**Morning Press Clips: Wednesday, April 13, 2016**

**TV COVERAGE**

[WXII - 12:03pm - Prayer vigils held over HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=7290f867-1d31-4479-b879-1f751fa9a51d)

[WNCT - 12:04pm - Gov. McCrory releases healthcare budget](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=26b74913-2521-41c9-b8aa-78704db597ea)

[WCNC - 12:04pm - Protests over tax hikes/Deutsche bank pulls out](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c2b7c9be-79cc-4536-93d3-3e931923cb2d)

[WTKR - 4:00pm - Gov. McCrory revises previsions in HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=f89ea445-a84e-49ae-8878-dbc397dadd00)

[WAVY - 4:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues executive order](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=64a87c68-ea6e-42af-bbe7-33b2dd6c1441)

[WMBF - 4:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues executive order in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=a45840cb-23d5-4f3f-b1a8-fd35d080dbae)

[News 14 - 4:02pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=1614133e-1bdf-4d67-83b7-0c01f1b2ec33)

[WECT - 4:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=031a218b-9cff-4ac1-857d-80c1e7d685a0)

[WVEC - 4:13pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=0ba5aeda-0344-4af0-9f54-f8bb4640b0b3)

[WBTV - 4:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=f150e438-8282-41ad-a2e3-5d8f2c0cb1bb)

[WTVD - 4:02pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=743c9a8e-9d35-47cb-ac0d-54488599d82c)

[WGHP - 4:02pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=bd4a92c8-4ffd-484c-845f-21b0b55c06df)

[News 14 - 4:30pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=51d9195f-98bf-44ba-9709-eae110cdb4bd)

[CNBC - 4:33pm - Gov. McCrory wants to change parts of HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c058ffc9-5ae7-40de-be9a-5935c50bb070)

[WBTV - 4:30pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ec375596-d01a-4513-acef-3e678139dc52)

[WSOC - 4:59pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=a6076ee6-c05a-40a3-8605-2ca522947d33)

[WCNC - 4:59pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=702cb1fc-9541-4c4f-a0b6-091a828ec708)

[WGHP - 5:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c2dfbfc2-c9c8-474a-a840-19277e3f1ab1)

[WCTI - 5:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=68550ab4-a6dd-4d00-8ade-105ab50f5c6d)

[WITN - 5:01pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=3ac182b6-11ef-41f3-bd21-623a0cb4a251)

[WVEC - 5:01pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=174bf688-a7c1-4f82-8a6e-1fb4d82ea3ad)

[News 14 - 5:02pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=f417b769-8c05-4562-b347-f9ac5cbf49dc)

[WNCT - 5:02pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ada6b1d2-6721-49bd-8619-18b000ac0410)

[WXII - 5:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=2e08de94-e305-4da5-ace3-eb5486e08696)

[WECT - 5:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=431ab523-d96f-417f-b4e6-878dfd31fafd)

[WBTV - 4:58pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=6519d4ac-e241-4e89-82ea-7e555d33f58b)

[WTVD - 5:01pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c41d8e20-854d-4ad9-9db9-a418a59bff32)

[WFMY - 5:00pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=6512f9a8-00f5-409a-b7af-dd97f6c1c7f0)

[WBTV - 5:25pm - Gov. McCrory outlines plan to prepare NC for Zika Virus](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=682c93f7-3866-4e77-bde3-b1eff7ab8170)

[WWAY - 4:59pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=38fa5f93-c0d1-4c60-9089-2ae5a6d0da33)

[WNCT - 5:17pm - NC leaders discuss healthy families](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=1d398109-5a9b-40f3-af8a-739c2ae73513)

[WFMY - 5:29pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=8dc57291-bbe3-4002-b29f-19e3c4247005)

[WNCT - 5:32pm - Gov. McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=610299a0-94e9-44cc-a233-90c3d497858c)

[WCNC - 5:31pm - Teachers ask for school supplies](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c2d0c9a5-8192-4767-a7ef-8a04dd015056)

[WRAL - 5:32pm - HB2 impacts governor's race](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=84f681e4-9c21-46d5-b441-566bd895ebd9)

[WECT - 5:33pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=6ee4b7f0-c0ed-45fd-9270-80dd0b20e3e7)

[WBTV - 5:33pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=752427ee-fe1a-4852-86d9-eeb6c6abfb0a)

[WSOC - 5:38pm - Charlotte taxpayers speak out against tax hikes](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=889bf3c3-3945-4e91-95dd-fb7fa8a0f519)

[WSOC - 5:44pm - Zika virus](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=8377cd8e-b442-4650-a8ff-5cb12159921c)

[WFMY - 5:58pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=8bb7a7d7-e4b2-46d6-ba2d-cc8dfdfc4953)

[WCNC - 5:58pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=d10bef6f-2934-4850-a96d-f14f2f2bded8)

[WCTI - 6:00pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=38e026e5-7119-40a7-8069-30ffc504142a)

[WRAL - 5:59pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=8a5880bf-65fa-41e0-b50a-ab5f00b45961)

[WJZY - 6:00pm - HB2 already cost NC millions of dollars](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=35c6e976-890d-4742-9740-efcc43fd81d3)

[WITN - 6:01pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=b53325bb-846d-425d-aad8-5df58f4a3448)

[WWAY - 6:01pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=1132922c-33ba-40f0-b2dd-d1f6e6e06248)

[WVEC - 6:02pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=d98abc80-6ce7-4b8c-985d-b4d90c57c95b)

[WECT - 6:02pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=836f3fc3-8bc5-4fc1-b7db-43ff6ade6c87)

[WBTV - 6:00pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=702db980-7a23-4f48-9cbe-f211cebdf204)

[WNCT - 6:03pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=fc27d056-96d5-4797-8312-5f09805b918e)

[Fox News - 6:09pm - Gov McCrory wants to change law](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=e9398774-c4f1-4f2e-a903-decca4928095)

[WTKR - 6:09pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c96fb063-88b7-45f3-b3cc-2242ea453e66)

[WJZY - 6:14pm - Gov McCrory announces plan to get ahead of Zika virus](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=feae6611-f586-4487-80ff-b73e54e539c5)

[WGHP - 5:58pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=7af639c6-ddd7-4b27-adc6-d8798cb1fd15)

[WLOS - 5:59pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=b4824352-b724-4f91-8645-1d4e2cdae94e)

[WTVD - 6:01pm - New Fallout to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=1f062abb-425c-4443-9bb8-7a6cecb967d8)

[WXII - 5:59pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ac1ff798-88f1-4bc7-8ce4-3c3b15eb68cd)

[WFMY - 6:10pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=11de1d47-430a-4d3f-885c-f3285a4547ce)

[WJZY - 6:29pm - Gov McCrory issues EO in response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=982bbb9b-d792-495f-a7fb-f6201d0d0d47)

[CBS Evening News - 6:39pm - Gov. McCrory slightly modifies law](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=903db2d7-c1ad-424f-98df-36fd3e1143f4)

[News 14 - Capital Tonight Part 1 - 7:00pm - Gov. McCrory Signs EO in Response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=4dbcd6de-cdb9-4993-a888-6ee6c7ad5bfd)

[News 14 - Capital Tonight Part 2 - 7:21pm - Gov. McCrory Signs EO in Response to HB2](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=80815f28-281f-41c8-a7c2-554a6f833a8e)

**ONLINE & PRINT COVERAGE**

*Misc.*

**Asheville City Council passes resolution calling for repeal of HB2**

BY ASHLEA SURLES

[WLOS](http://wlos.com/news/local/asheville-city-council-set-to-pass-resolution-opposing-hb2)

**Reaction fast following changes to NC HB2 law**

by: Greg Suskin

[WSOC](http://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/reaction-fast-following-changes-to-nc-hb2-law/212519522)

**NC CITIES SAY THEY'RE FEELING IMPACT OF HB2 BACKLASH**

By Heather Waliga

[WTVD](http://abc11.com/politics/nc-cities-say-theyre-feeling-impact-of-hb2-backlash/1287518/)

**Salem College students protest HB2 law and school's stance on the measure**

By John Hinton

[Winston-Salem Journal](http://www.greensboro.com/news/local_news/salem-college-students-protest-hb-law-and-school-s-stance/article_14dacb25-b35c-52fe-b0fb-a792ec7530b5.html)

**City Council calls for repeal of HB2, urges other cities to do same**

by Virginia Daffron

[Mountain Xpress](http://mountainx.com/news/city-council-calls-for-repeal-of-hb2-urges-other-cities-to-do-same/%20)

**Winston-Salem government committee opposes HB2**

By Wesley Young

[Winston-Salem Journal](http://www.journalnow.com/news/local/winston-salem-government-committee-opposes-hb/article_50eb1923-7dcb-5567-90a0-6162263e14bb.html)

**Asheville City Council calls for HB2 repeal**

[The Citizen-Times](http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2016/04/12/asheville-city-council-calls-hb2-repeal/82930342/)

**Guilford school board to N.C. lawmakers: Repeal HB2**

By Marquita Brown

[News & Record](http://www.greensboro.com/blogs/the_chalkboard/guilford-school-board-to-n-c-lawmakers-repeal-hb/article_cf92029b-a2bb-591b-b29e-e8011b3bbfa5.html)

**NC Gov. Makes 'Special Announcement' After Executive Order on HB2**

[NBC New York](http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/national-international/NC-Governor-Announcement-Executive-Order-New-Law-375520741.html)

**Gov. McCrory to make special announcement following HB2 executive order**

[WNCN Staff/WAVY News](http://wavy.com/2016/04/13/nc-gov-mccrory-to-make-special-announcement-following-tuesdays-executive-order-on-hb2/)

**McCrory’s pay plan getting thumbs up**

By Gabrielle Isaac

[Laurinburg Exchange](http://laurinburgexchange.com/top-stories/4720/mccrorys-pay-plan-getting-thumbs-up)

**McCrory's Executive Order Doesn't Order Much**

By TOM BULLOCK

[WFAE](http://wfae.org/post/mccrorys-executive-order-doesnt-order-much)

**Triangle execs weigh in on McCrory's HB2 executive order**

by Lauren K. Ohnesorge

[Triangle Business Journal](http://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2016/04/13/triangle-ceos-weigh-in-on-mccrorys-hb2-executive.html)

**NC’s McCrory struggles to undo damage from anti-LGBT law**

By Steve Benen

[MSNBC](http://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/ncs-mccrory-struggles-undo-damage-anti-lgbt-law)

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**CBJ Morning Buzz: The impact (or not) of McCrory's action on HB 2; Banks may face rejection by regulators (Video)**

by Jen Wilson

[Charlotte Business Journal](http://www.bizjournals.com/charlotte/blog/morning-edition/2016/04/cbj-morning-buzz-the-impact-or-not-of-mccrorys.html)

**Governor calls for rescinding provisions of disputed rights law**

By Rob Morris

[Outer Banks Voice](http://outerbanksvoice.com/2016/04/12/governor-calls-for-rescinding-provisions-of-disputed-rights-law/%20)

**In North Carolina and Mississippi, Backlash Grows Over Rights Law**

By CHRISTOPHER MELE

[NY Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/us/north-carolina-mississippi-gay-rights-boycott.html)

**Despite Executive Order, Opponents and Supporters Still Clash Over HB2**

[WFMY](http://www.wfmynews2.com/news/local/despite-executive-order-opponents-and-supporters-still-clash-over-hb2/129954976)

**Gov. Pat McCrory to make provisions to House Bill 2**

[Technician](http://www.technicianonline.com/news/article_2e48e362-0132-11e6-9113-8bf58727e746.html)

**Social Conservatives Try New Tack With State-Level Efforts on Religious Freedom**

By VALERIE BAUERLEIN and  JON KAMP

Wall Street Journal

**Film in NC faces challenges**

By Bill Colvard

[Mt. Airy News](https://mtairynews.com/news/39695/film-in-nc-faces-challenges)

**What does McCrory's executive order do for age discrimination lawsuit?**

By Pamela Escobar

[WBTV](http://www.wect.com/story/31706683/what-does-mccrorys-executive-order-do-for-age-discrimination-lawsuit)

**Senate committee to discuss Sen. Bright's "bathroom bill" Wednesday**

By Jack Kuenzie

[WIS](http://www.wdam.com/story/31706715/opposition-looks-to-stop-sen-brights-bathroom-bill)

**A look at governor's order on North Carolina rights law**

[Associated Press](http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20160412/APN/304129652)

**Cost of a Tenn. transgender-bathroom bill could be $1.5B**

by Joel Ebert

[USA Today](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2016/04/12/tennessee-bathroom-bill/82938128/)

**Anti-HB2 billboard causes controversy in Polk County**

[WLOS.com](http://www.wcti12.com/news/Anti-HB2-billboard-causes-controversy-in-Polk-County/38993536)

**ACLU Releases Statement on Gov. McCrory’s Executive Order**

by Ashley Armstrong

[WCCB](http://www.wccbcharlotte.com/2016/04/12/aclu-releases-statement-on-gov-mccrorys-executive-order/)

**Governor's supporters hold prayer vigil in Greensboro**

By Joe Gamm

[News & Record](http://www.greensboro.com/news/governor-s-supporters-hold-prayer-vigil-in-greensboro/article_10682a35-fcfd-5d3a-be1e-6baeb64a5390.html)

**Report: HB2 has cost Wake County more than $700,000**

by LIZ BELL

[Daily Tar Heel](http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/report-hb2-has-cost-wake-county-more-than-700000)

**Gregg Allman Slams North Carolina "Bathroom Bill," but Says He'll Play Concert in the State**

[ABC News Radio](http://abcnewsradioonline.com/music-news/2016/4/12/gregg-allman-slams-north-carolina-bathroom-bill-but-says-hel.html)

**More than 100 people gather in Greensboro in support of HB2**

BY KIM WYNNE

[FOX 8](http://myfox8.com/2016/04/12/more-than-100-people-gather-in-greensboro-in-support-of-hb2/)

**Air horn activism: couple kicks off HB2 protest at governor's mansion**

by ERIC SCHWARTZ

[Daily Tar Heel](http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/hb2-protest-0404)

**Interview: McCrory Talks About Executive Order on House Bill 2**

By Capital Tonight Staff

[TWC News](http://www.twcnews.com/nc/triangle-sandhills/politics/2016/04/12/interview--mccrory-talks-about-executive-order-on-house-bill-2.html)

**Gov. tries to defuse outrage over N.C. "bathroom bill"**

[CBS News](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/north-carolina-bathroom-bill-backlash-continues-despite-governor-pat-mccrory-action/)

**Website hacking claims are at center of NC Republican Party feud**

BY COLIN CAMPBELL

[N&O](http://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article71446027.html)

**Governor wants to change, but not scrap, North Carolina law**

by GARY D. ROBERTSON and JONATHAN DREW

[The Associated Press](http://wsav.com/ap/governor-wants-to-change-but-not-scrap-north-carolina-law/)

**WRAL News poll: HB2 could have impact on fall campaigns**

By Mark Binker

[WRAL](http://www.wral.com/wral-news-poll-hb2-could-have-impact-on-fall-campaigns/15637258/#qmjV5YLriTeQK7pJ.99)

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**North Carolina governor issues executive order in wake of HB2**

by Catherine E. Shoichet

[CNN](http://www.cnn.com/2016/04/12/us/north-carolina-bathrooms-law-hb2-executive-order/index.html?sr=twCNN041216north-carolina-bathrooms-law-hb2-executive-order0939PMStoryPhoto&linkId=23376087)

**REACTION SWIFT, MIXED TO MCCRORY'S HB2 ANNOUNCEMENT**

[WTVD](http://abc11.com/news/durham-bulls-call-for-full-repeal-of-hb2/1288044/)

**North Carolina Governor Signs Order in Response to 'Anti-LGBT' House Bill 2**

By AVIANNE TAN

[ABC News](http://abcnews.go.com/US/north-carolina-governor-signs-executive-order-addressing-concerns/story?id=38342388)

**The Latest: Senators enter North Carolina gender dispute**

[WRAL](http://www.wral.com/the-latest-jimmy-buffett-not-canceling-north-carolina-shows/15637419/)

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**McCrory rescinds parts of HB2 in executive action, bathroom provision still stands**

by HAYLEY FOWLER

[Daily Tar Heel](http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/mccrory-signs-executive-action)

**North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory Seeks to Roll Back Limits on Antibias Protections in Transgender Bill**

By VALERIE BAUERLEIN and  JON KAMP

[Wall Street Journal](http://www.wsj.com/articles/north-carolina-gov-pat-mccory-vows-to-revise-transgender-law-1460491573)

**Governor Issues Order To Clarify HB2**

[By WFAE NEWS](http://wfae.org/post/governor-issues-order-clarify-hb2)

**WRAL News poll: NC voters conflicted over HB2**

By Matthew Burns

[WRAL](http://www.wral.com/wral-news-poll-nc-voters-conflicted-over-hb2/15637430/)

**North Carolina governor clarifies language in controversial bathroom bill**

By Bradford Richardson

[The Washington Times​](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/apr/12/pat-mccrory-clarifies-north-carolina-bathroom-bill/)

**NORTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR PAT MCCRORY SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER IN RESPONSE TO ANTI-LGBT BILL CRITICISM**

BY LUCY WESTCOTT

[Newsweek](http://www.newsweek.com/north-carolina-hb2-pat-mccrory-executive-order-447012)

**READ MORE: Statements regarding McCrory's executive order 93 on HB2**

[WSOC](http://www.wsoctv.com/news/read-more-statements-regarding-mccrorys-executive-order-93-on-hb2/212122374%20)

**North Carolina Governor Tries to Step Back From Bias Law**

By RICHARD FAUSSET and ALAN BLINDER

[NY Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/us/north-carolina-governor-pat-mccrory.html)

**McCrory wants lawmakers to reverse part of HB2**

By Mark Binker, Laura Leslie and Kathryn Brown

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**Hooray for McCrory and legislature**

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**Opinion: McCrory's Near-Meaningless HB2 Order**

BY GREG LACOUR

[Charlotte Magazine](http://www.charlottemagazine.com/Charlotte-Magazine/April-2016/Opinion-McCrorys-Near-Meaningless-HB2-Order/)

**Opinion: UNC Greeks can help further fight against HB2**

[Daily Tar Heel](http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/opinion-unc-greeks-can-help-further-fight-against-hb2)

**NBA urged to move All-Star Game over N.C. anti-LGBT law**

[Washington Blade](http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/04/12/nba-urged-to-move-all-star-games-from-n-c-over-anti-lgbt-law/)

**Citizen Green: First Flint and New Orleans, then North Carolina**

by Jordan Green

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by DANIEL NUSSBAUM

[Breitbart](http://www.breitbart.com/big-hollywood/2016/04/12/michael-moore-boycotts-north-carolina-you-anti-gay-bigots-dont-get-to-see-my-latest-flop/)

**McCrory signs executive order addressing H.B. 2**

[Jones & Blount](http://jonesandblount.com/2016/04/12/mccrory-signs-executive-order-addressing-h-b-2/)

**The Buzz, April 13**

[StarNews](http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20160412/ARTICLES/160419909?p=all&tc=pgall)

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By Mark Berman

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[News & Record](http://www.greensboro.com/blogs/clark_off_the_record/mccrory-retreats-a-little-on-hb/article_6dc32b2c-00df-11e6-a682-73172cc3ad70.html)

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[Fayetteville Observer](http://www.fayobserver.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-overdose-prevention-and-zika-hit-the-governor-s/article_26b9d820-5e2b-55ef-a7a5-874445a88d71.html)

**How Obama Powers the Transgender Movement**

By JASON L. RILEY

[Wall Street Journal](http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-obama-powers-the-transgender-movement-1460502253?tesla=y&mod=vocus)

**McCrory tries to walk back parts of HB2, LGBT advocates call Executive Order insufficient, “weak”**

By Clayton Henkel

[Progressive Pulse](http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/mccrory-tries-to-walk-back-parts-of-hb2-lgbt-advocates-call-executive-order-insufficient-weak/)

**North Carolina Governor Issues Executive Order In Attempt To “Clarify” Anti-LGBT Law**

by Dominic Holden

[BuzzFeed](https://www.buzzfeed.com/dominicholden/north-carolina-gov-issues-executive-order-in-attempt-to-clar#.ixAxDwbpd5)

**North Carolina Gov. McCrory Signs Executive Order Clarifying ‘Bathroom’ Privacy Law**

by DR. SUSAN BERRY

[Breitbart](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2016/04/13/north-carolina-gov-mccrory-signs-executive-order-clarifying-bathroom-privacy-law/)

**McCrory HB2 executive order fails to live up to the hype**

By Allan Freyer

[Progressive Pulse](http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/13/mccrory-hb2-executive-order-fails-to-live-up-to-the-hype/)

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**Gov. McCrory Retweeted GOP Senate Majority Leader's Vile Response Supporting His Executive Order**

[New Civil Rights Movement](http://www.thenewcivilrightsmovement.com/davidbadash/gov_mccrory_retweeted_gop_senate_majority_leader_s_vile_response_to_his_executive_order)

**The Morning Roundup: The Day the Left-Wing Political Correctness Mob Got a Small Concession from Pat McCrory**

by David Hudnall

[Indy Week](http://www.indyweek.com/news/archives/2016/04/13/the-morning-roundup-the-day-the-left-wing-political-correctness-mob-got-a-small-concession-from-pat-mccrory)

**Gaspo on HB2: Durham chooses embrace over disgrace**

BY TOM GASPAROLI

[N&O](http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/dn-opinion/article70917742.html)

**Roy Cooper’s Hawks**

by Mike Adams

[Town Hall](http://townhall.com/columnists/mikeadams/2016/04/12/roy-coopers-hawks-n2146679/page/full)

**###**

*Misc.*

**Asheville City Council passes resolution calling for repeal of HB2**

BY ASHLEA SURLES

WLOS

<http://wlos.com/news/local/asheville-city-council-set-to-pass-resolution-opposing-hb2>

WLOS — ASHEVILLE, N.C. -- Asheville City Council unanimously passed a resolution that calls for the repeal of N.C. House Bill 2 on Tuesday evening.

