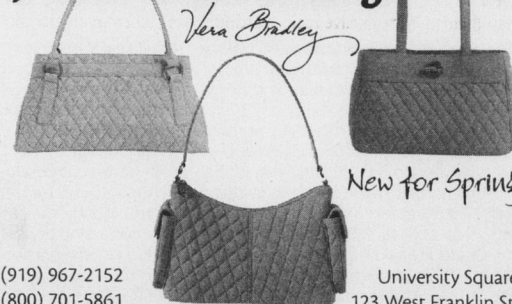


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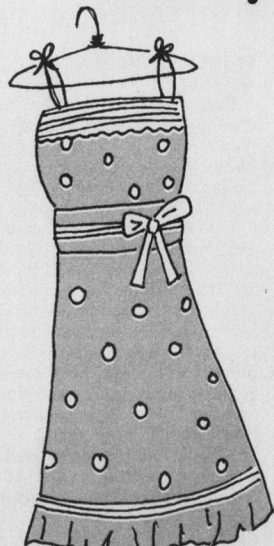
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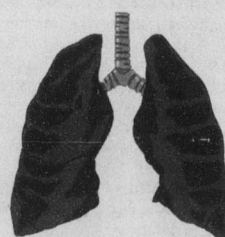
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