



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE
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Emergency Call to Action!

DATE: May 10, 2011
TO: NAACP units, HKonJ Partners
FROM: Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, President of the NC State Conference and Convener of HKonJ

FRONTAL ATTACK ON CIVIL RIGHTS, ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND EDUCATION!

WE MUST FIGHT BACK!!

***NC NAACP OPPOSES EXTREME RIGHT PUBLIC POLICY AND BILLS THAT WILL
RESULT IN RACE/CLASS BASED DISCRIMINATION***



THE ISSUES

Extremists have taken over the General Assembly. Their policies and legislation give a whole new meaning to 'trickle down economics' and turning back the clock. They believe in 'holding down the poor' economics, undermining civil rights and rooting their decisions in the politics of yesterday rather than going forward and working towards a more just society. African Americans, minorities, the unrepresented, the disenfranchised, the poor and the working people of North Carolina need to know: The people running the State Legislature in Raleigh are not working for the common good.

The new extreme ultra-conservative, radical right, Tea Party leadership is attempting to move North Carolina backwards by attacking economics, education and equal protection laws. On May 4, 2011, the House shamefully approved their harmful budget containing a series of debilitating cuts to education, health care and other vital services despite our protests.

In addition to the budget, many bills that are harmful to African-Americans and the poor are being debated.

- **They are attempting to take public money and give vouchers for private schools and lift the cap on charter schools.** This will undermine civil rights gains, entrench racial discrimination and re-foster segregation in public education.

****IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION – READ TO THE END****

- **They are slashing funding to community colleges and the UNC System.** This will damage the opportunity for higher education for all North Carolinians. These cuts will be devastating to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) since they have been historically neglected and inadequately funded.
- **They are cutting funding to NC Office of Minority Health and the Health Disparities Initiative.** They are abolishing direct funding for unique minority health initiatives.
- **They are working hard to get bills passed requiring Voter ID.** They are trying to eliminate same day registration and proposing limits on early voting periods. If successful these actions will result in undermining our voting rights and cause mass disenfranchisement of African-Americans, minority and low-income citizens.
- **They are attempting to repeal the Racial Justice Act** and change the discovery laws which will remove necessary racial bias protections from our justice system.
- **They are severely cutting funding to Indigent Defense Services Commission (IDS)** which has already resulted in the resignation of attorneys from court appointed lists across the state. Bearing the brunt of these losses will be minorities, poor people and juveniles who are unable to afford competent legal counsel.
- **They are proposing changes to the Workers Compensation laws** that will limit compensation to individuals who suffer long-term physical injuries. This will severely impact those without insurance coverage.
- **They have refused to approve the extension of unemployment benefits to 37,000 individuals.** These benefits are funded by entirely by federal dollars and would not cost the state anything.

These efforts are being funded by big money. Last year, big money special interests spent over \$2.6 million to influence state legislative races — including \$2.2 million donated by ultra-conservative organizations connected to North Carolina’s single largest campaign donor: retail millionaire Art Pope and his conservative think tank, The Civitas Institute (www.nccivitas.org). We’ve already seen the influence of this money in bills introduced to severely restrict basic voting rights, give corporations advantages that hurt consumers, and destroy environmental protection efforts — all key elements of a well funded, far right agenda. You can read more about the far reaching impact of Art Pope’s money and influence by following this link (<http://www.indyweek.com/indyweek/absolute-power-an-examination-of-art-popes-dominance/Content?oid=2140073>). Now, under the influence of big money, the NC House has adopted a budget that puts big money interests ahead of the people. This budget does nothing to address big donor tax breaks and other special provisions that rob our state of more than \$1 billion a year in revenues.

The NC NAACP supports a holistic approach to reducing our state deficit and creating a healthy state budget: one that includes responsible decisions to raise new revenue by broadening a graduated tax base; strategically assessing cuts to our largest expenditures, making our tax system fairer and closing tax loopholes. We support budget proposals which reflect this approach, and will work to advocate for proposals which reflect the priorities and values of our Association.

Did You Know?

It has been...

- 143 years since North Carolina guaranteed a public education to its citizens
- 57 years since the Brown v. Board of Education decision
- 46 years since the passage of the Voting Rights Act

Impacts of the House Budget:

IN EDUCATION...

- 18,000 jobs in K-12 are estimated to be lost (NCAE)
- 15.5% cut to The University of North Carolina System (est. 3,200 jobs, 240,000 class seats lost)
- 1.25 billion dollars in cuts overall
- 347 million dollars in discretionary cuts from school systems (approx. 7,000 teachers)
- 30 million dollars cut from More at Four

IN ECONOMIC JUSTICE...

- 67 Republicans and 5 Democrats in the House voted for the House Budget. All the members of the Legislative Black Caucus voted against this regressive budget.
- 25% cut to Minority Economic Development
- 25% cut to the NC Association of Community Development Corporations

IN HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES...

- 336 million dollar cut to Medicaid
- 67 million dollars cut from mental health services
- 38 million dollars cut from to Smart Start

IN JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY...

- Severe cuts to funding for the Indigents Defense Services Commission, reducing availability of competent legal counsel for the poor
- 4 million dollar cut to District Attorney support staff

IN TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT...