City leaders are gathered at 5 p.m. for their regular scheduled meeting on April 12, 2016, and the measure was on the agenda.

"It will talk about the parts of the bill - the various different parts of the bill - and why those parts of the bill are unacceptable to our community," said Mayor Esther Manheimer at City Hall Tuesday afternoon. "It will also reinforce our support and welcoming of our diverse community, and that includes the LGBT community."

Manheimer said she expected the bill to pass unanimously.

The resolution will now be sent to the Buncombe legislative delegation, the chair of the county commission and the mayor Charlotte.

News 13's Aaron Adelson is at the meeting and will have a full report at 11 p.m.

**Reaction fast following changes to NC HB2 law**

by: Greg Suskin

WSOC

<http://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/reaction-fast-following-changes-to-nc-hb2-law/212519522>

CHARLOTTE —

Reaction came quickly after the governor's executive order regarding HB2 Tuesday afternoon. Many believe the governor didn't go far enough, in gutting parts of the controversial measure.

Democrat state Rep. Tricia Cotham co-sponsored a bill to repeal House Bill 2.

She told Channel 9 the bill would hopefully be taken up on April 25 when the state Legislature goes into session again.

However, after Gov. Pat McCrory released his executive order, asking for legislation to restore the right to sue for discrimination and restoring legal protection for LGBT citizens when it comes to government employment, Cotham said it was a good step but that McCrory showed poor leadership.

"Clearly he's listened to the polling data. He's heard the outcry. He's seen the protests. He just should've done that from the beginning," Cotham said.

Cotham wasn't sure how lawmakers would react to the executive order as several groups opposed to HB2 continued to push the Legislature to repeal the entire law.

Channel 9 spoke to several people who were glad that public bathrooms will remain gender specific, because they are concerned about children and safety.

However, they applauded steps toward equality.

Niksa Balbosa doesn't agree with much of what McCrory does but she agrees with the order.

"They should be treated equally, as anyone else, respected as anyone else," she said.

A company, Duetsche Bank, announced Tuesday it would not add 250 jobs to its office in Cary because of HB2.

Resident David Delao said he was saddened to see companies pull out and hopes altering the law will change that.

"I hate that these companies left,” he said. “Charlotte's a growing area. It's a beautiful place and gives people the opportunity to come here and live here.”

The American Unity Fund, a nonprofit pro-LGBT organization, also released a statement Tuesday saying in part, "We thank Governor McCrory for his willingness to recognize the mistakes of HB2 and act decisively to fix some of the damage. All eyes turn now to the General Assembly as it reconvenes later this month. They must continue the process of reconciliation and the only way to do that is to repeal HB2."?

**NC CITIES SAY THEY'RE FEELING IMPACT OF HB2 BACKLASH**

By Heather Waliga

WTVD

<http://abc11.com/politics/nc-cities-say-theyre-feeling-impact-of-hb2-backlash/1287518/>

New figures released by the Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau show Wake County has lost more than $700,000 in response to House Bill 2 and could lose millions more.

Four groups have canceled upcoming events in Raleigh and more than a dozen others are considering pulling out, blaming the controversial new law that opponents say limits the rights of gay, lesbian and transgender people.

"I guess the only thing we could equate this to would be what we saw after 9/11. Travel just kind of stopped," said Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau CEO Denny Edwards.

Edwards said the groups combined would infuse more than $24 million into the local economy.

The tourism agency would not disclose the groups reconsidering.

"They're getting attendees that are expressing concern about coming to North Carolina because of the bill or they have state employees that are not allowed because of travel bans in other cities," Edwards said. "What we don't know is how many groups were going to consider Raleigh or North Carolina and have now taken us off their list."

While the Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau is not taking a political stance on HB2, tourism leaders are making a plea to visitors:

"We are and always have been a great place to visit. We're very welcoming. Please don't penalize us."

Raleigh is banding with other cities across North Carolina to create an ad welcoming everyone to the state.

It is expected to launch in the coming days.

The financial fallout in Wake County is the latest backlash from the controversial bill.

German financial giant Deutsche Bank said Tuesday that it is freezing plans to add jobs in North Carolina, including 250 positions at a tech center in Cary.

John Cryan, Co-Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank, said: "We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We're proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future."

Cary mayor Harold Weinbrecht has vowed not to give up on the jobs.

"It's a shame we had a legislative majority that believes that passing this rule will protect women and children when, in fact, it almost does the opposite, and it hurts so many families with the loss of jobs," Weinbrecht said.

Deutsche Bank employs approximately 900 people at its software application development center in Cary.

Other regions in the state also say the impact is being felt. The Charlotte Regional Visitor's Bureau estimates the city could lose $100 million should the 2017 NBA All-Star Game be moved from Charlotte.

"We are extremely concerned about the state legislation in place as we continue to hear negative feedback and potential event cancellations from our customers, said Tom Murray, CEO of the Visitor's Bureau. "Our city has worked incredibly hard to build a thriving visitor economy over the last 20 years, which has welcomed major events and conventions that greatly give back to the city and the state of North Carolina's economy and overall quality of life. This issue is in danger of setting us back from the progress we've made in positioning Charlotte as an attractive, inclusive destination."

The Bureau said 29 groups were hesitant or concerned about holding their events in Charlotte, and at least nine four groups have canceled, an equivalent to 1,137 hotel room nights.

"Our city has long had a track record of creating an environment that not only values diversity, but strongly embraces it," Murray said. "On behalf of the visitor economy that represents one in nine jobs across the Charlotte region, we strongly urge that state and local leaders find a resolution that represents the best interests of our city and state."

Earlier this month, PayPal announced it was cancelling plans to expand its operations in Charlotte that would have created 400 new jobs.

Over the weekend, singer Bruce Springsteen cancelled a show in Greensboro citing opposition to the law.

North Carolina legislative leaders who backed the law are blaming the business backlash on Charlotte's mayor and the Democrat running for governor.

House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate leader Phil Berger said after the PayPal announcement that Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts and Attorney General Roy Cooper were responsible.

**Salem College students protest HB2 law and school's stance on the measure**

By John Hinton

Winston-Salem Journal

<http://www.greensboro.com/news/local_news/salem-college-students-protest-hb-law-and-school-s-stance/article_14dacb25-b35c-52fe-b0fb-a792ec7530b5.html>

About 40 students protested on Tuesday at Salem College, calling for the school to oppose the state law limiting protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and demanding that the college extend its policies to protect its LGBT students, faculty and staff members.

The demonstrators held signs stating “HB 2 Takes Us Back to 1772” and “Salem Do Better!” and shouted “we oppose HB 2” and “trans lives matter” in front of the campus student center. The women’s college was founded in 1772.

Christina Novaton, a senior from Miami who help organize the protest, said that college administrators haven’t publicly opposed the law. There are many transgender students at Salem College, and demonstrators want the college to protect their rights, Novaton said.

The law requires transgender individuals to use public restrooms that match the gender on their birth certificates. It also excludes sexual orientation and gender identity from the state anti-discrimination law and bars local governments from expanding anti-discrimination rules.

Novaton pointed to a statement issued last week from Stephen G. Jennings, chairman of the college’s board of trustees, and President Lorraine Sterritt, regarding the law.

Jennings and Sterritt said in part that the law “will not necessitate any changes in Salem Academy and College’s policies and procedures in terms of protected rights and bathroom and changing facilities.”

Novaton said that the statement by Jennings and Sterritt was inadequate.

“I don’t think it was a strong enough statement at all,” Novaton said. “It was a stance to appease us for the moment.”

Novaton and other organizers said they planned to present their five demands to Sterritt to at a college faculty meeting later on Tuesday afternoon.

The demands include the college issuing a public statement opposing HB 2, outlining how Salem officials will protect its LGBT students, faculty and staff members, and creating a policy that is inclusive of transgender students who may apply for admission and protective of transgender students at Salem.

In response to the students’ protest, Sterritt issued a statement saying that, “since the circumstances regarding the new law remain fluid, we are continuing to evaluate the situation, and we are engaged in conversation with our students and faculty.”

Opposition to the law also has spread to Appalachian State University, where about 50 students have occupied the lobby of the school’s administration building since Saturday in their protest against the law.

A protest organizer said that students will keep occupying the building until Chancellor Sheri Everts denounces the new law. College campuses across the state have seen protests against the law.

In a related matter, the UNC board of governors is moving its meeting from Asheville to Chapel Hill this week because of planned protests surrounding a visit by UNC system President Margaret Spellings.

The students oppose the naming of Spellings, a former U.S. education secretary under President George W. Bush, to the position.

The board had planned to meet at UNC-Asheville on Thursday and Friday.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

**City Council calls for repeal of HB2, urges other cities to do same**

by Virginia Daffron

Mountain Xpress

<http://mountainx.com/news/city-council-calls-for-repeal-of-hb2-urges-other-cities-to-do-same/>

Asheville residents packed City Council chambers to voice opposition to House Bill 2 and to urge the city to adopt an uncompromising resolution condemning the law and calling for its repeal. Council members listened closely, sometimes with tears in their eyes, as they heard from transgender people who believe the new law puts them at greater risk of arrest or acts of violence. After over an hour of public comment, City Council unanimously voted to approve a strongly-worded measure modeled on one passed by the town of Carrboro.

Mayor Esther Manheimer introduced the discussion and referenced an Executive Order signed by Governor Pat McCrory shortly before Council’s meeting began. “As of tonight,” said Manheimer, “many cities and towns have also passed resolutions, mostly because they have had their meetings before we had a chance to have our meeting. I anticipate a few more will pass similar resolutions before the Legislature goes back into session on April 25.”

The Governor’s Executive Order, Manheimer continued, did not repeal the bill but restored the ability for people to bring discrimination lawsuits in state courts and added a class to the state personnel act for gender identity and sexual orientation. “But that doesn’t take away any of what House Bill 2 put into effect,” she said.

Councilman Cecil Bothwell, who proposed adapting the Carrboro resolution to replace a much less aggressive proposed Asheville resolution, said HB 2 had brought national attention to the state, and not in a good way. Also, Bothwell noted, “Many parts of this are unconstitutional and it’s entirely wrong, so I’m proud to be doing this tonight.”

Councilman Brian Haynes urged those who have supported the law to consider it “through the lens of love and tolerance” and to reject fear and misinformation about LGBT people.

Of the 16 who spoke, only one expressed support for the law.

Devan Balsam, a transgender man and a single father of three sons, spoke of telling his children that there is now a small chance that he will be arrested for using the “wrong” restroom. “I’m not a monster, I’m a hard-working, law-abiding, God-fearing father of three,” Balsam said. “Please find it in your heart to consider me as a person for sake of my children.”

Tara Darby, a transgender woman, said she has seen an “explosion” of threatening statements directed toward her and other transgender people on social media in the wake of the passage of the law on March 23. To those who say the bathroom aspects of the law are a small part of its effects, Darby responded, “The bathroom part isn’t a tiny little part if we could get hurt or even killed going to the bathroom.”

Attorney Meghan Burke said, “This law will not stand test of time and litigation, which is pending,” and she urged Council to take steps beyond passing a resolution, including adding non-discrimination clauses to city contracts.

Lindsay Furst, who is a teacher in the Buncombe County schools, said enforcing the state law in public schools would require her to violate her first priority, which is protecting her students. “LGBTQ teens are dying from homelessness, overdose, suicide and violence,” she said.

This controversy, said Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, is part of the long historical arc of the LGBT community. She joined her wife Meghan Burke in calling on the city to take additional steps to extend equal protection to all.

Manheimer closed the public comment session by noting that the only silver lining of the situation with HB 2 is that it provides an opportunity to “reaffirm that we stand together.”

Councilman Keith Young read an email he said he had sent to his Council colleagues soon after hearing the law had passed. “To take this lightly,” read Young, “is to be complacent of a civil rights history that is less than 60 years old. Don’t be afraid to act. We must take heartfelt action in defense of equality.” As the only minority member of Council, he said, he felt especially obligated to condemn a law that “erodes the power of local government and tramples decades of public policy.”

Council unanimously passed its consent agenda, including the resolution calling for the repeal of HB 2.

**Winston-Salem government committee opposes HB2**

By Wesley Young

Winston-Salem Journal

<http://www.journalnow.com/news/local/winston-salem-government-committee-opposes-hb/article_50eb1923-7dcb-5567-90a0-6162263e14bb.html>

The Winston-Salem City Council’s general government committee voted Tuesday to ask state lawmakers to undo “damaging legislative changes” it sees in House Bill 2, setting up an April 18 vote by the full city council on the controversial law.

The unanimous vote by members of the committee came after people spoke for and against a resolution against HB2 proposed by Council Member Dan Besse, and after City Attorney Angela Carmon basically said that HB2 would have minimal effect on city operations.

HB2, passed by the General Assembly to overturn Charlotte’s so-called bathroom ordinance, put in place a statewide anti-discrimination standard for public accommodation that does not include sexual orientation or gender identity. The new law also puts in place new provisions for how people pursue employment discrimination claims.

Council members were looking beyond HB2’s immediate local effects when they passed a motion approving Besse’s resolution.

Besse said he is concerned in part that the law could be the prelude to state legislators taking away other local government prerogatives, while some other members of the committee framed the issue as “standing up again for what is right,” in the words of Council Member D.D. Adams.

Council Member Robert Clark accused Besse of “crying wolf” with some of his objections to the new law, and said the language of the Besse resolution might have legislators simply consigning it to “file 13” — the trash can, in other words.

Clark is not a member of the general government committee and so did not vote on Besse’s resolution Tuesday. But he did highlight many of the provisions of HB2 that Carmon found would not change city operations.

The city includes sexual orientation among its anti-discrimination standards for working for the city, and Carmon said that the city needs to make no changes to those policies under HB2.

What’s more, Carmon said that if the city did apply HB2 bathroom regulations to its own employees, that could leave the city at risk of litigation. Carmon said federal authorities are saying that sexual orientation and gender identity are considered protected categories.

The result, Carmon and city officials said Tuesday, is that a transgendered city employee would be allowed to use the bathroom of the gender claimed by the employee, should the case arise here:

“The city must abide by federal law despite the potential of violating state law,” Carmon wrote in her analysis for the city council.

Thus far, city officials said, no city employee has actually caused bathroom choice to be an issue.

In her presentation on HB2’s effects, Carmon said that some provisions of HB2 forbid things the city can’t do anyway under previous legislation: The city can’t impose wage requirements on employers as a condition for bidding on a city contract.

On the other hand, Carmon said, the city can require contractors to make “good faith” efforts to hire minority- and woman-owned businesses in subcontracting. The potential of losing that ability was one of the main concerns that Besse cited in opposing HB2.

Among those speaking from the floor to the council was the Rev. Liam Hooper, a transgender man, who said that the issue was not whether “we will figure out where to go to the restroom” but that “this bill was used to limit your power and to limit our freedom and to limit our recourse.”

But the Rev. Laura Spangler said that “it is not discrimination, not a civil rights issue when you are trying to change the way that you were created,” and called the new law’s bathroom provisions worthwhile.

Spangler was the only person to speak in support of HB2, and most speakers encouraged council members to take a stand against the new law.

Council Member Derwin Montgomery called the restroom issue that provoked the law a “fear tactic” and compared the issue to black and white segregation in a different era:

“The fact of the matter is that for a long time in this country people were not comfortable eating in the same restaurants with people who did not look like them,” Montgomery said.

“They were not comfortable going to the same shopping places (and) swimming in the same swimming pool.”

Council Member Jeff MacIntosh said the city needs “good minds — and those minds sometimes don’t think and talk and dress like the rest of us.”

“It is an advantage that we have that I hope we don’t squander,” MacIntosh said.

Adams said she would be “going down swinging ... because I believe this is a civil rights issue.”

“I believe that the core of this has to do with discrimination,” she said.

Besse, responding to Clark, said that while many sections of HB2 may not appear to change city practices, the law could be interpreted differently by a court, in light of what he called the General Assembly’s “expressed intent to crack down on local flexibility.”

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**Asheville City Council calls for HB2 repeal**

The Citizen-Times

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2016/04/12/asheville-city-council-calls-hb2-repeal/82930342/>

The Asheville City Council on Tuesday took a strong stance on recent state legislation and released a revised proclamation opposing House Bill 2, the measure that limits LGBT discrimination protection in North Carolina.

The new resolution surprised the more than 100 people who gathered at the meeting. Mayor Esther Manheimer said the proclamation was developed Tuesday to replace a proclamation released on Friday with softer language.

The first proclamation did not explicitly call for the repeal of HB2, although it drew a clear contrast between the inclusive environment of Asheville and the policies of the state legislature.

The Tuesday resolution calls for the speedy repeal of HB2 and encourages other municipalities, counties and boards of education to do the same.

"The Asheville City Council urges the North Carolina General Assembly to repeal House Bill 2 at the earliest opportunity," Tuesday's resolution reads. "Meanwhile, Council will look to the court system for remedy, seeking opportunities to partner with other local jurisdictions and advocacy organizations in taking appropriate legal action against this unconstitutional legislation."

The Asheville resolution, which was passed as part of the council's consent agenda, matches nearly word for word a resolution passed by Carrboro on March 26, three days after Gov. Pat McCrory signed HB2 into law.

Manheimer said Monday that mayors from around the state were collaborating to create resolutions, and Lydia Lavelle, mayor of Carrboro and a constitutional lawyer, was leading the effort.

More than a dozen citizens commented on the resolution, including downtown business owners, transgender people, religious leaders, activists and others. Each of the speakers supported the council's resolution except, perhaps, for one, who made a one-sentence remark about sin.

Allison Scott, a transgender woman, applauded the council for opposing HB2 and lamented fearful attitudes that miscast transgender people.

"I'm tired of people hiding behind this argument of protecting women and children," she said. "Twenty-five percent of North Carolina children live in poverty. Where are the people protecting those children?"

Devan Balsam, a transgender man, spoke about the experience of explaining HB2 to his three sons.

"(I told them) there was a small chance that I would be detained for using what is now the wrong restroom or be the victim of vigilante violence," he said.

Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, executive director of the Campaign for Southern Equality and an uncontested candidate for the Buncombe County commissioners, encouraged the council to do more than pass a resolution.

"I think this is a moment when all of us who are allies to the transgender community need to listen, need to learn and need to show at least the measure of courage that our transgender brothers and sisters are showing," she said. "I hope you will do so now not just by passing this resolution but by critically examining the steps that our city can take to make sure that we are extending full equality, full protection in every sphere of life."

Earlier on Tuesday, McCrory issued an executive order that offers protections based on gender identity and sexual orientation to state employees and suggests legislation should reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in court. Both city council and Asheville citizens who spoke during the public comment period agreed the order does not go far enough and continued to call for a full repeal of HB2.

**Guilford school board to N.C. lawmakers: Repeal HB2**

By Marquita Brown

News & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/blogs/the_chalkboard/guilford-school-board-to-n-c-lawmakers-repeal-hb/article_cf92029b-a2bb-591b-b29e-e8011b3bbfa5.html>

GREENSBORO — The Guilford County Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution opposing legislation that restricts anti-discrimination protections for people who are gay, lesbian or transgender.

In the resolution, the board urges the state General Assembly to repeal the law.

The board presented and approved the resolution late Tuesday night.

With that action, the school board joins a growing list of governmental bodies, celebrities and businesses actively opposing the legislation, which the General Assembly passed and Gov. Pat McCrory signed into law on the same day last month.

Here are some highlights from the discussion. Check back for more information.

**NC Gov. Makes 'Special Announcement' After Executive Order on HB2**

NBC New York

<http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/national-international/NC-Governor-Announcement-Executive-Order-New-Law-375520741.html>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory is set to make a "special announcement" Wednesday morning a day after he signed an executive order amid backlash against a new law affecting the rights of lesbian, gay and transgender people.

The announcement will take place at 9 a.m. ET. The governor’s office did not provide details about the announcement.

McCrory said Tuesday he stands by the law — which mandates gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools — but wants lawmakers to restore the right to sue over gender discrimination in state court.

"This was my conclusion after hearing from many, many different sides of the issue," McCrory told The Associated Press shortly after he signed an executive order Tuesday addressing the law.

But McCrory said he sees no need to repeal the rest of the law, which has brought nationwide fallout on North Carolina since his signature three weeks ago, with corporate executives, gay-rights groups and political opponents blasting him. Some companies also have scaled back their planned job expansions, and Bruce Springsteen canceled a concert in the state because of the law.

North Carolina's measure is among several advanced across the country that opponents say is discriminatory toward gay, bisexual and transgender people.

McCrory's order expanded the equal employment policy for state employees to include sexual orientation and gender identity, and urged lawmakers to restore the right of all workers to sue in state court over employment discrimination on the basis of things like race, age and gender.

"I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality," McCrory said in a video released with his announcement.

The order also affirmed parts of the law directing people at government buildings and schools to use the multistall bathrooms corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate. And the law still prevents local governments and the state from mandating businesses extend protections to LGBT people who work for them or when they visit their stores and restaurants.

Although some critics of the law called the order a positive first step, the most vocal opponents said nothing short of repeal will be enough.

"The governor's action is an insufficient response to a terrible, misguided law that continues to harm LGBT people on a daily basis," said Sarah Warbelow, legal director at the Human Rights Campaign. "It's absurd that he'll protect people from being fired but will prohibit them from using the employee restroom consistent with their gender identity."

A Charlotte ordinance approved in February that would have allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity in public accommodations caused the Republican-controlled General Assembly to hold a special session March 23. Legislators overturned the ordinance and blocked all other cities and counties from passing similar rules targeting anti-LGBT discrimination.

There was no need for a state law "until the city of Charlotte brought it up," said McCrory, himself the previous mayor of North Carolina's largest city. "It wasn't a problem in my 14 years as mayor and I've never heard it as an issue during my three years as governor."

Still, current Mayor Jennifer Roberts tweeted she was pleased to see movement from McCrory's office: "Historic to include LGBT protections for state employees. Look forward to more dialogue."

Attorney General Roy Cooper, a Democrat challenging McCrory for governor this fall, said McCrory should have vetoed the law to begin with and the order doesn't change that last month's legislation "has written discrimination into the law."

Equality North Carolina, the American Civil Liberties Union and three LGBT citizens sued in federal court two weeks ago to overturn the entire law.

A full repeal appears highly unlikely from the General Assembly. In statements, Republican legislative leaders didn't address McCrory's request to restore the right to sue in state court for employment discrimination. But they praised him for reaffirming bathroom provisions in the law they say keeps women and children safe from men who may have used ordinances similar to Charlotte's as a pretense to enter women's restrooms.

The order affirms the importance of the General Assembly's action "to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists' efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives," Republican House Speaker Tim Moore said.

**Gov. McCrory to make special announcement following HB2 executive order**

WNCN Staff/WAVY News

<http://wavy.com/2016/04/13/nc-gov-mccrory-to-make-special-announcement-following-tuesdays-executive-order-on-hb2/>

RALEIGH, N.C. ( WNCN) – Gov. Pat McCrory will make a special announcement Wednesday morning, a day after he issued an executive order on House Bill 2.

The announcement will take place Wednesday at 9 a.m. at the Executive Mansion in Raleigh. The governor’s office did not provide details about the announcement, but it comes one day after McCrory signed an executive order amending HB2.

Read: Executive Order 93

The executive order maintains gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools but would allow the private sector to establish its own restroom and locker room policies.

The order also expands the state’s employment policy to cover sexual orientation and gender identity for state employees and seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination.

WAVY News 10 is planning on live streaming McCrory’s announcement at 9 a.m.

**McCrory’s pay plan getting thumbs up**

By Gabrielle Isaac

Laurinburg Exchange

<http://laurinburgexchange.com/top-stories/4720/mccrorys-pay-plan-getting-thumbs-up>

RALEIGH — Gov. Pat McCrory’s proposal for a 5 percent increase in teacher pay is being applauded by area legislators and educators — but they say teachers deserve more.

And at least two local lawmakers expect any raise would be less.

McCrory announced last week that he would include the pay-hike proposal with a one-time bonus for veteran educators only in his state budget proposal for the fiscal year that begins July 1.

”The pay raise might help some, but we aren’t where we need to be,” said Rep. Ken Goodman. “We need to respect our educators. To ask that our educators should only make the average salary in North Carolina is like asking someone to earn a C instead of an A.”

North Carolina is ranked 47th in the country for average salaries for public school teachers, according to the most recent estimate by the National Education Association. A first-year teacher with a bachelor’s degree and no special certifications will make $35,000 a year while an educator who has been in the classroom for upwards of 20 years makes about $46,500.

“Two years ago, when I announced a significant teacher pay raise plan right here at Ragsdale (High School), I promised that we would not stop there,” McCrory said during the announcement in Greensboro. “Today, I am following through on that promise and introducing an aggressive education budget that will bring average teacher pay to more than $50,000 for the first time in state history.”

According to WRAL, the $50,000 figure includes local supplements. Under the plan, bonuses for teachers and principals would average 3.5 percent of salaries and reach $5,000 for teachers with 25 years or more of experience.

The permanent pay raises, according to McCrory’s office, would cost about $250 million each year while the one-time bonuses would run $165 million for teachers and $10 million for principals. McCrory said the money can be found in an expected budget surplus.

“We’ve got to make it happen,” said Rep. Garland Pierce. “Once you give it, it’s got to remain in place. I think the public would understand if there had to be cuts in other areas to support our education system. We’ve got to celebrate and value education. That means we must invest in education.”

Pierce said the raise may help combat the “revolving door” of teachers leaving North Carolina for higher-paying gigs in other states.

Rep. Charles Graham said the pay raise would boost morale among teachers.

“There has been a war on public education and I think teachers sense that,” Graham said. “Look at the facts. We’ve given money to the wealthiest people in our state and to corporations instead of giving it to our teachers and public education. I believe teachers are very discouraged when they look at everything that has happened over the past few years. We need to demonstrate to our teachers that we support them and the way to do that is to put that money out there.”

Jamie Burney, a local representative of the North Carolina Association of Educators, said teachers have powered through pay freezes and the loss of longevity pay. He says teachers deserve more than a 5 percent increase, but they’ll take what they can get.

“Whether you’re Democratic or Republican, you’re going to need to do that pay increase to keep those teachers,” Burney said. “We went to college for four years and maybe even got a master’s degree. We have student loans to pay.”

Mark Jewell, the vice president of the North Carolina Association of Educators, called McCrory’s suggestion an “election-year proposal.” Pierce said that could work to the benefit of the teachers.

“It’s all political this year, so you’re not going to find many folks who have any desire not to support teachers,” he said. “It shouldn’t be about that. Teachers should not get caught in political limbo. They should not be used as political pawns.”

Sen. Jane Smith and Goodman both doubt that the House and Senate will follow through with the 5 percent increase, and expect a pay hike of 2 or 3 percent.

“I think we’re going to have to do an increase if we’re going to keep and recruit good teachers,” Smith said. “I think teachers don’t go into the profession to make money, but they should certainly earn a decent wage and shouldn’t have to pay for their own supplies out of their pocket.”

McCrory also plans to propose that $2 million go toward funding 300 scholarships that will attract qualified math and science teachers for public schools; $5 million for education scholarships for K-12 students with disabilities; and more money to expand Wi-Fi access in the public schools and increase the use of electronic textbooks.

Gabrielle Isaac can be reached at 910-816-1989 or on Twitter @news\_gabbie.

**McCrory's Executive Order Doesn't Order Much**

By TOM BULLOCK

WFAE

<http://wfae.org/post/mccrorys-executive-order-doesnt-order-much>

Three weeks ago today, Governor Pat McCrory signed House Bill 2 into law. At the time he wrote “this bill does not change existing rights under state or federal law.”

On Tuesday, McCrory walked back that statement a bit and is now calling for a section of the controversial law to be repealed. It’s all part of an executive order issued by McCrory. But in reality, the measure doesn’t accomplish all that much.

Listen Listening...6:02 Listen to the full report by WFAE's Tom Bullock

You can view Governor McCrory's video statement on Executive Order 93 below:

**Triangle execs weigh in on McCrory's HB2 executive order**

by Lauren K. Ohnesorge

Triangle Business Journal

<http://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2016/04/13/triangle-ceos-weigh-in-on-mccrorys-hb2-executive.html>

On Tuesday, Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order to make some changes to the controversial House Bill 2, though it maintains the legislation's original stance on gender-specific restrooms.

The executive order would expand the state’s employment policy to cover sexual orientation and gender identity, and seek legislation to allow employees to sue their employers in state court over discrimination – rather than federal court. Private companies could still make their own rules when it comes to discrimination, according to McCrory's office.

“I think he just put lipstick on a pig,” said John Replogle, CEO of Seventh Generation on Tuesday. Replogle was one of dozens of CEOs across the country to petition against the measure when it was passed in special session in March. Replogle, whose sustainable household products company runs its venture arm from Raleigh, has said that HB2 may lead to his firm re-evaluating investment opportunities in the state. When asked what he would have liked to have seen in McCrory’s order, he said: “That he would repeal HB2 and apologize rather than call it misinformation."

Poll: Should repealing the entirety of HB2 be a priority when legislators return to Raleigh?

O. Temple Sloan Jr., chairman of Highwoods Properties and founder of General Parts International, said that he fully supports McCrory's refinements, "which continues protection to our women and girls to the right of privacy from men in their public restroom facilities.

"I hope we as citizens and business leaders will join together to move North Carolina forward," he said.

The Redwoods Group CEO Kevin Trapani, who also signed the petition against HB2, said he would be surprised if the order was found to be "adequate" for business leaders. "If his order undoes the core of the law, why didn't he veto the law in the first place?" he asked. "The law he signed needs to be repealed, not papered over."

Matt Williamson, CEO of Durham-based marketing technology firm Windsor Circle, said he appreciated McCrory’s efforts. “It is not easy to make a public declaration … and then come back to try to move toward the middle." But in Williamson’s mind, it’s not nearly enough. “What he and many conservative lawmakers are misreading is that businesses have largely evolved on this social issue and care more about finding and securing the best talent than where that talent chooses to use the bathroom.”

He says he awaits “further progress” on the issue.

So far, the bill has been blamed for more than bathroom regulations by the business community. It's caused uncertainty when it comes to the status of certain economic development projects. New Jersey-based Braeburn Pharmaceuticals said it is “re-evaluating” its options because of HB2 regarding a planned 52-job expansion in Durham. Deutsche Bank and PayPal have also changed course on planned expansions in North Carolina.

Read: Deutsche Bank CEO says company is freezing its Cary expansion plans over HB2

Deutsche Bank declined to comment late Tuesday and Paypal and Braeburn didn't immediately return requests for statements on the order.

Lauren Ohnesorge covers information technology and entrepreneurship.

**NC’s McCrory struggles to undo damage from anti-LGBT law**

By Steve Benen

MSNBC

<http://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/ncs-mccrory-struggles-undo-damage-anti-lgbt-law>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) probably thought it would be a one-day story. He’d sign a new anti-LGBT measure into law, effectively overturning most of the state’s local anti-discrimination ordinances, and though the left would complain, the hullabaloo would soon fade.

It’s not fading. Last week, PayPal canceled its decision to open an office in the state as a result of the Republicans’ discrimination measure. This week, Deutsche Bank scrapped plans to add 250 new jobs in North Carolina; Wake County reported economic development losses; and as Rachel noted on the show last night, a pornography website went so far as to block visitors from computers in North Carolina.

Yesterday, the state’s Republican governor decided it was time to take some action – which did little to undo the damage McCrory and his legislative allies have already done.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory on Tuesday attempted to walk back parts of a controversial law that is seen as discriminatory to LGBT people – yet reinforced a provision in the legislation that restricts transgender people from using the bathroom that aligns with their identification.

McCrory said he’s using an executive order to expand government equal employment policies to include sexual orientation and gender.

He also said that he would ask legislators to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina, which was restricted by HB2, the legislation he signed into law last month that overturned many anti-discriminatory practices enforced by local governments in the state.

The point, obviously, is to mitigate some of the problems the GOP governor has created for his state as a result of HB2. McCrory clearly never anticipated the severity of the election-year backlash, so he’s scrambling to find some kind of fix, other than simply repealing the controversial law that started this mess in the first place.

But as Slate’s Mark Joseph Stern explained, serious problems remain.

It maintains the anti-trans state bathroom policy, which McCrory calls “common sense,” and “affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies.” Yet that was never in doubt: HB2 always allowed businesses to create their own bathroom regulations. So the executive order effectively does nothing to address HB2’s most castigated component.

Similarly, the executive order “affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees” – but this, too, fails to address the actual problem created by the bill. HB2 voided citywide nondiscrimination ordinances covering all employees within the city, not just government workers. In fact, the bill explicitly allowed cities to maintain previous policies regarding municipal workers. So this portion of McCrory’s order changes absolutely nothing.

In a statement to MSNBC, Chase Strangio, staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union, responded to yesterday’s developments by saying, “It’s clear that this is a political ploy from the governor that does absolutely nothing to change or roll back many harms to the LGBT community [inflicted by] HB2. Perhaps most concerning about the executive order is that it reinforces the anti-transgender provisions of the law and continues McCrory’s campaign to distort the truth about what it means to protect transgender people from discrimination.”

Or put another way, the governor’s fix doesn’t seem to have fixed much.

Looking ahead, though, McCrory’s announcement yesterday encouraged the Republican-led legislature to reinstate legal rights that HB2 scaled back, and if state lawmakers agree to take action, it will open the door to real, substantive improvements. No word yet on when, or whether, North Carolina’s General Assembly will take up the issue.

**CBJ Morning Buzz: The impact (or not) of McCrory's action on HB 2; Banks may face rejection by regulators (Video)**

by Jen Wilson

Charlotte Business Journal

<http://www.bizjournals.com/charlotte/blog/morning-edition/2016/04/cbj-morning-buzz-the-impact-or-not-of-mccrorys.html>

Good morning! Welcome to the CBJ Morning Buzz, a daily feature offering a quick look at everything you need to know to start your day.

If you missed it, check out yesterday's CBJ Afternoon Buzz here for a stock-market wrap, including a look at how notable local stocks ended the day and more.

Today’s top local story:

Just as the unrelenting barrage of criticism from the business community and LGBT-rights advocates in recent weeks has put North Carolina in national headlines, so did Gov. Pat McCrory's move yesterday to clarify certain aspects of the state legislation that sparked the controversy in the first place. The New York Times notes governor's signing of an executive order on the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act — better known as HB 2 — reflects McCrory's difficult position as he seeks re-election this year. And it's not clear whether his order, which urges the General Assembly to modify part of the law but leaves its most-criticized provisions intact, will satisfy either side of the debate. Several companies that have spoken out against HB 2 — including PayPal (NASDAQ:PYPL) and Deutsche Bank (NYSE:DB), which have halted plans to add jobs in the state — declined comment on the action or could not be reached by the newspaper.

The Washington Post points out that McCrory's attempt to change the law risks upsetting his fellow Republicans and supporters of the measure, even while Democrats and other opponents may view the effort as not strong enough.

POLL: Does the governor's order on HB 2 address your concerns about the new law?

Yesterday's top-read story on the CBJ website: Governor issues order on HB 2

In the national news:

Harsh verdicts expected for big banks: Regulators are set to reject the so-called living wills of at least half of the U.S.’s systemically important banks, possibly including Charlotte-based Bank of America (NYSE:BAC), in a move that would send the financial institutions scrambling to revise plans for a potential bankruptcy, The Wall Street Journal reports, citing people familiar with the matter. The move would raise the prospect of higher capital requirements or other regulatory sanctions for some of the banks.

Verizon workers go on strike: Nearly 40,000 employees of Verizon Communications (NYSE:VZ) walked off their jobs this morning in a strike coordinated by the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers unions, according to CNBC. The strike comes amid a contract dispute with the company.

Global finance leaders convene: The world’s finance ministers opened their six-day spring meeting yesterday, facing dampened expectations for global growth and warnings about financial risks and political movements toward nationalism and protectionism — in the United States and abroad, reports The New York Times. The International Monetary Fund said that it expects the global economy to expand by 3.2% in 2016, which is down 0.2% from its January forecast — and that could be an optimistic estimate, the IMF admitted.

JetBlue adding flat-bed seats: Airline JetBlue (NASDAQ:JBLU) announced on Tuesday it is adding "Mint" premium seating, or lie-flat seats, on seven additional cross-country routes, including four cities that don't currently have it: Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Las Vegas, San Diego and Seattle, reports USA Today. Charlotte was not on the short list.

Nestle looking at medical foods: Nestle is veering from frozen pizza and ice cream into a new territory: development of medical foods, The Wall Street Journal reports. The Swiss food company is hoping the estimated $15 billion market for prescription-based powders and drinks that help treat diseases will provide a big opportunity for sales growth, according to the WSJ.

Weather:

It's overcast and 53 degrees in Charlotte this morning, with a mostly sunny day and a high of 65 degrees ahead. The rest of the week looks much the same — sunny skies, highs in the 60s and lows in the 40s.

Traffic:

Get real-time updates on traffic conditions here.

Traveling for business today? You'll want to check the status of your flight before heading to the airport — you can do that here, at FlightStats.com.

Google business trends:

Japanese yen

Tesco PLC

Chesapeake Energy

European Union

Sumner Redstone

Premier Foods

Peabody Energy

Ford Motor Company

China

Anheuser-Busch InBev

Trending on Twitter in Charlotte:

#RealBlackPeopleQuestions

#EqualPayDay

#NationalGrilledCheeseDay

#JackieRobinsonPBS

#BGC15

Kobe

Sean Parker

Supporting Bernie Sanders

Tyloo

Homestuck

Sports:

The Charlotte Hornets will play their regular-season finale this evening at Time Warner Cable Arena. Game time is 8 p.m. against the Orlando Magic. The Hornets, with a 47-34 record that marks a team best since the NBA's return to Charlotte in 2004, are bound for the playoffs.

The Charlotte Knights' home opener at BB&T BallPark is Thursday.

This week:

General admission tickets for Queens Cup Steeplechase go on sale today.

Both Wells Fargo (NYSE:WFC) and Bank of America (NYSE:BAC) are due to report first-quarter earnings tomorrow.

N.C. unemployment figures for last month are due out Friday.

Jen Wilson coordinates the Charlotte Business Journal's online operations and social-media efforts.

**Governor calls for rescinding provisions of disputed rights law**

By Rob Morris

Outer Banks Voice

<http://outerbanksvoice.com/2016/04/12/governor-calls-for-rescinding-provisions-of-disputed-rights-law/>

After nationwide criticism and the potential loss of millions of dollars in business investment and tourism, Gov. Pat McCrory has issued an executive order requesting provisions of House Bill 2 be rescinded while maintaining its original intent to require gender-specific restrooms and locker facilities in publicly owned and managed buildings.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said.

“Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

McCrory said in a video released by his office that the order affirms “the private sector and local government’s right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies” for their employees.

Further, he said, “I have expanded our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included,” for state workers.

The governor also announced that he will ask for the General Assembly in its upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination. That right was eliminated in the new law, although aggrieved employees of private businesses could still sue in federal court. The federal process, however, must be within a limited time frame.

“Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality,” he said. “We can and we must achieve both of these goals.”

Dozens of major corporations, including several located in North Carolina, have protested the new law. Just today, Deutsche Bank said it was putting a $9 million expansion in Cary on hold.

House Bill 2 was passed last month in response to an ordinance approved by the Charlotte City Council concerning transgender use of public restrooms and other gender-specific facilities.

Approved March 24 in a one-day special session with near-record speed, the legislation also outlawed municipal and county governments from passing their own anti-discrimination ordinances, and local measures that would set a minimum wage standard for private employers.

McCrory’s order did not address the minimum wage provision, which bans local governments from passing ordinances that would force private businesses operating in their jurisdictions to raise hourly employee salaries above the state minimum, such as was recently passed in Seattle.

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left’s lies about HB2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law,” said state Senate leader Phil Berger (R-Rockingham).

The state chapter of the North Carolina Civil Liberties Union called the governor’s order a “poor effort to save face.” The ACLU recently joined in a lawsuit challenging HB2.

State statute does not include LGBT as a protected group in the private sector, and provisions in HB2 affirmed that policy.

“With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom,” the group said in a statement on its website.

Editor’s note: This story is an update of a previous version.

**In North Carolina and Mississippi, Backlash Grows Over Rights Law**

By CHRISTOPHER MELE

NY Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/us/north-carolina-mississippi-gay-rights-boycott.html>

When Bruce Springsteen canceled a concert in Greensboro, N.C., last weekend to protest a state law that many said curbed gay and transgender rights, it was only the latest fallout from the measure. Like similar legislation in Mississippi, it has drawn criticism across the country.

The rock star joined politicians, municipalities and businesses that had withdrawn cultural events, projects and official travel to North Carolina, dealing symbolic and economic blows to the state because of the new law, which bars transgender people from using public bathrooms that do not match the sex on their birth certificates.

“Some things are more important than a rock show and this fight against prejudice and bigotry — which is happening as I write — is one of them,” Mr. Springsteen said in a statement.

Here are some other key developments in the two states.

April 12

• Gov. Pat McCrory of North Carolina backed away from elements of the law, but he stopped short of opposing limits on bathroom access and left other elements of the measure intact.

• Deutsche Bank announced that it would freeze a plan to create 250 positions at its technology development center in Cary, N.C., in response to the state law.

• Lawmakers in Mississippi called for a repeal of the state law that allows business owners to refuse service to gay men, lesbians and others based on religious beliefs.

• The 37th annual Mississippi Picnic held in Central Park in New York City was canceled as a result of the state law, organizers said.

April 11

• The Canadian singer Bryan Adams canceled a concert scheduled for April 14 in Biloxi, Miss. In a statement headlined “STOP BILL 1523,” he said: “I find it incomprehensible that L.G.B.T. citizens are being discriminated against in the state of Mississippi. I cannot in good conscience perform in a state where certain people are being denied their civil rights due to their sexual orientation.”

• The musician Jimmy Buffett condemned North Carolina’s law in a post on his blog, but declined to cancel any shows there.

April 5

• PayPal said it was canceling plans to open a global operations center in Charlotte, N.C., that would have employed 400 people.

• In Mississippi, companies such as Tyson Foods, MGM Resorts International, Nissan and Toyota, all major employers in the state, have raised objections to the law signed by Gov. Phil Bryant. The far-reaching legislation allows individuals and institutions like churches, religious charities and privately held businesses to decline services to gay people if doing so would violate their religious beliefs on marriage and gender.

Document: North Carolina Governor’s Order Restoring Some Anti-Bias Protections

• Vermont, Washington State and New York have banned official state-funded or sponsored travel to Mississippi.

Opponents of North Carolina’s new law on gay and transgender rights protested outside the State Capitol in Raleigh in April. Credit Ray Whitehouse for The New York Times

March 29

• More than 80 chief executives of corporations and technological giants — including Facebook, Apple and Google — signed a letter to Governor McCrory of North Carolina urging that the law be repealed. Bank of America, which has its headquarters in Charlotte, also signed the letter.

“We are disappointed in your decision to sign this discriminatory legislation into law,” the letter reads. “The business community, by and large, has consistently communicated to lawmakers at every level that such laws are bad for our employees and bad for business.”

• Braeburn Pharmaceuticals said it was “extremely disappointed” and was reconsidering plans to expand a plant in the state that would bring an investment of nearly $20 million and 52 new jobs.

March 28

• Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York signed an executive order banning all nonessential state travel to North Carolina.