- 3.8 million dollars cut from transit
- Federal rail money blocked
- 25% overall budget cut to Natural and Economic Resources

IN EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW...

- 1 million people could be adversely impacted under the Voter ID law (Democracy NC)
- Zero is the total number of people that Voter ID supporters can prove voted illegally in the examples cited as support for the legislation (Bob Hall, Democracy North Carolina)

The Action We Need You to Take:

Contact your State Senator and Representative and let them know you join the NC NAACP and its partners in standing against these extreme policy and budget initiatives that will entrench racial and class discrimination. Also contact the Senate and House Leaders, Senator Phil Berger and Speaker Thom Tillis.

To contact Senators or Representatives, you may:

Make a Phone Call

Call your Senator and your Representative in Raleigh by calling the NC General Assembly switchboard and asking to be transferred to your Senator and Representative's offices or go to www.ncga.state.nc.us and click on "Who Represents Me?" Follow the directions to identify your Legislators and their contact information. If you call the switchboard you will need to know who represents you prior to calling. The switchboard number is (919)733-7928 (see message section below for talking points).

Send an Email

To send an email to your Senator or Representative, simply go to www.ncga.state.nc.us and click "Who Represents Me?" Follow the directions to identify your Legislators and their contact information. A sample letter is attached.

Send a Fax

If you would like to send a fax, call your Senator or Representative's offices (direct number or through the switchboard) and ask for their fax numbers (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box below).

REMEMBER TO CONTACT BOTH YOUR SENATOR AND REPRESENTATIVE!

(A SAMPLE LETTER IS ATTACHED)

THE MESSAGE:

- **A state's budget reflects its priorities.** It is a moral document. It must be a just document. It must promote the common good. It should represent our willingness and ability to promote racial justice, care for the sick and elderly, educate the young, protect our environment, respond to natural emergencies, and house and protect those less fortunate. The House Budget is discriminatory, reckless, mean spirited, dangerous and short sighted.
- **Do not support bills that will send North Carolina backwards rather than forwards.** Oppose requiring photo ID for voting, ending same day registration, early voting, school vouchers for private schools, lifting the cap on charter schools, repealing the Racial Justice Act, capping worker compensation awards and reforming the earned income tax credit.
- **We need to support a budget and bills which take a holistic approach to our state's finances** and protects poor North Carolinians while maintaining the protection of basic civil rights and ensuring that the basic human needs of the most vulnerable among us are met.

ADDITIONAL WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF THE NC NAACP:

- Text NAACP to 46988 for sign up for NAACP/HKonJ Movement alerts
- Join the NAACP. To join, go to <http://action.naacp.org/pages/join>.
- Contact Governor Bev Perdue at (800) 662-7952 or (919) 733-2391 and tell her to veto regressive bills and the shameful budget.
- Plan to join us in Raleigh on May 24th for an **Emergency Day of Action** – more information to follow soon

HKonJ Emergency Call to Action

May 24, 2011

4:00 p.m.

16 West Jones Street, Raleigh, NC

Join us for a PEOPLE'S HEARING AND SPEAK-OUT at the General Assembly.

More information coming soon.

(SAMPLE LETTER)

(date)

The Honorable _____
300 N. Salisbury Street or 16 W. Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925 Raleigh, NC 27601-1096
(the appropriate address for your representative can be found at www.ncga.state.nc.us)

RE: URGING YOU TO SUPPORT A RESPONSIBLE STATE BUDGET AND BILLS THAT ARE FAIR TO ALL CITIZENS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Dear Senator / Representative _____:

As your constituent, I am urging you, in the strongest terms possible, to work towards and support a state budget and bills that are responsible and ensure the protections of basic civil and human rights for all North Carolinians and guarantees we will go forward and not backwards as a state. We cannot have discriminatory, reckless, mean-spirited and short sighted public policy that hurts the most vulnerable among us.

I urge you to oppose the many bills that are coming up for votes which are oppressive to poor North Carolinians, undermine civil rights and promote the politics of yesterday rather than going forward and working towards a more just society. These offensive bills include school vouchers for private schools (HB 41), removing the cap on charter schools (SB 8), photo ID needed for voting (SB 352/HB 351), eliminating the earned income tax credit (SB 117), repealing the Racial Justice Act (HB 615), reducing worker compensation benefits (SB 544/HB 709) and no secondary education for illegal aliens (HB 11).

I urge you to reject the House Budget, call on the Senate to reject it and if necessary, call on the Governor to veto it. Specific points of the budget which I oppose include:

- Education cuts of \$1.25 billion overall including the loss of 21,000 K-12 employees
- Millions of dollars and hundreds of employees cut from mental health services
- 1000 jobs cut from Justice and Public Safety incl. domestic violence services & IDS funding
- Minority Economic Development funding cut by 25%

Rather than supporting these bad policies, I urge you instead to support legislation that will promote education, equality, economic justice and equal protection under the law for all North Carolinians.

This is a moment in history where we must choose whether we will go backwards as a state or continue to push our way forwards. I am determined to fight for justice and ensure that we go forward. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

(sign and print your name and be sure to include your address)