• Similar orders were issued by Govs. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut, Peter Shumlin of Vermont and Jay Inslee of Washington State; along with Mayors Bill de Blasio of New York City, Ed Lee of San Francisco, Muriel Bowser of the District of Columbia, Rahm Emanuel of Chicago and Ed Murray of Seattle, among others.

• High Point Market, which hosts a huge furnishings industry trade show in High Point, N.C., said in a statement that dozens of customers had been in contact to say they had canceled plans to visit. “Based on the reaction in just the last few days, hundreds and perhaps thousands of our customers will not attend Market this April,” it said.

March 24

• The N.C.A.A., which plans to hold tournament events in North Carolina in 2017 and 2018, said that it would “monitor current events, which include issues surrounding diversity, in all cities bidding on N.C.A.A. championships and events, as well as cities that have already been named as future host sites.”

• The N.B.A. also released a statement.

March 23

• American Airlines, which employs 14,000 people in North Carolina and has its second-largest hub in Charlotte, issued a statement critical of the new law passed by the Republican-controlled Legislature and signed by Governor McCrory within 12 hours.

• On Twitter, a hashtag, #WeAreNotThis, and an account calling for a boycott of the state appeared.

• Attorney General Roy Cooper, Mr. McCrory’s Democratic opponent in the race for governor, posted a video and tweets criticizing the new law.

• The measure generated a lawsuit, and Mr. Cooper has declined to defend the law in Federal District Court.

**Despite Executive Order, Opponents and Supporters Still Clash Over HB2**

WFMY

<http://www.wfmynews2.com/news/local/despite-executive-order-opponents-and-supporters-still-clash-over-hb2/129954976>

In the two weeks since Governor Pat McCrory signed House Bill 2 into law, businesses pulled out of the state, protestors rallied for and against the law and cities passed resolutions calling for its repeal. The governor responded to the backlash by signing an executive order to change part of the law, specifically the part which makes it harder for people to sue over discrimination. However, the bathroom rule will remain the same.

(Click here to read more on McCrory's executive order.)

The order may change a few things about the law but as of now, the order seems to be doing very little to change the minds of people both for and against HB2.

Like the law itself, some agree with McCrory on his amendments.

"It's showing that they want to listen and they don't want to alienate themselves from anybody," said HB2 supporter Alan Stockard.

But others see the changes as a political play on McCrory's part.

"To tell you the truth, I wasn't really impressed with it," said Liam Hooper, a trans male. "It insults our intelligence."

Hours after McCrory's order, city council committee members in Winston-Salem passed a resolution calling for the review and further reconsideration of HB2. Winston-Salem joins Greensboro, who passed a similar resolution last week.

While representatives from both cities said it’s difficult to know if the resolutions will have any impact on the general assembly, it’s agreed the resolutions are a sign of solidarity.

Councilwoman Denise Adams said, "North Carolina is suffering behind this bill. McCrory is circling the wagon trying to minimize the damage that has already been done."

Hooper said the law is more than bathroom talk. He said supporters used fear-tactics to pass a bill that affects minimum wage and civil rights.

"It was backroom, plantation, privileged politics aimed at vilifying a group of people so they could slide in even more control," said Hooper.

Meanwhile, supporters of the law and McCrory gathered in Greensboro for a prayer vigil.  Stockard said the core of the bill protects decency.

"There are a large number of people that do support McCrory and do support biblical standards and common sense standards."

Carolyn Hill, said she applauds McCrory effort to recall the discrimination part of the law- but stands firm with the governor on other parts of HB2.

"The bathroom issues, that's what I'm standing behind him with."

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**Gov. Pat McCrory to make provisions to House Bill 2**

Technician

<http://www.technicianonline.com/news/article_2e48e362-0132-11e6-9113-8bf58727e746.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order Tuesday that affects five provisions of the controversial House Bill 2 and will allow local governments to pass their own nondiscrimination policies.

The executive order provides support for new legislation that would allow employees to sue their employers for discrimination in state court. It also expands North Carolina’s policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity, according to The News & Observer.

The order reinforces the law’s controversial provisions regarding gender-specific bathrooms and its support for local governments and private businesses to create their own nondiscrimination policies.

McCrory announced in a statement that his executive order was necessary because of confusion surrounding the intent of HB2. The executive order states that “it is the policy of the executive branch that government services be provided equally to all people.”

The original law, ratified during a special session last month, described itself as “an act to provide for single-sex multiple occupancy bathroom and changing facilities in schools and public agencies and to create statewide consistency in regulation of employment and public accommodations.” The law has been commonly referred to as a “bathroom bill,” but it also encompasses unrelated matters, preventing cities from raising their minimum wages or extending protections from discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

McCrory’s order went on to insist that the state has a “rich legacy of inclusiveness, diversity and hospitality [that] makes North Carolina a global destination for jobs, business, tourists and talent.” However, the provision in HB2 requiring that individuals use the bathrooms of the sex listed on their birth certificate remains unchanged, leading to ongoing criticism from businesses and public figures.

The American Civil Liberties Union has been a major critic of HB2, and it has filed a lawsuit against the state. In response to McCrory’s executive order, ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston said in a press release: “Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people.”

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**Social Conservatives Try New Tack With State-Level Efforts on Religious Freedom**

By VALERIE BAUERLEIN and  JON KAMP

Wall Street Journal

 <http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-obama-powers-the-transgender-movement-1460502253?tesla=y&mod=vocus>

RALEIGH, N.C.—Social conservatives, pivoting from a series of setbacks on the national stage, are taking a more targeted, local approach to religious and individual privacy rights.

In North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri and other states where Republicans have comparative strength, they have introduced proposals they say are intended to protect religious freedom, as well as bills governing the use of public bathrooms by transgender people.

Now, those efforts face challenges that are more than just political, but also economic, as alliances between Republicans and business leaders in many state capitols begin to fray over proposals regarding gay, lesbian and transgender rights.

Companies including Dow Chemical Co. and Deutsche Bank AG are wading into these issues, citing concerns that the laws remove antibias protections for LGBT people and could harm the firms’ ability to recruit top talent.

North Carolina’s Republican Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday he will seek a narrow modification to the new state law that limits antidiscrimination protections for LGBT people, in an attempt to “affirm and improve” the state’s commitment to equality. He proposed asking state lawmakers to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination. His critics say his executive order doesn’t go far enough.

Mr. McCrory, who faces a tight race for re-election this year, faced the loss of at least 650 jobs from two companies that canceled expansion plans in the state in reaction to the law, known as the bathroom bill, which requires people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex on their birth certificates.

After some Deutsche Bank employees based in North Carolina raised concerns about the law, Deutsche executives decided to freeze plans to add 250 positions to the bank’s operations in Cary, a Raleigh suburb. PayPal Holdings Inc. previously scrapped plans for a 400-employee expansion in Charlotte, and officials from more than 100 other companies, including Apple Inc., have objected to the law.

Social conservatives haven’t always been successful in their new wave of legislative pushback. Two weeks ago, Georgia’s Republican Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed a bill that was motivated in part by last year’s Supreme Court ruling allowing same-sex marriage amid threats that film and TV production companies would leave his state.

More broadly, however, social conservatives believe their former silent majority is transforming into a vocal minority that is now pressing its case on specific concerns, from school prayer to homosexuality and transgender issues.

“There’s the sense on the part of social conservatives that we need protections of our liberty as dissenters,” said Ramesh Ponnuru, an editor at National Review and a visiting fellow at the conservative American Enterprise Institute think tank. “That’s opposed to the previous view, which has been that they were in the majority.”

The change has been swift.

A decade ago, then-President George W. Bush was pushing for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. Five years ago, President Barack Obama opposed gay marriage, though he said his views were “evolving.”  Voters in California in 2008 and North Carolina in 2012 approved ballot initiatives meant to block gay marriage. Now the U.S. Supreme Court has legalized gay marriage, and Republican front-runner Donald Trump has been married three times, and on the campaign trail barely mentions the sanctity of marriage as one man and one woman, for life.

“What you’re seeing here is states saying, ‘OK, you made a rule, but there still are things I can control, and I will control them,’” said David Fowler, head of the Christian-conservative Family Action Council in Tennessee.

The former state senator now lobbies for socially conservative causes in his state’s Republican-dominated legislature, including a proposed law that would require students to use restrooms and locker rooms matching the sex on their birth certificates.

A spokeswoman for Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, a Republican, said Tuesday he has concerns about a potential loss of funding under the federal Title IX law, which governs an array of public programs, including education, and prohibits discrimination.

“Currently in Tennessee this issue is being handed on a local basis, situation by situation,” the spokeswoman said. “The governor trusts our teachers and local school boards to make necessary accommodations in those situations.”

North Carolina was the first state to enact legislation restricting access to sex-segregated facilities on the basis of sex assigned at birth, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. But at least 13 other states, including Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma and Washington, are considering similar bills, according to the nonpartisan group.

Roughly 9 million U.S. adults identified as LGBT, according to a 2011 report from the Williams Institute of the University of California, Los Angeles, citing poll research.

Mr. McCrory said he is shocked at the backlash, particularly since transgender issues weren’t on many people’s radar until last summer when Caitlyn Jenner, formerly known as the Olympic athlete Bruce Jenner, revealed her new identity. “Who would’ve thought?” he said in an interview.“I can’t believe we’re talking about this.”

The law flew through the North Carolina legislature and was signed by Mr. McCrory in less than a day—a show of strength by the GOP, which gained control of state government in 2013.

Hundreds of social conservatives, including church groups from across the state, rallied outside Mr. McCrory’s office Monday, urging him to stand strong for tolerance of their beliefs as conservative Christians. Gay people often ask for tolerance, said Charlotte businesswoman Donica Hudson, but “that same grace was not extended to me.”

Proponents of similar measures are trying to capitalize on momentum from the N.C. bill and a more sweeping measure recently passed in Mississippi. In South Carolina, legislators are expected to hold a hearing this week on a bill introduced last week by state Sen. Lee Bright. Mr. Bright said he was angered when California-based PayPal dropped expansion plans in Charlotte, a move pushed for by LGBT activists.

“It used to be that they wanted us to tolerate them, now they want us to be quiet,” Mr. Bright said.

Ryan Anderson of the Heritage Foundation is calling on social conservatives to pivot after the legalization of same-sex marriage in the same way they did after the legalization of abortion with Roe v Wade.

Take the fight to the states, he writes, in his book “Truth Overruled: The Future of Marriage and Religious Freedom.” Protect the right of the baker not to make a cake for a same-sex couple on the grounds of religion, he said, just as states protected doctors from having to provide abortions.

“America is in a time of transition,” Mr. Anderson said. “It is critical to protect the right to disagree.”

Democrat Jeff Jackson, a state senator from Charlotte, said the bathroom bills and other measures like it are a last skirmish of the culture wars, made especially distasteful because transgender people are “the last group of minorities it’s socially acceptable to be hostile toward.”

“We’re going to push through this,” Mr. Jackson said. “At the other end of this national moment we’re experiencing is a great consensus in how to move forward.”

Mr. Jackson and others say the religious-freedom furor is a political attempt to gin up enthusiasm among a key Republican constituency, some of whom are ambivalent about Mr. Trump as a potential nominee.

“It’s sadly familiar to see those who oppose equal treatment and inclusion of LGBT people using religion as an excuse for discriminating against us,” said Jenny Pizer, the Law and Policy Project Director at LGBT-rights group Lambda Legal.

Write to Valerie Bauerlein at valerie.bauerlein@wsj.com and Jon Kamp at jon.kamp@wsj.com

**Film in NC faces challenges**

By Bill Colvard

Mt. Airy News

<https://mtairynews.com/news/39695/film-in-nc-faces-challenges>

“Surry County has been hot the last couple of years,” said Rebecca Clark, executive director of the Piedmont Triad Film Commission in her address to Mount Airy Rotary on Tuesday.

When asked about the impact of HB2 on the film business, Clark said, “I think it’s going to hurt us.” A remake of “Dirty Dancing” will finish production in western North Carolina but the producers say they will not be back, added Clark. “Others are saying the same thing.”

In response to Gov. Pat McCrory’s Tuesday executive order that walked back some of the provisions of HB2 on Tuesday, Clark said via email, “I think its a step in the right direction toward winning back business.”

Clark has been with the commission for 22 years, recruiting filmmakers to shoot their movies, television shows, music videos and more recently, web series in the 12 counties that the commission covers. Historically, film productions spent about $32 million in the Triad every year but those numbers were already down considerably since the state legislature ended a popular incentive program at the end of 2014 and replaced it with a grant program that is far more limited.

Before the state ended the film incentive program and passed HB2, Surry County was a popular film location. For a farmhouse to be used in the film adaptation of Nicholas Sparks’ romance, “The Longest Ride,” Clark submitted photos of farms all over the Piedmont. None were quite right until Bryan Cave at Surry County Extension suggested a farmhouse on the Mitchell River which turned out to be perfect. That production spent $23.3 million in North Carolina, according to Clark.

Other Surry County films have included “One and Two” starring “Mad Men” alum Kiernan Shipka, which was primarily filmed at Horne Creek, “Cabin Fever” which filmed some scenes at Camp Raven Knob, and “Are you Here?” a 2013 Owen Wilson comedy that featured a Siloam farmhouse.

Among the tools the film commission provides to location scouts is a website that includes more than 2,000 images of Triad locations with Surry County locations prominent among them. Both Mount Airy and Elkin downtowns are on the first two pages. The commission website also provides an online production directory which lists crew available locally.

Among the economic benefits provided to localities that host film production, Clark cited hotels, site fees and rental fees. There are also good paying jobs for locals.

Some projects provide economic benefits long after production is over as tourists visit the sites of favorite films and television shows. The first “Hunger Games” movie, “Dirty Dancing” and reality show MadHouse, featuring the Modified division NASCAR races at Bowman Gray Stadium, still draw people from all over the world.

Film productions can be very secretive about locations before making public announcements. When George Clooney was scouting Triad locations for “Leatherheads,” Clark took him all over the Triad but didn’t tell anyone about it, except her mom and husband.

In that spirit of secrecy, Clark ended her talk with a cryptic announcement that a production scheduled for summer 2016 had fallen in love with Mount Airy. She would divulge no further details, other than Main Street may very well be disrupted by a film crew in a few months.

**What does McCrory's executive order do for age discrimination lawsuit?**

By Pamela Escobar

WBTV

<http://www.wect.com/story/31706683/what-does-mccrorys-executive-order-do-for-age-discrimination-lawsuit>

CHARLOTTE, NC (WBTV) -

House Bill 2 affects all people who may face discrimination and are fired from their job in North Carolina. There are several parts of the new law that have caused controversy, and Governor Pat McCrory is attempting to address some those concerns by issuing his executive order.

Maryanne White is 64 years old and was fired from her nurse specialist job of 28 years in 2015. She believes she was terminated due to her age. She wanted to file a lawsuit in state court, but couldn’t because of HB2.

On Monday, she told WBTV she would write Governor McCrory a letter about her story and to state she wants to meet with him. It’s possible the governor heard her story without the letter.

Tuesday in the Governor’s statement, he said he would work with lawmakers in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination.

White says she’s now hopeful. She says hope is a good thing for all the groups affected by HB2.

“It’s a good thing that there’s some recognition from him, that he sees that there are some issues in House Bill 2 that they passed so quickly - in less than 12 hours,” White said. “I was excited that again someone in high authority recognized that there were some issues and perhaps can set some things on the right path where they should be.”

Her lawyer at Van Kempen Law in Charlotte said the executive order did not repeal the law.

“As of today, Maryanne and other employees in the state are left in the same kind of limbo. Now it is more like limbo because now it seems like it might get repealed... maybe not. So nothing has changed yet," lawyer Sean Herrmann said. "Now there’s at least a 'yet.'"

"As of today nothing has changed,” Herrmann continued. “The reality is the executive order didn’t change anything today. He encouraged the General Assembly to take action, which we hope they do - North Carolina needs that. But he could have taken action three weeks ago and vetoed it when it went through.”

Herrmann said the goal is to fix it and to protect North Carolina workers.

The North Carolina Advocates for Justice are a group of lawyers who have been concerned about the employment section of HB2. They said they look forward to working with the governor in the upcoming short session.

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**Senate committee to discuss Sen. Bright's "bathroom bill" Wednesday**

By Jack Kuenzie

WIS

<http://www.wdam.com/story/31706715/opposition-looks-to-stop-sen-brights-bathroom-bill>

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) -

The battle over limiting access to public facilities for people who are transgender will be debated at the South Carolina State House complex Wednesday.

The Senate hearing Wednesday is expected to be packed, though the subcommittee is unlikely to take any vote. Senator Lee Bright, who introduced the bill, said he supports the North Carolina law that's led to companies ending expansion plans in the state and conventions going elsewhere.

The issue flared up in North Carolina Tuesday.

On Tuesday, Gov. Pat McCrory signed an executive order to protect “privacy and equality for all the state’s citizens." Gov. McCrory is reacting to a huge backlash after he signed House Bill 2, a law repealing local government rules against discrimination based on gender identity.

Here in South Carolina, Upstate Senator Lee Bright has introduced a similar bill. The bill attempts to block local governments from passing anti-discrimination ordinances covering the use of public bathrooms by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

Bright said he's had enough of tolerance if that means "men who claim to be women" going into a bathroom with children.

State Chamber of Commerce CEO Ted Pitts says Bright's creating a nonexistent political crisis to save his political career. Bright faces three GOP opponents in June.

Former state Democratic Party communications director Zeke Stokes is among those working to kill the bill.

"I think those of us who support equality and acceptance want to make sure that we're able to nip this now than have another North Carolina on our hands where the legislature rammed this through in a very quick period of time and the governor signed it and there really was no time for reaction or to build support against it,” Stokes said. “So that's why GLAAD is here on the ground with our partners in South Carolina Equality and others to make sure that we can stop this bill in its tracks."

LGBT activists, corporate leaders, and even Gov. Nikki Haley have all voiced opposition to Bright’s “bathroom bill.”

Most recently, Uphold, an international financial services company with U.S. headquarters in Charleston, announced it would move its offices to Los Angeles to protest the proposal.

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**A look at governor's order on North Carolina rights law**

Associated Press

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20160412/APN/304129652>

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has filed an executive order that extends further protections to state employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity, but leaves intact the bulk of a new state law regarding rights for lesbian, gay and transgender people.

McCrory said he wants state lawmakers to change part of the law that prevents people from suing over workplace discrimination, but he would need the legislature to make that change.

He said that after hearing feedback from the public, "I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality."

Chris Brook, an ACLU lawyer who's fighting the law in court, said even if provisions about suing in state court were changed, the state law still excludes sexual orientation and gender identity from classes protected from discrimination. And local governments are still precluded from passing anti-discrimination laws that go further.

Below is a look at significant provisions of the executive order, along with measures in state law that remain unchanged.

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PROTECTIONS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

McCrory added protection for gender identity and sexual orientation to an antidiscrimination policy covering state employees. He also affirmed the ability of private businesses and local governments to create nondiscrimination policies for their own employees.

Brook said that private businesses have always been able to create nondiscrimination policies that go beyond state law, and he noted that the state law passed in March already appeared to give local governments the ability to set policies for their own employees.

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THE BATHROOM DEBATE

McCrory isn't asking the legislature to change the provision of the law regarding transgender people's access to bathrooms.

Essentially, the law requires government agencies to direct men and boys to multi-stall restrooms and locker rooms designated for use by people born as male, and keep women and girls in those designated for people born female.

This applies to public schools, state university and community college systems, state agencies and local government offices.

Single-occupancy bathrooms or changing facilities are still allowed "upon a request due to special circumstances" to a local school board or by a person to a public agency.

There are exceptions, such as when preschoolers enter a restroom with their mother or father, or when a person with a disability needs assistance. Transgender people who have obtained a new birth certificate after a sex-change operation can enter the multi-occupancy bathroom that matches their new gender.

McCrory's order said that private businesses can make their own rules for bathroom access "free from government interference," which is consistent with current law.

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SUING IN STATE COURT

McCrory's order said that he will ask the General Assembly to restore people's ability to sue in state court over workplace discrimination.

The new state law prohibits employees of private businesses from filing such lawsuits in state court. The same law also bars people from suing in state court over discrimination in public accommodations, such as hotels or restaurants.

It set up a new statewide public accommodations policy that prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin or biological sex. But the law includes no specific LGBT protections.

The state Human Relations Commission would investigate and mediate any discrimination complaints.

Brook said that even if the right to file a lawsuit in state court were restored, people still couldn't sue over sexual orientation or gender identity discrimination because those classes are omitted from state law.

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LOCAL LAWS

McCrory also isn't asking legislators to change a part of the law that forbids cities and counties from imposing any additional requirements on employers. A handful of local governments had made veterans a protected class, and this is no longer allowed. Local laws regarding discrimination in public accommodation are also overruled.

Brook said that the executive order "in no way touches" what he sees as the most onerous provisions of the law for the general public: pre-empting local protections for LGBT people in employment and public accommodation, as well as Charlotte's efforts enhance transgender bathroom access rights.

The law also addresses local minimum wage ordinances, an area of the law not addressed by McCrory either.

**Cost of a Tenn. transgender-bathroom bill could be $1.5B**

by Joel Ebert

USA Today

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2016/04/12/tennessee-bathroom-bill/82938128/>

NASHVILLE — A Tennessee bill that would require students to use a restroom that matches their sex at birth would put the state in jeopardy of losing federal money, the state's attorney general has concluded.

The five-paragraph bill, which has seen new life in the Tennessee General Assembly in the past week, is not as far reaching as the transgender-bathroom law that North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory enacted March 24. North Carolina also restricts cities and counties from passing ordinances that prohibit discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

The problem as Tennessee's Republican attorney general, Herbert Slatery, sees it is the federal government's interpretation of U.S. law that prohibits discrimination based on sex.

"As things currently stand, we must, as a practical matter, assume that HB 2414 would violate Title IX, because the enforcer of Title IX has clearly interpreted — and enforced — Title IX to prohibit as 'discriminatory on the basis of sex' what H.B. 2414 is designed to accomplish," Slatery said in an opinion issued Monday.

A revised fiscal note attached to the bill Tuesday cites a potential loss of $300 million in tax revenue and as much as $1.2 billion in federal Title IX money if it were passed.

Lawmakers already have passed two other religion-based bills in recent days.

One declaring the Bible to be the state's official book is sitting on Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam's desk. Haslam has until April 19 to decide to sign HB 0615, veto it or let it become state law — potentially the first across the USA to dub the Bible the state book.

“The fact that the attorney general has recognized that this will result in significantly reduced federal funds for the state of Tennessee should put an end to the discussion about this bill.”

State Rep. Mike Stewart, Nashville Democrat

Last year, Slatery issued an opinion on a similar bill that lawmakers did not pass suggesting the measure would violate separation of church and state provisions in both the state and federal constitutions.

"Common sense compels the conclusion that designation of the Bible as the official state book in practice and effect conveys a message of endorsement," he wrote then.

On Monday, the General Assembly passed the second bill, SB 1556, which will go head the governor later this week. It would allow mental-health professionals to turn away patients based on therapists’ religious beliefs and personal principles but would not allow them to reject people in imminent danger of harming themselves or others.

Republicans dominate Tennessee's state House and Senate, and Haslam, whose family started Pilot Flying J Travel Centers, also is a Republican.

The party is facing tensions both nationally and across the state between conservatives who want stronger stands on social issues and business interests who are mindful of the economic effects of such decisions. Haslam has not said how he will act on the Bible bill or the therapist bill nor how he would act if the transgender-bathroom bill were to land on his desk.

Proponents of the transgender-bathroom bill, including the Alliance for Defending Freedom and the Family Action Council, say it is necessary to protect students' privacy. Opponents, such as the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee and the Human Rights Campaign, argue it is discriminatory.

State Rep. Mike Stewart, a Nashville Democrat, called Slatery's bathroom-bill opinion the "final nail in the coffin" for that legislation.

On Tuesday, the measure's sponsor in the state Senate, Republican Mike Bell of Riceville, Tenn., told the Senate Finance Ways and Means Committee that he wanted another day to digest Slatery's opinion before proceeding with the bill.

Artists, entertainment companies, the tourism industry and Nashville Mayor Megan Barry are among those who have come out in opposition to the bill. Conservative groups have backed the bill.

"The fact that the attorney general has recognized that this will result in significantly reduced federal funds for the state of Tennessee should put an end to the discussion about this bill," Stewart said.

By taking up a bathroom bill, Tennessee legislators joined several other states including Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota and South Carolina in considering regulations that could put them in the firing line of boycotts and lawsuits.

"The administration is firmly committed to promoting and defending (the) equal rights of all Americans, including LGBT Americans," White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Tuesday, citing Tennessee's bill specifically. "Specific laws like this that seek to target and marginalize one small segment of the population are nothing less than mean spirited."

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, whom some have touted as a potential Republican vice presidential candidate, said last week that a transgender bathroom bill is not needed in her state. South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard, also a Republican, vetoed similar legislation March 1.

Tennessee is a smaller state than North Carolina but larger than Mississippi, whose governor signed a religious-freedom bill April 5 that activists say allows private businesses and public employees to discriminate against gay couples and others in the LGBT community. Both North Carolina and Mississippi have been in the cross hairs of activists' ire after their anti-gay legislation became law, and governors of five states have banned travel there on state business.

In 2013, Tennessee received about $1.3 billion in state and local tax revenue from tourism, compared with $3 billion in North Carolina and $630 million in Mississippi, according to comparable reports from each state.

But primarily because of its music industry, Tennessee had about 96.4 million tourists in 2013, compared with 52.5 million in North Carolina and 21.6 million in Mississippi. More than 3 in 5 were from out of state, and visitors across the state spent almost a third of their travel money in Nashville, home of the Grand Ole Opry.

Both Stewart and others said the bathroom bill could hinder progress the state has made in recent years to create a business-friendly climate.

"What we're doing with this sort of bill is absolutely putting that sort of progress in jeopardy," Stewart said.

Former state Sen. David Fowler, who serves as president of the Family Action Council of Tennessee, ripped Slatery for his opinion, saying it simply "regurgitates legal arguments made by President Barack Obama's administration." He contended that Slatery's opinion relied on "settlement agreements," not court decisions.

"Thankfully, the attorney general did mention that, by law, no money can be withheld from a state until the state loses its legal arguments, and then only if it doesn’t come into compliance with that ruling within 30 days," he said. "No one needs to run around like their pants are on fire as if there is some immediate, real threat to Tennessee losing Title IX funds."

Contributing: Holly Meyer, The Tennessean; The Associated Press. Follow Joel Ebert on Twitter: @joelebert29

**Anti-HB2 billboard causes controversy in Polk County**

WLOS.com

<http://www.wcti12.com/news/Anti-HB2-billboard-causes-controversy-in-Polk-County/38993536>

ASHEVILLE -

An anti-House Bill 2 billboard is causing controversy in Polk County.

The billboard is located off N.C. Hwy. 108 outside the town of Lynn and reads, "Welcome to North Carolina. Due to our stance on LGBT rights please set your clock back 100 years."

CLICK HERE to read more from ABC affiliate WLOS.com.

The sign makes reference to HB2, which was signed into law by North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory in March.

Under the law, transgender individuals are forced to use public bathrooms matching the gender listed on their birth certificate.

The group that put the billboard up is called Planting Peace and is based out of Topeka, Kan.

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**ACLU Releases Statement on Gov. McCrory’s Executive Order**

by Ashley Armstrong

WCCB

<http://www.wccbcharlotte.com/2016/04/12/aclu-releases-statement-on-gov-mccrorys-executive-order/>

RALEIGH, N.C. — The American Civil Liberties Union released a statement about Governor McCrory’s Executive Order addressing House Bill 2.

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory issued an executive order on Tuesday that maintains House Bills 2’s law that transgender people must use their gender-specific restroom while prohibiting workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity for state employees.

In response, ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston said the following:

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

“An impressive and growing number of businesses, faith leaders, and public figures have come out to condemn House Bill 2 as an unnecessary and dangerous measure that unfairly targets gay and transgender people. Regardless of political affiliation, more and more political leaders also understand that discrimination is bad for business and politically toxic. The public believes in equality and fairness and House Bill 2 and measures like it are out of step with the values of most Americans.

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action. We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.”

Lambda Legal, the ACLU, and the ACLU of North Carolina recently filed a lawsuit challenging House Bill 2.

The complaint argues that HB 2 is unconstitutional because it violates the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment by discriminating on the basis of sex and sexual orientation and invading the privacy of transgender people.

The complaint also states that the law also violates Title IX by discriminating against students and school employees on the basis of sex.

**Governor's supporters hold prayer vigil in Greensboro**

By Joe Gamm

News & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/news/governor-s-supporters-hold-prayer-vigil-in-greensboro/article_10682a35-fcfd-5d3a-be1e-6baeb64a5390.html>

GREENSBORO — About 170 people gathered downtown Tuesday night in a prayer vigil supporting Gov. Pat McCrory and the General Assembly’s stance on safety and privacy for women and children.

The vigil, held in the governmental plaza, was organized to respond to criticism the governor and legislators received after passage of House Bill 2.

The vigil, announced earlier in the week, took place hours after McCrory signed an executive order intended to clarify the new state law, sometimes called the “bathroom bill” because it, in part, bans transgender people from using the restroom of the sex with which they identify when in government buildings and public schools.

Supporters of the bill cite concerns that, without these protections, men might accost women or children in a public restroom.

“Most people know what the governor did (today) just makes sense,” said Marcus Kindley, a former chairman of the Guilford County Republican Party.

In a special legislative session on March 23, the General Assembly passed and McCrory signed HB 2, which created statewide policies that prohibit discrimination based on race, religion or biological sex, but left out prohibitions against discrimination against the LGBT community.

The law prevents cities from establishing their own anti-discrimination policies and ended the ability to file discrimination lawsuits in state courts.

The new law derailed Charlotte’s transgender restroom ordinance, which was scheduled to go into effect April 1, allowing people to choose which restrooms they use based on the sex with which they identify.

Shortly after McCrory signed the law, PayPal said it was withdrawing its plan to create 400 high-paying jobs in Charlotte.

Bruce Springsteen canceled Sunday’s sold-out concert in Greensboro over the law.

And Tuesday, hours before McCrory signed the executive order, Deutsche Bank announced that it would discontinue plans to add 250 jobs in Cary because of the law.

The executive order reinforces the fact that the private sector can establish its own restroom and locker room policies. But it maintains that schools and government buildings must have “gender-specific” restrooms and locker rooms.

In the order, McCrory says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation that would reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination, which the law abolished. The General Assembly convenes April 25 for its short session.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said in a statement after signing the order.

Kindley, the former Republican Party official, said letting people sue in state court if they feel someone has discriminated against them makes common sense.

And it’s not up to government to tell privately owned businesses they can’t let their customers use the bathrooms for the sex they identify with, he said.

“From theget-go, I didn’t see that private organizations didn’t have a right to do what they want with private property,” he said. “From a Republican standpoint, we feel the same way.”

Kindley prayed with and mingled among about 170 people gathered for the vigil.

They broke into groups of 10 to 12 and read prayers prepared for the event.

“Father, we thank you for our governor, Pat McCrory, and his decision to protect the people of North Carolina,” they prayed. “We thank you for the General Assembly and all the leaders that you have raised up to stand with our governor and lead our state.”

Supporters of the law aren’t opposed to acknowledging the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, said Summerfield resident Kathy Bauchle.

They just want women and children to feel safe in bathrooms, she said.

“We have a heart for transgender people,” she said. “If you want to, build them another bathroom.”

Many people attended the vigil hoping somebody might explain how the governor’s executive orders changed conversations about HB 2, according to Craig Phillips.

He and his wife, Rachel Phillips, said they support the restroom portion of the bill.

“We thought maybe (the vigil) was an informative-type thing — Maybe somebody will just explain why they’re here,” Craig Phillips said. “I’m looking for more of an explanation.”

Contact Joe Gamm at (336) 373-7090, and follow @joegammNR on Twitter.

**Report: HB2 has cost Wake County more than $700,000**

by LIZ BELL

Daily Tar Heel

<http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/report-hb2-has-cost-wake-county-more-than-700000>

For Taylor Mingos, House Bill 2 revives the same problems his company faced four years ago when same-sex marriage-banning Amendment One was passed. Mingos’ Durham online archiving business, Shoeboxed, strives to be attractive to out-of-state recruits in his competitive tech field, but, as House Bill 2 continues to dominate national headlines, Mingos expects the same problem he had in 2012, when the state’s constitutional amendment pushed people away. “I think it’s pretty clear from the reaction across the country —this has not upheld North Carolina’s image as a place where millennials and progressive, young, smart people want to work,” Mingos said. The law, passed March 23, requires people to use bathrooms corresponding to their biological sex, which raises issues for LGBT individuals. Tuesday, Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order to include sexual orientation and gender identity in the state’s non-discrimination policy for its employees and to clarify that private businesses can create their own policies on bathroom preference. All individuals, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, must continue to use the bathroom that corresponds with their biological sex in public buildings. In the past three weeks, CEOs of more than a hundred businesses across the country have signed a petition to repeal the law. Chancellor Carol Folt sent a campuswide message Friday saying the University has experienced reconsideration from donors, hesitation from businesses and cancellation of conferences. And on Tuesday, the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau released a report stating Wake County has lost more than $700,000 in economic investment due to the legislation, with millions more in jeopardy. UNC journalism professor Ferrel Guillory said legislation like House Bill 2 can hinder economic growth for a reason that conflicts with McCrory’s and his constituents’ social conservatism. “Tolerance has become an economic asset,” he said. Terri Phoenix, the director of UNC’s LGBTQ Center, said the legislation will play a factor in LGBTQ individuals’ decisions when deciding where to apply to college and work. Jeff Sackaroff, an associate director for University Career Services, said it’s too soon to know whether the legislation could influence companies’ decisions to come to the University to recruit. Cisco, who was one of the top-five hiring employers for UNC graduates last year and has offices in Research Triangle Park, signed the petition to repeal the bill. However, UNC remains an important part of the company’s recruiting strategy, said spokesperson Robyn Blum. Scott Albert, co-founder of Aurora Funds in RTP, said in an email when businesses are looking to expand or open a branch in North Carolina, the legislation might be a bigger factor. “The decision-maker has dozens of criteria to rank and analyze,” he said. “So, something like HB2 makes it an easy quick disqualification — you go from six state choices to five quickly.” To Mitch Kokai, analyst for the right-leaning John Locke Foundation, anecdotes of opposition to the bill don’t mean much. He said the bill will have no long-term impact on the state’s economy. “In the short term, this is going to be a big story for as long as the folks that are interested in making it a big story continue to push it,” Kokai said. Aaron Scarboro, who manages two accelerator programs for start-ups in Chapel Hill, said the law won’t change the region’s welcoming culture. “The hearts and minds of people in this area haven’t changed towards the LGBTQ community just because a law was passed in the middle of the night.” @llizabell special.projects@dailytarheel.com

Read more: http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/report-hb2-has-cost-wake-county-more-than-700000

Quoted from The Daily Tar Heel

**Gregg Allman Slams North Carolina "Bathroom Bill," but Says He'll Play Concert in the State**

ABC News Radio

<http://abcnewsradioonline.com/music-news/2016/4/12/gregg-allman-slams-north-carolina-bathroom-bill-but-says-hel.html>

Gregg Allman is the latest music star to voice criticism of a recent law passed by North Carolina known as the "bathroom bill" that many people consider to be discriminatory against the LGBT community. Allman, who has a concert lined up in Greensboro, North Carolina, on Wednesday, has posted a message on his official website explaining that he opposes the legislation, as well as a similar law enacted in Mississippi.

"For over 45 years, I've been fortunate to play music all around this country and the world. I've been honored to know and be friends with many different people from all walks of life," writes the singer. "Although we, as a nation, have made progress in many areas, it's sad and infuriating that some, in 2016, are still working so hard to take the rights away from our brothers and sisters, as in the cases of 'bathroom laws' recently passed in North Carolina…and Mississippi…discriminating against the LGBT community."

He adds, "I know that North Carolina is a state full of good folks and loyal fans, many of whom are angry about and feel misrepresented by this action. My band and I will continue to play our show as scheduled there tomorrow, April 13, and hope that our music unites people in this challenging time."

Allman finishes his messages by declaring that he and his solo band "stand in solidarity with the LGBT community urging [North Carolina Gov. Pat] McCrory to listen to the people and reverse this wrong."

Allman's message comes a few days after Jimmy Buffett announced that he would be going ahead with two shows scheduled in North Carolina next week, while strongly criticizing the state's "bathroom bill," which he called a "stupid law." Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, meanwhile, canceled an April 10 show in Greensboro in protest over the legislation.

North Carolina's "bathroom bill," also known as House Bill 2 and the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, was signed into law last month by Governor McCrory. It mandates that people must use bathrooms that match the sex that's indicated on their birth certificates, which opponents of the law argue is discriminatory toward the transgender community.

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**More than 100 people gather in Greensboro in support of HB2**

BY KIM WYNNE

FOX 8

<http://myfox8.com/2016/04/12/more-than-100-people-gather-in-greensboro-in-support-of-hb2/>

GREENSBORO, N.C. -- More than 100 people gathered downtown Tuesday for a prayer vigil in support of House Bill 2.

Organizers say the goal was to pray for state leaders and Gov. Pat McCrory.

Attendees stood in small circles, reciting prayers and singing hymns.

"We need to support our state legislators when they're making tough decisions," said HB2 supporter Laura Piedad.

“There are a large number of people that do support biblical standards, common sense standards,” said HB2 supporter Alan Stockard.

The event was hosted by NC Values Coalition.

Many at the vigil said state leaders are standing up for the safety and protection of women and children through HB2.

The bill requires transgender individuals to use bathrooms according to the gender on their birth certificate.

"It's a cut and dry issue,” Stockard said. “It hopefully will end as it began. They're not making a change; they're just keeping things in order."

"We're not bigots and haters,” said Kathy Baucle, a supporter of the bill. “We have a right to voice our opinions like they have a right to voice their opinion."

Since the bill was passed in March, protests and rallies have been held throughout the state both for and against the controversial bill.

Many at the prayer vigil say they're still in support of the governor even after he made an executive order making changes to the bill.

The changes include preventing the state from discriminating against someone because of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

It will also reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination.

**Air horn activism: couple kicks off HB2 protest at governor's mansion**

by ERIC SCHWARTZ

Daily Tar Heel

<http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/hb2-protest-0404>

 Three synchronized minutes of air horn blasts at the governor’s mansion could wake Gov. Pat McCrory to opposition against House Bill 2, compelling him to reevaluate the bill. At least, that’s the hope of Tina and Grayson Currin, who are spearheading the first of what they would like to be weekly occurrences starting with an April 13 protest dubbed Air Horn Orchestra #1. “We’re not into discrimination and we love our state. We think it’s important be loud, figuratively, literally,” said Tina Currin, a creative strategist at Myriad Media. The Currins have succeeded in creative forms of activism before — their Saturday Chores campaign finds them counter-protesting anti-abortion advocates by making satirical signs of their own and documenting the results on Tumblr.  “This idea of being disruptive and quirky and weird really seems to have hit a chord with people,” she said. She said their non-traditional style can capture the attention of people who usually tune out explicit discussions of issues. Grayson Currin, music editor of INDY Week, said while traditional forms of protest are invaluable, the air horn orchestra is an appropriate rhetorical response to the logic behind the bill. “We’re just doing something as ridiculous as what we see they’re doing,” he said. Michal Osterweil, a global studies lecturer at UNC, said while a social movement can be enigmatic to qualify, the public’s swift response against House Bill 2 could be interpreted by some as a sign of a larger cause — the fight for greater diversity. Grayson Currin said in today’s world, the internet is a key platform to make voices heard and mobilize events — like the air horn orchestra, which is being shared on Facebook. He said today’s fight is one for sweeping inclusivity. “I think America is in the midst of a really great civil rights moment,” he said. Osterweil said the experience of activism — being out in the streets with other passionate people — generates momentum and galvanizes people to follow up their protests by voting. Other activists are so disillusioned with the political system that they refuse to participate, she said. But Grayson Currin said he hopes for the former. While air horn activism will be fun and different, it will be a missed opportunity if people don’t actually vote against the people who enable measures like House Bill 2 to pass, he said. He said the influx of youth participation is a good sign for activism, and a bad sign for the conservative ideologies that currently dictate state decisions. “Pat McCrory is going to wish he was still the mayor of Charlotte,” he said. state@dailytarheel.com

Read more: http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/hb2-protest-0404

Quoted from The Daily Tar Heel

**Interview: McCrory Talks About Executive Order on House Bill 2**

By Capital Tonight Staff

TWC News

<http://www.twcnews.com/nc/triangle-sandhills/politics/2016/04/12/interview--mccrory-talks-about-executive-order-on-house-bill-2.html>

Governor Pat McCrory sat down with Capital Tonight anchor Tim Boyum to talk in a exclusive interview about his executive order, which clarifies House Bill 2, the state's new non-discrimination law.

**Gov. tries to defuse outrage over N.C. "bathroom bill"**

CBS News

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/north-carolina-bathroom-bill-backlash-continues-despite-governor-pat-mccrory-action/>

RALEIGH, N.C. --North Carolina's governor slightly altered a new state law Tuesday that limits protections for gay and lesbians.

But he left intact a provision that requires transgender people to use public bathrooms corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate.

The state has been hit with a tremendous backlash over this.

Two weeks after he voted for the bill, Democratic state Rep. Billy Richardson says he's haunted by his decision, and he wants the law repealed.

"As Mark Twain says, 'It's never wrong to do the right thing,'" Richardson told CBS News. "I was wrong when I voted the way I did, and it was incumbent on me to stand up like a man and say I was wrong, and fix it."

The law has provoked a storm of criticism from gay, lesbian and transgender groups who say it discriminates against them -- while social conservatives have been as vocal in their support.

But it's had an immediate impact on the state's bottom line.

Businesses in the capital of Raleigh have already lost more than $700,000 from cancelled events. Another 16 groups are considering cancellations, worth about $24 million, according to the state's tourist board.

Deutsche Bank and PayPal have frozen their plans to create 650 new jobs.

As the fallout continues, Governor Pat McCrory tried to defuse the protests with his executive order.

"The people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality," McCrory said Tuesday in a YouTube video.

His order seeks to restore the right to sue for discrimination, but the state isn't challenging the most controversial measure of the law -- which restricts transgender bathroom access b.

For Rep. Richardson, his reversal was personal -- because of his his daughter's reaction.

"Honestly, after the vote, she called me and said, 'I'm disappointed,'" Richardson said. "It caused me to look in the mirror and reassess things."

Richardson said the governor's executive order doesn't go far enough, it doesn't do enough.

A transgender woman CBS News spoke with said the law as it remains vilifies transgender people and repealing is the only acceptable option.

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**Website hacking claims are at center of NC Republican Party feud**

BY COLIN CAMPBELL

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article71446027.html>

Much of the debate over Hasan Harnett’s future as chairman of the N.C. Republican Party centers on allegations that he ordered a “brute force attack” on the party’s website to lower its convention fee.

After a dispute about the price of admission to the June state convention, the party’s Central Committee took a vote of “no confidence” in Harnett last month, cut him off from party email and banned him from the NCGOP’s Raleigh headquarters.

Some party leaders want to oust Harnett, who’s aligned with the Tea Party grassroots wing of his party and wasn’t endorsed by most Republican elected officials. The Central Committee doesn’t have the power to remove him, so some leaders are working on a petition to bring the 600-member Executive Committee together to discuss it.

Meanwhile, the party’s attorney has released a four-page affidavit from Ken Robol, a web development instructor at Pitt Community College in Greenville who says Harnett told him he wanted to hack the NCGOP website.

But supporters of Harnett say Robol was acting of behalf of GOP leaders in an effort to gather incriminating evidence against the chairman.

Both sides have sent extensive documentation of the incident to the media, including screenshots of text messages. As a result, the party’s dirty laundry has become national news in the middle of an election year; a Washington Post story last week carried the headline “North Carolina’s Republican Party has declared war on itself.”

Robol is an unusual figure in the conflict because he’s not in party leadership – his only official role is as webmaster for several community GOP groups. He contacted Harnett after Harnett’s email access was shut off over what party executive director Dallas Woodhouse called a “security issue.”

“Mr. Chairman, I can help you to hack your website to get into the site,” Robol said in a text message that Harnett later posted online.

In the posted texts, Harnett replies, “Let’s chat when you’re available,” but the rest of their conversation appears to have taken place by phone.

Robol said in the affidavit that he thought helping Harnett regain access to his email would “be helpful to the Republican Party.”

When Robol explained the options for accessing the website, Harnett “told me he preferred to do a brute force attack” so he could set up a new website offering cheaper tickets to the state convention, according to the affidavit.

Harnett has sparred with other party leaders over the convention fees. He wanted a $45 fee so that more grassroots activists can afford to attend and help select delegates for the national GOP convention. But the Executive Committee said the lower price wouldn’t cover event costs and instead set a $90 fee.

Harnett says lower attendance could mean the state party elects delegates who won’t stay loyal to outsider candidates like Donald Trump if no presidential candidate has the delegates to win the party’s nomination on the first ballot.

Harnett says Robol’s claims that Harnett wanted to crash the party website are “completely false and untrue.”

“I would call into question the statement from a person who ‘hacks’ websites as a credible source for the truth,” Harnett wrote in a letter to fellow Republicans.

Since the party released Robol’s statement, a new group – calling itself Republicans for Ethics and Transparency – has formed to support Harnett and investigate Robol’s actions.

On Tuesday, that group released screenshots of what it said were text messages from Robol in which the community college instructor says he wants “to get you the truth.”

Robol could not be reached Tuesday. The leader of the group investigating Robol, Farmville precinct chairman Todd Bennett, said the texts indicate that Robol wasn’t being honest in his written statement.

“It is unreasonable to think that Ken Robol woke up one day and decided he wanted to do this,” Bennett said, adding that he thinks party leaders were involved.

“I’m not going to name them. They know who they are. They need to resign.”

The NCGOP’s attorney, Tom Stark, said his investigation did not find any other people involved with Robol’s actions.

“The party has remained hopeful that it will be able to resolve this dispute, and it’s unfortunate that some people have tried to exacerbate it by appearing to form a bogus public interest group for the purpose of trying to harass Dr. Robol until he changes his testimony,” Stark said Tuesday.

Bennett’s group has filed a public records request with Pitt Community College for security camera footage around Robol’s office. Bennett said he wanted to see whether any GOP leaders visited the instructor. But the college had already erased the tapes.

Republicans for Ethics and Transparency had planned to hold a protest Tuesday at the N.C. Community College System headquarters in Raleigh, but the event was called off because of rain. WNCT, a Greenville TV station, reported that Pitt Community College leaders are investigating Robol’s actions but aren’t releasing details.

“My first goal is to restore the good name of Hasan Harnett” after “this ridiculous failed sting,” Bennett said.

Both sides said they want to resolve the dispute and focus on this year’s elections. But with Harnett sidelined and accusations continuing to fly, it’s unclear whether any major action will be taken before the June convention.

“It’s a needless distraction in what is already a complicated year because of the elections,” Stark said.

Colin Campbell: 919-829-4698, @RaleighReporter

Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article71446027.html#storylink=cpy

**Governor wants to change, but not scrap, North Carolina law**

by GARY D. ROBERTSON and JONATHAN DREW

The Associated Press

<http://wsav.com/ap/governor-wants-to-change-but-not-scrap-north-carolina-law/>

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Saying he received lots of “feedback and suggestions and opinions” about a law he signed that limits LGBT protections, North Carolina’s governor has ordered anti-discrimination rules be expanded for state employees.

Gov. Pat McCrory also wants lawmakers to soon restore the ability of all workers to sue over employment bias in state court, which was removed in the law.

“This was my conclusion after hearing from many, many different sides of the issue,” McCrory told The Associated Press shortly after he signed an executive order Tuesday addressing the law.

But McCrory said he sees no need to repeal the rest of the law, which has brought nationwide fallout on North Carolina since his signature three weeks ago, with corporate executives, gay-rights groups and political opponents blasting him. Some companies also have scaled back their planned job expansions, and Bruce Springsteen canceled a concert in the state because of the law.

North Carolina’s measure is among several advanced across the country that opponents say is discriminatory toward gay, bisexual and transgender people.

McCrory’s order expanded the equal employment policy for state employees to include sexual orientation and gender identity, and urged lawmakers to restore the right of all workers to sue in state court over employment discrimination on the basis of things like race, age and gender.

“I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality,” McCrory said in a video released with his announcement.

The order also affirmed parts of the law directing people at government buildings and schools to use the multistall bathrooms corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate. And the law still prevents local governments and the state from mandating businesses extend protections to LGBT people who work for them or when they visit their stores and restaurants.

Although some critics of the law called the order a positive first step, the most vocal opponents said nothing short of repeal will be enough.

“The governor’s action is an insufficient response to a terrible, misguided law that continues to harm LGBT people on a daily basis,” said Sarah Warbelow, legal director at the Human Rights Campaign. “It’s absurd that he’ll protect people from being fired but will prohibit them from using the employee restroom consistent with their gender identity.”

A Charlotte ordinance approved in February that would have allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity in public accommodations caused the Republican-controlled General Assembly to hold a special session March 23. Legislators overturned the ordinance and blocked all other cities and counties from passing similar rules targeting anti-LGBT discrimination.

There was no need for a state law “until the city of Charlotte brought it up,” said McCrory, himself the previous mayor of North Carolina’s largest city. “It wasn’t a problem in my 14 years as mayor and I’ve never heard it as an issue during my three years as governor.”

Still, current Mayor Jennifer Roberts tweeted she was pleased to see movement from McCrory’s office: “Historic to include LGBT protections for state employees. Look forward to more dialogue.”

Attorney General Roy Cooper, a Democrat challenging McCrory for governor this fall, said McCrory should have vetoed the law to begin with and the order doesn’t change that last month’s legislation “has written discrimination into the law.”

Equality North Carolina, the American Civil Liberties Union and three LGBT citizens sued in federal court two weeks ago to overturn the entire law.

A full repeal appears highly unlikely from the General Assembly. In statements, Republican legislative leaders didn’t address McCrory’s request to restore the right to sue in state court for employment discrimination. But they praised him for reaffirming bathroom provisions in the law they say keeps women and children safe from men who may have used ordinances similar to Charlotte’s as a pretense to enter women’s restrooms.

The order affirms the importance of the General Assembly’s action “to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists’ efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives,” Republican House Speaker Tim Moore said.

**WRAL News poll: HB2 could have impact on fall campaigns**

By Mark Binker

WRAL

<http://www.wral.com/wral-news-poll-hb2-could-have-impact-on-fall-campaigns/15637258/#qmjV5YLriTeQK7pJ.99>

RALEIGH, N.C. — The conflict over House Bill 2, the recently passed measure setting statewide discrimination standards, could reverberate into the fall general election, likely voters told a WRAL News poll.

Conducted by SurveyUSA exclusively for WRAL News, the poll found Republican Gov. Pat McCrory trailing Democratic challenger Roy Cooper 43 percent to 47 percent, with more than two-thirds of voters saying that a politician's position on the bill will either "strongly" or "somewhat" influence their votes.

"Probably the past two weeks have taken a toll on McCrory, and he needs to hope for a short 'short' legislative session this summer so he can get into the summer and re-balance the political equation," said Michael Bitzer, a professor of political science at Catawba College.

McCrory has defended the bill after signing it only hours after it passed the General Assembly on March 23. Cooper has labeled the bill "a disgrace" and refused to defend it in court.

"For both McCrory and Cooper, it's a dynamic that probably both of them want to go away, except that it seems to energize their respective bases," Bitzer said.

Both of the candidates have used House Bill 2 to raise money and have been regularly communicating with supporters about the bill.

Results of WRAL News poll on House Bill 2

The poll's margin of error is plus or minus 3.6 percentage points, meaning that Cooper and McCrory are still in a statistical tie. However, the result is the reverse of a finding by liberal-leaning Public Policy Polling, which found McCrory leading Cooper by 2 percentage points just before lawmakers passed House Bill 2.

The WRAL News poll reflects a "significant" gender gap, Bitzer said, with Cooper leading McCrory among women 50 percent to 38 percent.

It's unclear whether House Bill 2 played a role in Cooper's overall lead on McCrory. The numbers of voters who said they approve or disapprove of McCrory's job performance did not move significantly between a WRAL News poll released just before the March 15 primary and this week's survey. However, Cooper's approval rating climbed 18 points during the same time period.

Similarly, only 30 percent of respondents said they approve of the job the North Carolina General Assembly is doing, with 51 percent disapproving. Those numbers are about the same as a month ago.

Of respondents likely to cast ballots in November, 58 percent said a candidate's position on House Bill 2 would strongly influence his or her vote, while another 24 percent said a candidate's position would somewhat influence his or her vote. Only 14 percent said the bill would have no impact. Voters who identified themselves as strongly liberal or conservative were more likely to report that the measure would have a strong impact on their votes.

Results of WRAL News poll on House Bill 2

"It's one of those cultural issues that can get legs," said Carter Wrenn, a veteran Republican political consultant. "It has landed in politics where it has gotten plenty muddied up, but it's a cultural issue."

Wrenn said it was typical for partisans to feel more strongly about an issue like House Bill 2. But 56 percent of voters who identified themselves as truly independent – leaning neither Republican nor Democratic – said it would also be on their minds when they go to the polls.

Gary Pearce, a longtime Democratic consultant, pointed out that the law has dominated newspaper headlines and local television news and has even been featured on national news programs.

"Here's the one thing that is different right now – there's an enormous amount of coverage. It dominates anything else in North Carolina politics. The question is, will that continue?" Pearce said.

If the intensity of news coverage slackens, he said, so will electoral passions with regard to the bill.

Read more at http://www.wral.com/wral-news-poll-hb2-could-have-impact-on-fall-campaigns/15637258/#w6VHPYutTTZmB9Qi.99

**North Carolina governor issues executive order in wake of HB2**

by Catherine E. Shoichet

CNN

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/04/12/us/north-carolina-bathrooms-law-hb2-executive-order/index.html?sr=twCNN041216north-carolina-bathrooms-law-hb2-executive-order0939PMStoryPhoto&linkId=23376087>

(CNN)North Carolina's governor says he's responding to criticism of his state's controversial transgender law with a new measure of his own.

In an announcement Tuesday, Gov. Pat McCrory said he'd signed an executive order "to protect privacy and equality."

"After listening to people's feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," he said. "But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality."

The executive order, McCrory says, "expands the state's employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity" and "seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination."

Both of those were issues that drew sharp criticism after McCrory signed the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act last month. That law put in place a statewide policy that bans individuals from using public bathrooms that do not correspond to their biological sex. It also stopped cities from passing anti-discrimination ordinances to protect gay and transgender people.

The law faced staunch opposition from gay rights groups and others who slammed it as discriminatory. People vowed to boycott the state, celebrities canceled concerts and companies said they were pulling out of business deals in North Carolina.

The controversial law also has staunch supporters.

Demonstrators in favor of it stood outside the State Capitol on Monday, praying and waving signs of support for the governor, CNN affiliate WRAL reported.

Opponents: Too little, too late

Opponents of the controversial law, which is known as HB2, said Tuesday that the governor's executive order was too little, too late.

And they noted that it includes some of the same language that's in HB2.

"Gov. McCrory's actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed the harmful House Bill 2 into law which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people," the ACLU of North Carolina said in a statement. "With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

Equality North Carolina said in a statement that more needs to be done to stop discrimination, and that repealing the law should be the next step.

"After weeks of harsh scrutiny directed at him over the sweeping anti-LGBT 'Hate Bill 2' that he made law, the Governor responded today by dangling benefits for some, while North Carolina's transgender community, workers, and reputation as a welcoming place to live, travel, and work continue to needlessly suffer," said Chris Sgro, the organization's executive director.

A federal lawsuit has been filed over HB2, and the state's attorney general says he won't defend it in court. But in the court of public opinion, McCrory and other supporters of the measure have staunchly stood behind it, saying it's about protecting privacy.

"I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals," McCrory said Tuesday. "Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues. This is the North Carolina way."

**REACTION SWIFT, MIXED TO MCCRORY'S HB2 ANNOUNCEMENT**

WTVD

<http://abc11.com/news/durham-bulls-call-for-full-repeal-of-hb2/1288044/>

RALEIGH (WTVD) -- Governor Pat McCrory's announcement Tuesday that he will ask the General Assembly to reinstate people's right to sue in state court for discrimination - undoing a portion of the controversial House Bill 2 law drew swift and varied reaction from businesses, organizations and people on both sides of the controversy.

The Durham Bulls baseball team is one of those organizations, releasing an official statement Tuesday.

"HB2 is unnecessary, ill-conceived and furthers discrimination. We encourage the full repeal of HB2. The Durham Bulls are proud to be part of this diverse, inclusive community."

NC Democratic House Leader Larry Hall said McCrory's move is essentially an admission that the controversial law is having an economic impact on the state.

"Governor McCrory is now willing to admit the economic toll HB 2 is taking on North Carolina," Hall said. "In the weeks since the Governor signed this new statewide discrimination policy, our state's reputation has suffered very real damage. This cannot be undone with half measures and political spin. It requires meaningful action. He owes our state nothing short of a full repeal of HB 2 in the opening week of legislative session."

But NC Speaker of the House Tim Moore, a Republican, had a different take.

"Governor McCrory's Executive Order affirms the importance of the actions the General Assembly took in passing the Bathroom Bill to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists' efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives," Moore said. "Private businesses are free to decide for themselves restroom, dressing room and non-discrimination employment policies that best suit their business and employee needs without inconsistent mandates by cities and counties."

Moore went on to say, "North Carolina is a proud state and it is very unfortunate that the Bathroom Bill and the General Assembly's actions have been unfairly reported and maligned by political activists. We remain confident that a factual analysis of what the Bathroom Bill does and does not do will reinforce that North Carolina is a great state in which to live and do business."

Patsy Keever, chairwoman of the NC Democratic Party, said "with his actions today, Governor McCrory acknowledged for the first time the full scope and consequences of his discriminatory law. For two weeks, he's attempted to mislead about the effects of HB2 with long, incorrect memos and Internet videos. But today's Executive Order does nothing to fix what's really wrong with his job-killing law: legalized discrimination that will continue to cost the state of North Carolina jobs and respect."

Dallas Woodhouse, NC GOP executive director, said McCrory's actions Tuesday leave Attorney General Roy Cooper no excuse for not doing his job.

"Roy Cooper refused to do his job and defend the state of North Carolina by saying it would conflict with his obligation to defend his office's non-discrimination policy," Woodhouse said. "Now that Governor McCrory has signed an executive order expanding and affirming non-discrimination policies for North Carolina state employees, the attorney general now has two choices: come up with another excuse to not do his job, or stand up for North Carolina families and defend a common-sense law."

Cooper, who is running against McCrory for governor, issued a statement saying McCrory's "executive order is a day late and a veto short. The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue."

Cooper went on to say he's "glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more. The truth is, this executive order doesn't change the fact that HB 2 has written discrimination into the law. Governor, work to repeal HB 2."

Bob Phillips, executive director of Common Cause North Carolina said the "statements from Gov. McCrory seem to be a tacit acknowledgement that the process by which House Bill 2 was enacted was recklessly hasty and severely lacking in thoughtful deliberation or transparency. We hope that this can be a lesson for elected officials that passing such sweeping, controversial laws without proper time for public input and without thorough consideration undermines voter confidence in the legislative process and can cause real harm to our state."

The Gay Christian Network, which describes itself as an interdenominational nonprofit organization educating and equipping Christians worldwide to support LGBT people and their loved ones, said "while this order does address a few of the outrageous elements of HB2, it leaves in place some of the bill's biggest problems, including harmful, state-sponsored discrimination against transgender people."

Tyler Deaton, senior advisor for the American Unity Fund thanked the governor for "his willingness to recognize the mistakes of HB2 and act decisively to fix some of the damage caused by HB2's passage."

Deaton also said the executive order "means LGBT North Carolinians can feel more secure knowing their government will now protect them against discrimination in government hiring and firing and certain other state employment practices."

Lambda Legal was less charitable in its reaction, saying "the devastating blow of HB 2 will not be fixed by the band-aid of an executive order. While this is an improvement for the state employees it impacts, HB 2's reach goes far beyond what the executive order addresses and that's why we are challenging this extreme and discriminatory measure-in order to ensure that everyone who lives in and visits North Carolina is protected under the law."

Equality NC Executive Director Chris Sgro said "the order doubles down on the Governor's support for some of the most problematic provisions of HB 2."

"While Governor McCrory's Executive Order creates vital protections in public employment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, it does not address the deep concerns we share with members of the business community and citizens across the state about the damaging impact of HB 2," Sgro said.

The ACLU of North Carolina said "Gov. McCrory's actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

NC Senate leader Phil Berger countered by saying "Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman."

**North Carolina Governor Signs Order in Response to 'Anti-LGBT' House Bill 2**

By AVIANNE TAN

ABC News

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/north-carolina-governor-signs-executive-order-addressing-concerns/story?id=38342388>

North Carolina Gov. Patrick McCrory announced an executive order today addressing concerns over the recently passed House Bill 2, which has been criticized as "the most anti-LGBT bill in the country."

"After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," McCrory said in a video statement. "Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality."

House Bill 2, or HB2, which McCrory signed in late March, mandated that people use public bathrooms or changing facilities based on the "biological sex" stated on their birth certificates. Thus, transgender people in the state have been barred from using the bathroom corresponding to the gender with which they identify, unless they have had the sex listed on their birth certificates legally changed.

The bill also barred local municipalities from creating their own rules prohibiting discrimination in public places based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

McCrory signed Executive Order 93 today, which he says "clarifies" the bill and also "provides new protections for North Carolina residents," according to a news release from the his office.

North Carolina's Controversial 'Anti-LGBT' House Bill 2 Explained

The Reason North Carolina's 'Anti-LGBT' Law Is in the Spotlight Now

McCrory highlighted specific areas Executive Order 93 will address.

"Gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities" in government buildings and schools will remain in place, according to the order.

But the private sector can "establish its own restroom and locker room policies" and "non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees."

The order extends into policy for state employees with an, "equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity."

McCrory said the order also, "Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination."

LGBT advocates and community members have denounced the move as a deflective measure, which doesn't address some of their concerns with HB2.

"Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community," ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston in a statement. The group continues to call for the full repeal of HB2.

They said the measures, "fall far short of correcting the damage done when [McCrory] signed the harmful House Bill 2 into law which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people."

"With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom," Preston said.

"Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections, but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action," Preston continued. "We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people."

McCrory acknowledged opposition to his executive order in the video statement, saying, "Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues. This is the North Carolina way."

**The Latest: Senators enter North Carolina gender dispute**

WRAL

<http://www.wral.com/the-latest-jimmy-buffett-not-canceling-north-carolina-shows/15637419/>

RALEIGH, N.C. — The Latest on reaction to a North Carolina law that limits protection for lesbians, gays and transgender people (all times local):

5:50 p.m.

A bipartisan group of U.S. senators is urging the National Basketball Association to move the 2017 NBA All-Star game away from Charlotte, North Carolina, because of a state law that limits protection for lesbians, gays and transgender people.

Democratic Sens. Jeff Merkley of Oregon, Patrick Leahy of Vermont, Cory Booker of New Jersey, Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin and Patty Murray of Washington state, along with Republican Sen. Mark Kirk of Illinois, wrote to NBA Commissioner Adam Silver on Tuesday.

The senators said they hold no ill will toward the people of Charlotte but cannot "stand idly by as North Carolina moves to legalize and institutionalize discrimination."

The senators said the NBA made history when Jason Collins became the first openly gay athlete in a major U.S. sports league.

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5:45 p.m.

Rock 'n' roll fan Gov. Pat McCrory says he loves Bruce Springsteen's music but he says the Boss is wrong in opposing a law that overturned a city ordinance on gender discrimination and barred such ordinances statewide.

Springsteen canceled his concert last Sunday for Greensboro, North Carolina, citing the law McCrory signed. Guitarist Steven Van Zandt said such legislation is like an "evil virus" spreading around the U.S.

The state law came after Charlotte passed an ordinance allowing transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity.

McCrory said in an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press he thinks Springsteen and Van Zandt have "lost the pulse of the working-class men and women" who "agree with common-sense restroom and bathroom regulations" with the law.

It's not unusual to hear rock music playing on the stereo on the porch of the Executive Mansion.

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4:45 p.m.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory says he listened to lots of feedback before announcing his executive action on a law that addresses gender-specific bathroom use and LGBT protections, but he knows it won't satisfy some critics on both sides.

McCrory told The Associated Press on Tuesday he's been working on his order since he signed the law three weeks ago. But he said in an interview he doesn't regret signing the law because Charlotte had forced the issue by its "government overreach" in an ordinance mandating more rules upon private businesses.

The governor also told the AP he's concerned that some companies have halted expansions in North Carolina since the law was approved but believes many businesses are misinformed about its contents. He says recent phone calls with corporate executives have "absolutely" prevented jobs and investment from going elsewhere.

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2:45 p.m.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory says he wants lawmakers to restore the right to sue over discrimination in state court, but he's not challenging a new law on gender-specific bathroom access.

McCrory announced an executive order Tuesday in response to a wide-ranging bill he signed last month affecting the rights of lesbian, gay and transgender people.

His statement said that his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools.

He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity.

The order would expand the state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation and gender.

He also says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation that allows people to sue in state court over discrimination — which had been wiped out by the law.

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2:05 p.m.

Two North Carolina craft breweries are making a protest beer in opposition to a North Carolina law affecting lesbian, gay and transgender rights.

Mystery Brewing Company in Hillsborough and Ponysaurus Brewing Company in Durham are leading the effort announced this week. They say 30 other breweries are pledging resources.

They're naming the beer "Don't Be Mean to People, A Golden Rule Saison." It will be made in Durham with North Carolina ingredients and will go on sale in May.

Profits from the beer will be donated to LGBT advocacy groups Equality NC and QORDS.

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12:30 p.m.

Several more groups are canceling planned conventions or gatherings in North Carolina because of a state law limiting protections for lesbians, gays and transgender people.

Ryan Smith, a spokeswoman for the Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, says that five groups totaling about 1,000 attendees have already canceled. She said in an email the canceled events would have brought $730,000 to the area.

Smith said another 16 groups are considering cancellations of events expected to have an impact of $24 million on the area.

The B Lab, a group organizing a gathering for socially conscious companies, says that it's relocating the event that was expected to bring 550 attendees to Durham in October. Certified B Corporations are for-profit but meet strict criteria for social and environmental responsibility.

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11:45 a.m.

Entertainer Jimmy Buffett says he's not canceling two North Carolina concerts even though he thinks the state enacted a "stupid law" limiting protections for lesbians, gays and transgender people.

Buffett says he will perform scheduled shows in Raleigh on April 21 and Charlotte on April 23. But in a blog post he says scheduling of future shows will depend on whether the law is repealed.

Bruce Springsteen's cancellation in Greensboro over the weekend put the spotlight on big-name performers coming through the state.

Buffett condemns the law on his blog and says he thinks most of his fans feel the same way. But he says fans bought tickets long before the law was enacted last month. He adds: "I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year."

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11:15 a.m.

Deutsche Bank is halting plans to add 250 jobs in North Carolina because of a state law limiting protections for lesbians, gays and transgender people.

Previously, the bank had planned to add the jobs through next year in Cary.

But on Tuesday co-executive officer John Cryan said the company is "unwilling to include North Carolina in its U.S. expansion plans for now," because of the law. He said the German bank may revisit the plans later.

The bank currently employs 900 people at a Cary software development center, and it said it plans to sustain that existing operation.

The law passed last month overrules LGBT antidiscrimination measures passed by local governments. It also excludes sexual orientation and gender identity from the state's antidiscrimination policy.

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Read more at http://www.wral.com/the-latest-jimmy-buffett-not-canceling-north-carolina-shows/15637419/#YXCv53Ud8cagp8ao.99

**McCrory rescinds parts of HB2 in executive action, bathroom provision still stands**

by HAYLEY FOWLER

Daily Tar Heel

<http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/mccrory-signs-executive-action>

Sexual orientation and gender identity are now included in the state's nondiscrimination policy thanks to an executive action signed by North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory today. The governor unexpectedly backtracked on House Bill 2, the controversial law passed almost two weeks ago in special session, and clarified private businesses' and local governments' right to establish their own nondiscrimination ordinances.  The executive action also maintains provisions from House Bill 2 requiring transgender people use bathrooms of their biological sex, but allows state agencies and local governments to make accommodations for "special individual circumstances." "You know, after listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," McCrory said in a statement. "But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality."

Read more: <http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/mccrory-signs-executive-action>

Quoted from The Daily Tar Heel

**North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory Seeks to Roll Back Limits on Antibias Protections in Transgender Bill**

By VALERIE BAUERLEIN and  JON KAMP

Wall Street Journal

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/north-carolina-gov-pat-mccory-vows-to-revise-transgender-law-1460491573>

RALEIGH, N. C.—Republican Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday that he will seek to roll back some provisions of a new state law that limits antidiscrimination protections for lesbians, gays and transgender people in an attempt to “affirm and improve” the state’s commitment to equality after weeks of protest, including some corporations dropping plans to invest in North Carolina.

But Mr. McCrory said he was standing by a “common-sense” provision of the law requiring transgender people to use the public bathroom corresponding to the sex on their birth certificate.

Mr. McCrory issued an executive order that sought to unwind and clarify aspects of a law he signed March 23. He affirmed the ability of private businesses and local government entities to establish their own antidiscrimination policies for their employees and expanded state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation.

The governor has limited power to tackle the legislation through executive order, however. One key change—restoring citizens’ rights to sue in state court over wrongful termination on the basis of discrimination—will require legislation

“I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone,” said Mr. McCrory, in a video statement. “But the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues.”

LGBT advocacy groups said the executive order doesn’t go far enough—and that they are still seeking full repeal of the law.

“The governor’s action are an insufficient response to a terrible, misguided law that continues to harm LGBT people on a daily basis,” said Sarah Warbelow, legal director at Human Rights Campaign. “The North Carolina Legislature must act to right this wrong as swiftly as possible.”

“He just doesn’t have the power to unilaterally undo state legislation, she added,” while saying Mr. McCrory was “doubling down” on the bathroom-access aspect of the law.

Earlier Tuesday, the German bank Deutsche Bank AG said it is pulling the plug on plans to add 250 new jobs outside Raleigh, in protest of the new law. North Carolina-based Deutsche Bank employees raised concerns about the law within the bank, according to a person familiar with the matter.

PayPal Holdings Inc. previously scrapped plans for a new, 400-employee expansion in Charlotte, the state’s biggest city, and officials from more than 100 other companies, including Apple Inc., have also objected to the law.

Mr. McCrory said he is shocked at the backlash, particularly since transgender issues weren’t on many people’s radar until last summer when Caitlyn Jenner, formerly known as the Olympic athlete Bruce Jenner, revealed her new identity.

“Who would’ve thought?” Mr. McCrory said, in an interview last week. “I can’t believe we’re talking about this.”

Mr. McCrory said in a statement Tuesday that he would ask the legislature later this month to adopt legislation reinstating the right to sue in state court for discrimination. The new law prevented people from pursuing state court claims of wrongful termination on the grounds of discrimination based on age, gender or religion. Employment lawyers say the change affects thousands of people a year, who now must seek redress through the slower, more costly avenue of federal court.

Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger, an architect of the law, said in a statement that Mr. McCrory was putting “to rest the left’s lies” about the law and standing up to political opponents who want to allow “any man into any women’s bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Mr. Berger didn't immediately respond to comment on whether he supported Mr. McCrory’s call for reversing the change to state court law.

Write to Valerie Bauerlein at valerie.bauerlein@wsj.com and Jon Kamp at jon.kamp@wsj.com

Corrections & Amplifications:

Pat McCrory is the governor of North Carolina. An earlier version of this article incorrectly spelled his last name in a headline. (April 12)

**Governor Issues Order To Clarify HB2**

By WFAE NEWS

<http://wfae.org/post/governor-issues-order-clarify-hb2>

Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order Tuesday that he says clarifies House Bill 2 and provides new protections for state employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

McCrory signed HB 2 on March 23 after it passed in a one-day special session of the General Assembly. The law sought to overturn a new anti-discrimination ordinance in Charlotte, but went further, including provisions that exclude LGBT people from protection.

Among other things, the law took away North Carolinians' right to file discrimination lawsuits in state court. In Executive Order 93, the governor said he will ask lawmakers to revise the law to reinstate that right.

The order also expands the state employment policy for state employees to include sexual identity and gender identity. Critics had noted that HB 2 did not specifically include LGBT people.

McCrory said his order "maintains common-sense gender-specific restrooms and locker rooms" and affirms the private sector's right to establish

See McCrory's full announcement on his website, <http://governor.nc.gov/>

In this video, McCrory discusses the contents of this executive order.

The ACLU and three individuals have filed a federal lawsuit to overturn HB 2. In a statement Tuesday afternoon, the ACLU said the governor's order doesn't go far enough.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2," the ACLU said. "With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

WFAE News is working to learn more about what this order means to HB2. Tune to All Things Considered today and check back here for more.

**WRAL News poll: NC voters conflicted over HB2**

By Matthew Burns

WRAL

<http://www.wral.com/wral-news-poll-nc-voters-conflicted-over-hb2/15637430/>

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina voters say a new law has hurt the state's image and job prospects and should be completely or partially repealed, but they believe people should be required to use public bathrooms that correspond to their birth gender, according to a WRAL News poll released Tuesday.

The results reflect the ongoing struggle statewide with the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, commonly referred to as House Bill 2, since it was signed into law almost three weeks ago following a one-day special legislative session. The law prohibits transgender people from using public bathrooms that correspond to their gender identity, excludes gays, lesbians and transgenders from discrimination protection in employment and public accommodations and bars cities and counties from extending such protection to them.

Since the law was passed, North Carolina has been publicly ridiculed by comics and pundits and criticized by corporate executives and celebrities. On Tuesday, Deutsche Bank became the latest firm to hold off on expansion plans in the state, freezing an expansion of its operation in Cary, because of the law.

SurveyUSA polled 779 registered voters across the state for WRAL News between Friday and Monday to gauge their opinions on House Bill 2 and its fallout. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.6 percentage points.

Half of those surveyed disapprove of the law, while 38 percent approve of it and the remaining 12 percent aren't sure. Women and blacks show more hesitancy toward the law than men and whites, and support for the law breaks along political ideological lines, with conservatives strongly in favor and liberals opposed.

Results of WRAL News poll on House Bill 2

When the specific provisions of the law are examined, however, those clear lines become more jumbled.

Bathroom provision backed

On the bathroom provision, 56 percent said they somewhat agree or strongly agree that transgender people should use the bathroom that matches the gender listed on their birth certificates, not one that aligns with their gender identity. Thirty-four percent somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with that provision. Meanwhile, 56 percent also said that allowing a transgender person to use a women's bathroom poses a security risk to women and children, while 35 percent disagreed with that stance.

Republican legislative leaders called the special session after the Charlotte City Council approved an ordinance allowing transgender people to use the bathroom in which they feel more comfortable. The lawmakers said they needed to take immediate action to prevent sexual predators from going into women's bathrooms under the guise of being transgender.

Results of WRAL News poll on House Bill 2

People in Charlotte had the strongest response of any metro area in supporting the bathroom provision of House Bill 2 at 62 percent – 55 percent of Triangle respondents and 48 percent of those in the Triad agreed with it – and believing that transgender bathroom use poses a risk to women and children.

Only a quarter of those polled said they personally know a transgender person, however, and a majority said they don't fully understand what it means to be transgender. Forty-eight percent of respondents said they believe people are transgender by choice, while 35 percent said they believe people are transgender from birth and 6 percent said it was a matter of upbringing.

Discrimination policy hurts

The discrimination provisions of the law are opposed by a majority of those polled, with 52 percent saying protections should include the LGBT community and 36 percent saying they shouldn't. Younger people and minorities provided some of the strongest support for extending protections to gays, lesbians and transgenders, while conservatives and evangelicals were the staunchest opponents.

Results of WRAL News poll on House Bill 2

About a third of respondents said legal protections for gays, lesbians and transgenders don't go far enough in North Carolina, while 25 percent said they go too far and 29 percent said they are adequate. Younger voters, minorities, independents and liberals said more protections are needed for the LGBT community, while older voters and conservatives said too many protections already exist.

Clear majorities also said North Carolina cities should be allowed to set their own minimum wage and that people should be allowed to sue in state court over job discrimination, two protections that were eliminated by House Bill 2.

Sixty-one percent of those polled said the law has hurt North Carolina's image nationally and has hurt the state's ability to attract new jobs. Only 18 percent said the law has helped the state's image, while 13 percent said it has had no impact. An even smaller number, 11 percent, said the law has boosted North Carolina's economic prospects, while 19 percent said it hasn't had any effect.

People who identify themselves as "very conservative" were the only group that clearly believes House Bill 2 has helped the state's image, at 41 to 28 percent. Responses from those who identify as "strong Republicans" were just outside the margin of error, at 39 to 35 percent. Neither of those groups, however, back the stance that the law has helped bring new business to the state.

More than three-fourths of respondents said House Bill 2 needs to be changed, with 37 percent backing an all-out repeal. Twenty percent said the bathroom provision should be the only portion to remain on the books, while 19 percent said other changes should be made. Eighteen percent said the law should remain as is.

Results of WRAL News poll on House Bill 2

Conservatives and Republicans again provided the staunchest support for keeping the law intact, but evangelicals were evenly split on the question, with 26 percent saying it should be left alone, 23 percent calling for a complete repeal, 21 percent in favor of retaining the bathroom provision and 23 percent saying other changes should be made.

Read more at http://www.wral.com/wral-news-poll-nc-voters-conflicted-over-hb2/15637430/#KKKkzeEmgxDv4LKF.99

**North Carolina governor clarifies language in controversial bathroom bill**

By Bradford Richardson

The Washington Times

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/apr/12/pat-mccrory-clarifies-north-carolina-bathroom-bill/>

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory on Tuesday issued a clarification to a law prohibiting people from using the public facilities of the opposite sex, saying he had listened to “feedback” from his constituents and was taking action to “affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

The executive order does not change the main component of the legislation concerning public access to facilities, but allows the private actors to determine how to regulate their own restrooms, locker rooms and changing rooms.

“After listening to people’s feedback during the last several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, passion and, frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” Mr. McCrory said in a video announcement accompanying the executive order. “But based on this feedback, I am taking action to affirm the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

Mr. McCrory also extended North Carolina anti-discrimination laws to cover employment discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation. The governor said he will also instruct the legislature to revoke a prohibition on suing in state courts over discrimination.

The order came just hours after Deutsche Bank announced it was freezing a plan to create 250 new jobs at a Cary, North Carolina, software development center in response to the legislation. The office currently employees 900 North Carolinians, whom the bank said are not at risk of losing their jobs.

The German bank was just the latest blue-chip corporation to voice opposition to the North Carolina law. More than 130 CEOs, including those from Facebook, Google and Apple, signed a letter to Mr. McCrory saying the law goes against their values and threatens their ability to do business in the state. And PayPal withdrew a plan to build a facility in Charlotte that would have employed 400 North Carolinians in high-skill jobs.

Several celebrities have also spoken out against the law, including singer Bruce Springsteen, who canceled a show scheduled in North Carolina in response to the legislation.

Mr. McCrory said he does not anticipate the revisions will placate some of the law’s opponents, who contend it discriminates against transgender people who want to use public facilities on the basis of gender identity rather than biological sex.

Sarah Preston, who is acting executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina, called the executive order a “poor effort to save face for his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community.”

“With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted and forced to use the wrong restroom,” Ms. Preston said in a press release.

Sarah Warebelow, legal director for the Human Rights Campaign, called Mr. McCrory’s actions “insufficient.”

“It’s absurd that he’ll protect people from being fired but will prohibit them from using the employee restroom consistent with their gender identity,” Ms. Warbelow said in a press release. “The North Carolina Legislature must act to right this wrong as swiftly as possible. They created this horrendous law, and they need to repeal it.”

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**NORTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR PAT MCCRORY SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER IN RESPONSE TO ANTI-LGBT BILL CRITICISM**

BY LUCY WESTCOTT

Newsweek

<http://www.newsweek.com/north-carolina-hb2-pat-mccrory-executive-order-447012>

Weeks after signing an anti-LGBT rights bill that drew nationwide condemnation, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory responded to the backlash and pressure by issuing an executive order Tuesday that amends the measure, partially dropping the provision regarding using restrooms that match the gender indicated on one’s birth certificate.

House Bill 2 was signed by McCrory in late March, less than 12 hours after being introduced. It was created in response to a Charlotte City Council ordinance allowing transgender people to use a bathroom according to the gender they identify with. HB2 revoked that measure and prevented any new LGBT-protection ordinances from being introduced in the state.

McCrory said that Tuesday’s issuing of Executive Order 93 makes the state “one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.”

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and, frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said in a video on Tuesday afternoon. The executive order changes the policy in North Carolina’s schools and government buildings.

Executive Order 93 “maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and in our schools, and when possible, encourages reasonable accommodations for families and those who have unique or special circumstances,” McCrory said.

However, a private business “can make its own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities. This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector,” he said. The private sector and local governments can also establish their own nondiscrimination employment policies, and the state’s equal employment opportunity policy has been expanded to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.

“I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts,” McCrory said. The governor added that he knows “these actions will not totally satisfy everyone.”

The signing of the executive order comes after weeks of pushback from businesses, which included PayPal’s cancellation of a planned expansion in the state. Additionally, Bruce Springsteen canceled a show in North Carolina in response to the bill, and a number of state governors and city mayors issued bans on state-funded travel to the state. In late March, the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina and other plaintiffs filed a federal lawsuit over the law.

**READ MORE: Statements regarding McCrory's executive order 93 on HB2**

WSOC

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Statement from Equality NC Executive Director Chris Sgro

"While Governor McCrory's Executive Order creates vital protections in public employment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, it does not address the deep concerns we share with members of the business community and citizens across the state about the damaging impact of HB2. In fact, the order doubles down on the Governor's support for some of the most problematic provisions of HB2.

Related Headlines

 North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory makes remarks during an interview at the Governor's mansion in Raleigh, N.C., Tuesday, April 12, 2016. McCrory says he wants to change a new state law that prevents people from suing over discrimination in state court, but he's not challenging a measure regarding bathroom access for transgender people. (AP Photo/Gerry Broome)

Gov. McCrory wants to change, but not scrap, NC transgender law

Charlotte mayor says city still crunching HB2-related losses

HB2-style bill introduced in South Carolina

"Workplace protections are a vital first step in getting serious about fighting discrimination across North Carolina. If the Governor is truly committed to non-discrimination  and and wants to undo the harms done by House Bill 2, this is just the beginning of the conversation. We seek full repeal of HB2 in the short session.

"After weeks of harsh scrutiny directed at him over the sweeping anti-LGBT "Hate Bill 2" that he made law, the Governor responded today by dangling benefits for some, while North Carolina's transgender community, workers, and reputation as a welcoming place to live, travel, and work continue to needlessly suffer. Equality NC does thank Governor McCrory for his leadership on an issue that our legislative allies have fought on for years to win workplace protection for state employees."

Senate Leader Phil Berger issued the following response:

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Bob Morgan, Charlotte Chamber President and CEO statement

“Today’s action by Governor Pat McCrory sends a positive message to businesses across North Carolina and to our economic development clients throughout the country and world that North Carolina and Charlotte understand the need to attract and retain diverse talent in our workforce.”

ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston releases statement:

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

“An impressive and growing number of businesses, faith leaders, and public figures have come out to condemn House Bill 2 as an unnecessary and dangerous measure that unfairly targets gay and transgender people. Regardless of political affiliation, more and more political leaders also understand that discrimination is bad for business and politically toxic. The public believes in equality and fairness and House Bill 2 and measures like it are out of step with the values of most Americans.

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action. We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.”

Human Rights Campaign Legal Director Sarah Warbelow statement:

“The governor’s action is an insufficient response to a terrible, misguided law that continues to harm LGBT people on a daily basis. It’s absurd that he’ll protect people from being fired but will prohibit them from using the employee restroom consistent with their gender identity. The North Carolina Legislature must act to right this wrong as swiftly as possible. They created this horrendous law, and they need to repeal it.”

Statement from NCDP Chair Patsy Keever on Gov. McCrory's executive order

“With his actions today, Governor McCrory acknowledged for the first time the full scope and consequences of his discriminatory law. For two weeks, he’s attempted to mislead about the effects of HB2 with long, incorrect memos and Internet videos. But today’s Executive Order does nothing to fix what’s really wrong with his job-killing law: legalized discrimination that will continue to cost the state of North Carolina jobs and respect.”

Charlotte Chamber Executive Committee Statement

"The Charlotte Chamber supports our well-deserved reputation as a city that promotes and embraces diversity, inclusion and equality. The business community, in particular, understands the need to develop, attract and retain diverse talent. We believe that the growing diversity of our population is in fact a competitive advantage for Charlotte’s economy. The Charlotte Chamber of Commerce opposes discrimination in all forms.

"We applaud the Governor’s actions today which demonstrate that North Carolina is an open and welcoming state.

"We support efforts by all leaders at city and state levels to promote North Carolina and Charlotte as places that promote diversity, inclusiveness and equality.

"We strongly encourage the leadership and members of the General Assembly to take quick action to the Governor’s call to ensure citizens have the right to pursue claims of discrimination at the state level.

"Charlotte remains open for business as a city where everyone is always welcome."

**North Carolina Governor Tries to Step Back From Bias Law**

By RICHARD FAUSSET and ALAN BLINDER

NY Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/us/north-carolina-governor-pat-mccrory.html>

RALEIGH, N.C. — Gov. Pat McCrory of North Carolina, whose state has been the subject of withering criticism since he signed legislation limiting bathroom access for transgender people and eliminating anti-discrimination ordinances based on sexual orientation, announced Tuesday that he would strengthen workplace protections for state employees and urge the General Assembly to modify part of the law.

But he stopped short of opposing limits on which bathrooms transgender people could use, and the law will be left largely intact. Critics said his action was more cosmetic than real.

Mr. McCrory signed the legislation immediately after it was passed last month and, 20 days later, made his slight retreat with an executive order that he said would alter the equal employment policy for state workers to cover discrimination claims related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

He also said he would urge lawmakers to reverse course and allow people to bring discrimination cases in state court.

“Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality,” said Mr. McCrory, a Republican who is seeking re-election this fall. “We can and we must achieve both of these goals.”

The announcement reflected the difficult political position for the governor. He faces a steady drumbeat of threats and criticism from business interests calling for repeal of the law, and a united response from social conservatives in his own party who want to defend it.

State Representative Paul Stam, a Republican and the speaker pro tempore, said Monday that there was “no appetite” in the Legislature to modify the law significantly.

In an email Tuesday, he wrote: “A governor can’t repeal a law, and he did not. He did ask for one sentence in the law to be modified.”

Critics agreed that Tuesday’s order by Mr. McCrory made no immediate changes to North Carolina’s law, which includes the provision limiting transgender bathroom access and another that forbids local governments from creating their own anti-discrimination ordinances.

“Governor McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the L.G.B.T. community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done” by the law, Sarah Preston, the acting executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina, said in a statement on Tuesday.

But other opponents of the law said they were fleetingly encouraged by parts of Mr. McCrory’s announcement. Kyle Palazzolo, a staff lawyer at Lambda Legal, a gay rights group, said that the law’s “devastating blow” would not be resolved by Mr. McCrory’s order, but that it had brought “an improvement for the state employees it impacts.”

Since the measure became law, North Carolina has faced a barrage of criticism from business interests and warnings of boycotts and canceled investments. PayPal, an online-payment company, said it would abandon plans for a global operations center in the state, and the National Basketball Association suggested that it could move its 2017 All-Star Game from Charlotte. There, tourism officials said that organizers of at least four major events had cited the law when they dropped plans to be in the city.

On Tuesday, Deutsche Bank announced that it would “freeze plans to create 250 jobs” near Raleigh.

Mr. McCrory is not the first Republican governor to back away from a measure condemned as curbing gay rights. Last year, for example, Mike Pence of Indiana and Asa Hutchinson of Arkansas found themselves under similar pressures.

Document: North Carolina Governor’s Order Restoring Some Anti-Bias Protections

The North Carolina law that led to this year’s firestorm created a mandatory statewide anti-discrimination policy, but it did not include specific protections based on sexual orientation or gender identity. State lawmakers introduced their legislation after Charlotte, the state’s largest city, approved new legal protections for transgender people.

The new state law prohibits people from using public bathrooms that do not match the designated sex on their birth certificates.

In addition to the outcry from businesses, North Carolina has encountered pressure from the Obama administration, which has previously argued that gay, lesbian and transgender people are protected by federal laws forbidding gender discrimination. A handful of federal agencies have been studying whether the law makes the state ineligible for the billions of aid dollars it receives each year.

The measure is also the subject of a lawsuit, and Mr. McCrory’s general-election opponent, Attorney General Roy Cooper, has declined to defend the law in court.

In his previous efforts to defend the law in the court of public opinion, Mr. McCrory argued that out-of-state interest groups and news organizations were stripping the law of its context and besmirching North Carolina’s reputation. Mr. McCrory complained about “a vicious, nationwide smear campaign” in late March.

On Tuesday, it was not immediately clear whether Mr. McCrory’s decision would do anything to inhibit the pushback from major businesses, including Deutsche Bank.

After Mr. McCrory’s announcement, a spokesman for the bank, Michael Golden, declined to comment on its effects on the company’s plans.

Other companies that expressed concerns about the measure, including 21st Century Fox, Bank of America and PayPal, did not respond to messages. The chief executive of Charlotte’s chamber of commerce, Bob Morgan, said Mr. McCrory’s announcement “sends a positive message to businesses across North Carolina and to our economic development clients throughout the country and the world.”

Just as businesses were considering the consequences of Mr. McCrory’s decision, many members of the General Assembly were trying to digest the essence of his executive order and what it might mean for lawmakers when they reconvene on April 25.

Some Republicans quickly said that Mr. McCrory had effectively come down on the side of the law. The speaker of the State House of Representatives, Tim Moore, who was a sponsor of the legislation, said that the governor’s order “affirms the importance of the actions the General Assembly took in passing the Bathroom Bill to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists’ efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives.”

Mr. McCrory’s decision will shift at least some of the burden about the law’s future to the General Assembly, which will have to decide whether to assent to his request that discrimination claims again be permitted in state courts.

“Our caucus will carefully review the executive order to determine if there will be any further action by the General Assembly,” said Andy Munn, a spokesman for Mr. Moore.

Some Democrats offered modest praise for Mr. McCrory’s decision, but others condemned it as tardy and insufficient.

“Governor McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short,” Mr. Cooper said. “I’m glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more.”

Other Democrats said the executive order was little more than a distraction.

“I think it’s an attempt to divert attention from a full repeal effort,” said State Representative Darren G. Jackson, a Democrat from Wake County.

He said it was a tacit admission that the new law “has taken a big economic toll on North Carolina.”

**McCrory wants lawmakers to reverse part of HB2**

By Mark Binker, Laura Leslie and Kathryn Brown

WRAL

<http://www.wral.com/mccrory-wants-lawmakers-to-reverse-part-of-hb2/15637742/>

RALEIGH, N.C. — Gov. Pat McCrory says the General Assembly should reverse a portion of the recently passed House Bill 2 but leave in place provisions that deal with locker room and restroom usage.

Specifically, the governor called on lawmakers to reverse a part of the law, known as the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, which prevents North Carolina workers who believe they've been wrongfully fired due to sex, age, race or gender from suing in state court.

"I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts," McCrory said in a video announcement Tuesday. "Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals. Now, I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common-sense solutions to complex issues."

At the same time, McCrory lashed out at critics, saying that he had "come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and, frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina."

In particular, the governor defended a section of the bill that overturned a Charlotte ordinance that would have allowed transgender people to use the bathroom of their choice. House Bill 2 prohibits cities from imposing bathroom regulations on private businesses and mandates that people in government-owned buildings use the restroom that corresponds to the gender on their birth certificate rather than the one in which they would be most comfortable.

McCrory issued an executive order to clear up what he viewed as shortcomings in the bill.

Some of the order's provisions would do little. For example, the order reinforces that private businesses can set their own policies with regard to bathroom usage. That's something House Bill 2 already allows. McCrory's order does interpret the law as allowing private businesses that lease space in government-owned buildings to set their own restroom and locker room policies.

Although McCrory includes his request to roll back the provision on wrongful termination lawsuits in the executive order, only the General Assembly can carry out such a rollback.

"Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law," Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger said through a written statement.

"Governor McCrory’s Executive Order affirms the importance of the actions the General Assembly took in passing the Bathroom Bill to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists’ efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives. Private businesses are free to decide for themselves restroom, dressing room and non-discrimination employment policies that best suit their business and employee needs without inconsistent mandates by cities and counties," House Speaker Tim Moore said in a statement.

Neither Berger, R-Rockingham, nor Moore, R-Cleveland, addressed whether the legislature would take up a repeal of the lawsuit provision.

Rep. Nelson Dollar, R-Wake, said House leaders would consider the request, but he defended the change, saying he believes federal court is a better option for pursuing job discrimination claims.

"There was some concern that had been expressed about losing the state court option, which is frankly a smaller option, a more limited option," Dollar said. "When you look at those two, the remedies in the federal system are quite a bit more robust."

Melissa Essary, a law professor at Campbell University, said she was stunned the wrongful termination lawsuit provision was even part of the bill to begin with, and she lauded the effort to repeal it.

"It should go away. I don’t think the legislators themselves even knew it was there," Essary said. "Maybe he’s changed the conversation, I think, by asking for a repeal of what was a catastrophic portion of the law for state workers."

Protections extended to LGBT state workers

One of the most meaningful parts of McCrory's order may be a provision that says state human resource policy bars "unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political affiliation, genetic information or disability."

That would be an expansion of protections for many state workers who have been laboring under a much narrower non-discrimination policy, although some parts of state government such as the University of North Carolina system and the Department of Justice already have broader non-discrimination statements.

Essary called the expansion of protections "a huge step for the state, and a first."

"For him to do so by virtue of executive order, I think, is sending a statement that he wants the nation and the world to hear with regard to the inclusive nature of North Carolina. Mind you, it impacts only a small percentage of workers statewide, but it does impact state workers, and I think it does send a message," Essary said. "I would ask, if you’re going to protect state workers from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, why cannot the common citizen who works for a private-sector employer be protected?"

Some advocates who have opposed House Bill 2 acknowledged the expanded protections for state workers, while adding that they still oppose the bill.

"Workplace protections for state employees, that is important. That is something that our allies have been fighting for for 10 years, not just short term, so we're glad to see that," said Chris Sgro, the executive director of Equality NC, a nonprofit that advocates for LGBT people.

But Sgro said the order "doubles down" on the bathroom restrictions and still doesn't allow any local protections for LGBT people in employment or housing.

"If the governor is serious about this being a concerning piece of legislation, which he clearly has indicated today it is, then it needs to be repealed – in full and not just piecemeal," he said.

Other advocates and opponents of the law blasted McCrory's order as "insufficient," saying they fell short of the total repeal many have called for.

"Governor McCrory is now willing to admit the economic toll HB 2 is taking on North Carolina," House Minority Leader Larry Hall said in a statement. "In the weeks since the Governor signed this new statewide discrimination policy, our state’s reputation has suffered very real damage. This cannot be undone with half measures and political spin. It requires meaningful action. He owes our state nothing short of a full repeal of HB 2 in the opening week of legislative session."

"Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people," said Sarah Preston, acting executive director of the North Carolina branch of the American Civil Liberties Union. "With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

"While this order does address a few of the outrageous elements of HB2, it leaves in place some of the bill’s biggest problems, including harmful, state-sponsored discrimination against transgender people," Justin Lee, executive director of the Gay Christian Network, said in a statement.

Read more at http://www.wral.com/mccrory-wants-lawmakers-to-reverse-part-of-hb2/15637742/#2s6JwCC2RzfmWWmm.99

**North Carolina governor backs down -- a bit -- on state's controversial LGBT law**

by Matt Pearce and Jenny Jarvie

Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-north-carolina-lgbt-20160412-story.html>

Conventions have been canceled, rock concerts scrubbed, and corporations have yanked their business from North Carolina to protest a state law that critics say discriminates against gay, lesbian and transgender people.

Even the porn site xHamster.com is confronting users with a question: “Do you support the anti-LGBT bill in North Carolina?” Users who click yes are notified, via pop-up, that their access has been blocked.

These are tough days for the Republican North Carolina lawmakers who passed a law last month limiting legal protections for LGBT people at hotels, shops and restaurants. The law also restricted which bathrooms and locker rooms transgender people can use.

Now, as North Carolina faces the possibility of more business lost to corporate and celebrity protests, Republican Gov. Pat McCrory is trying to douse national criticism — without significantly changing the law.

“I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said in a video statement Tuesday.

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However, in response to public feedback, he announced he had signed an executive order intended to “affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.” Republican lawmakers had passed the law to override a Charlotte city LGBT nondiscrimination ordinance.

On its face, McCrory’s executive order expanded the state's equal-opportunity employment policy to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity — a seeming extension of protections for state government workers.

Additionally, McCrory said he would immediately seek approval of a new law in the upcoming legislative session to “reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.”

Yet critics swiftly responded that the governor had not made any significant changes. The executive order did little to alter the state’s requirement that transgender people use the public bathrooms and locker rooms that match the gender on their birth certificates. Nor did the order restore the ability of cities to determine their own LGBT nondiscrimination policies.

Chase Strangio, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union who is suing the state over the new law, said the equal-opportunity employment provision approved by McCrory doesn’t change anything for state government workers because they theoretically are already covered under federal employment provisions.

“It doesn’t do anything,” Strangio said of the executive order in an interview. “It does nothing to roll back or mitigate any of the harm [to] the LGBT community from [House Bill 2].”

The ACLU’s North Carolina chapter also criticized the governor’s announcement as ineffectual.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed the harmful House Bill 2 into law which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people,” Sarah Preston, acting executive director of the ACLU of North Carolina, said in a statement.

North Carolina’s Democratic Atty. Gen. Roy Cooper, who has publicly opposed the law, was equally blunt, calling the executive order “a day late and a veto short” and urging the governor to work on a repeal.

“The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue,” Cooper said.

North Carolina rally

Supporters of a new state law gather on Monday for a rally outside the North Carolina State Capitol in Raleigh. (Gerry Broome / Associated Press)

Republican Senate Leader Phil Berger praised the governor’s order, criticizing Cooper and the “left-wing political correctness mob ... who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Less than a week after McCrory signed the law on March 23, LGBT advocacy groups filed a federal lawsuit, arguing the state law violates the U.S. Constitution by “singling out LGBT people for disfavored treatment.”

The law, dubbed the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, has drawn strong opposition from major corporations including Apple and Google, as well as popular entertainers such as Bruce Springsteen, who canceled a concert in Greensboro, N.C.

Springsteen said the law represents “an attempt by people who cannot stand the progress our country has made in recognizing the human rights of all of our citizens to overturn that progress.”

PayPal has announced it is abandoning its plan to bring 400 jobs to the state and Deutsche Bank is reportedly freezing plans to create 250 new jobs in North Carolina. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority has forbade staff from traveling to Charlotte for a conference hosted by the American Public Transportation Assn.

A spokesman for Cyprus-based porn site xHamster said the goal of the site’s boycott “is to fight for the equality for everyone” and that “everybody has a right to their own sexuality and xHamster is there to love and support people the way they are.”

Staff writer Pearce reported from Los Angeles and special correspondent Jarvie from Atlanta.

**Governor McCrory takes action to break standoff over HB2**

WBT

<http://wbt.com/governor-mccrory-takes-action-to-break-standoff-over-hb2/>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has signed an Executive Order that he says will "protect the privacy and equality of all North Carolinians. His order asks lawmakers to restore the right to sue over discrimination in state court, but does not challenge a new law on gender-specific bathroom access.

Those concessions address concerns stated by opponents and supporters of House Bill 2.

The bill has triggered opposition from LGBT groups and a number of businesses. It has also drawn support from those concerned about privacy rights that they say were eliminated from a Charlotte non-discrimination ordinance that triggered House Bill 2 in the first place. That ordinance allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity, even requiring businesses to comply.

McCrory said that his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools.

One issue that HB2 opponents had insisted upon, which McCrory's order would cover, expands the state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation and gender.

He also says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation that allows people to sue in state court over discrimination which had been wiped out by the law.

**McCrory backs HB2 changes, protections for state jobs**

by Mark Barrett

Citizen Times

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2016/04/12/mccrory-backs-hb2-changes-protections-state-jobs/82944234/>

Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday he is banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identify in state government personnel decisions and is seeking to reverse a provision of HB2 that made it harder for people to sue over discrimination on other grounds in court.

An executive order McCrory signed Tuesday leaves intact the primary provisions of HB2. They keep local governments from adopting ordinances prohibiting discrimination against LGBT people and require that bathrooms and locker rooms in state and local government buildings be used according to the "biological sex" of the user.

However, the executive order reaffirms that the private sector can set its own restroom and locker room policies and that private businesses and local governments can establish their own policies for their employees. That would be the case with or without McCrory's action, but the executive order makes it clear that that is the position of the state.

In a video, McCrory said he has "listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals."

Before HB2 was passed in a one-day special session of the General Assembly March 23, people who alleged that they were discriminated against on the basis of "race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap" could sue in either state or federal court.

HB2 ended the ability to bring those suits in state court, although those discriminated against on the basis of a handicap could rely on a different state law to sue.

Lawyers who handle employment discrimination lawsuits said the change was a blow to those discriminated against in the workplace because it is cheaper and easier to sue in state court and the period during which lawsuits can be filed in state court is longer than in federal court. A state lawsuit can be filed at a county courthouse while federal cases are heard in a much smaller number of federal courthouses around the state, a potential barrier for people who live in more remote areas.

Changing the part of the law that prevents the cases from being filed in state court would take action by the General Assembly, which returns to Raleigh for its regular session April 25.

McCrory's office said North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.

One provision of the executive order says that private entities leasing property from the state can set their own policies regarding signage and use of bathrooms and locker rooms.

If, as it may do, that provision applies to local governments, it could lessen the chances of the NBA moving its all-star game to another city instead of holding it in Charlotte as planned.

The Charlotte Hornets lease Time-Warner Cable Arena, where the game is to be held, from owner Charlotte city government. Without the clarification in McCrory's order, policies in HB2 might apply in the arena. The order apparently allows the Hornets to decide bathroom and locker room signage and use questions.

Senate leader Phil Berger endorsed McCrory's actions in a statement.

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law," Berger said. "But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

The North Carolina chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union panned McCrory's actions as inadequate.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people," said Sarah Preston, acting executive director, in a statement. "With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

...

Here is the press release and statement from McCrory's office:

"Governor Pat McCrory has signed an Executive Order to protect the privacy and equality of all North Carolinians. Executive Order 93 clarifies existing state law and provides new protections for North Carolina residents.

Executive Order 93 does the following:

•Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

•Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

•Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

•Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

•Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

With this Executive Order, the state of North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” said Governor McCrory. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

Governor McCrory has posted a video statement on the Executive Order.

Transcript (of the video statement):

Hi, I’m North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

North Carolina proudly welcomes all people to live, work and visit our great state.

We didn’t become the ninth most populous state in the nation by accident. We have long held traditions of both ensuring equality for all of our citizens and our visitors, while also respecting the privacy of everyone.

We are also a state that strives to allow our people and businesses to be as independent as possible without overreaching government regulations.

These North Carolina values of privacy and equality came into conflict recently when the Charlotte City Council passed a new mandate that forced on businesses a city-wide ordinance of bathroom and locker room regulations, something frankly we had never seen or had before in that great city or in North Carolina.

Simply put, this government overreach was a solution in search of a problem.

In fact, the Charlotte City Council rejected this proposal less than a year ago.

In a letter prior to the most recent vote, I notified the Charlotte City Council that this unnecessary and intrusive mandate conflicts with basic expectations of privacy in the most private of settings.

Therefore, as I expected, the state took action on what was seen as government overreach.

You know, after listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina.

But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.

To that end, today I have signed an executive order with the goal of achieving that fine balance.

This executive order accomplishes the following:

First, it maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and in our schools, and when possible, encourages reasonable accommodations for families and those who have unique or special circumstances.

Second, the private sector can make its own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities. This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector.

Third, I have affirmed the private sector and local government’s right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies.

And fourth, as governor, I have expanded our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.

And fifth, I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.

Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals.

Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues.

This is the North Carolina way.

Thank you very much, and may God continue to bless the great state of North Carolina."

Read Wednesday's newspaper or return to CITIZEN-TIMES.com for more on this breaking story.

**Porn Site Blocks North Carolina Visitors Over Controversial LGBT Law**

by LUCY BAYLY

NBC News

<http://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/porn-site-blocks-north-carolina-visitors-over-controversial-lgbt-law-n554771>

As major companies continue to pull out of North Carolina over its controversial LGBT law, porn enthusiasts are the latest to be put in a bind. Residents with an IP address registered in that state have been blocked from accessing the online sex site XHamster.

"We will not stand by and pump revenue into a system that promotes this type of garbage," said the adult site in a statement. "We respect all sexualities and embrace them."

PlayNorth Carolina starts to see economic damage from anti-bias law Facebook Twitter Google Plus Embed

 North Carolina starts to see economic damage from anti-bias law 2:12

Mike Kulich, spokesman for XHamster, stressed the hypocrisy inherent in the state's new law, pointing out that last month the site had "400,000 hits for the term 'Transsexual' from North Carolina alone. People from that state searched 'Gay' 319,907 times."

Users who were hoping to view the site's naughty content will see only a blacked-out screen. "Judging by the stats of what you North Carolinians watch, we feel this punishment is a severe one," said XHamster, adding that the site will eventually replace the blackout with a petition to repeal the law.

The legislation, signed by Governor Pat McCrory last month, prohibits local governments from blocking anti-discriminatory legislation that could protect people on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Backlash has been swift and fierce: PayPal canceled a $3.6 million expansion plan that would have brought 400 jobs to the state, Bruce Springsteen and Bryan Adams canceled shows, Hollywood called for a complete ban on filming in the state, and several governors issued executive orders nixing any state-funded travel to North Carolina.

Deutsche Bank is the latest corporate giant to cancel or postpone investment in the Tar Heel State, announcing on Tuesday that it has frozen plans to create 250 new jobs at its tech center in Cary.

"We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously," said John Cryan, Co-Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank, in a press release. "We're proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now."

Tourism, one of the state's major industries, is also taking a gigantic hit. At last count, 13 conventions have canceled plans for Charlotte, and 29 more have cold feet about hosting events in the state.

"Our city has worked incredibly hard to build a thriving visitor economy over the last 20 years, which has welcomed major events and conventions that greatly give back to the city and the state of North Carolina's economy and overall quality of life," Tom Murray, CEO of Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, told NBC News in a statement. "This issue is in danger of setting us back from the progress we've made in positioning Charlotte as an attractive, inclusive destination."

The financial impact is significant: Cancellations in the greater Raleigh area alone are expected to lead to a loss of $24 million for the state, according to the News & Observer.

No word yet as to whether media mogul Oprah Winfrey still intends to give the keynote speech at Johnson C. Smith University's spring commencement ceremony in Charlotte on May 15.

**McCrory wants parts of nondiscrimination law changed**

By Gary D. Robertson and Jonathan Drew

The Associated Press

<http://yourdailyjournal.com/news/28654/mccrory-wants-parts-of-nondiscrimination-law-changed>

RALEIGH (AP) — North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday he wants to change a new state law that prevents people from suing over discrimination in state court, but he’s not challenging a measure regarding bathroom access for transgender people.

His announcement comes as fallout widens over the law he signed last month that would limit protections for gay, lesbian and transgender people.

McCrory said he’s using an executive order to expand the state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation and gender, as well as affirming private businesses’ rights to establish their own bathroom policies.

He also says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation later this month allowing people to sue in state court over discrimination. That right had been wiped out by the law.

But the statement said that his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools. He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity, calling it “a solution in search of a problem.”

The state law was passed partly in response to the Charlotte measure.

But it went further than repealing the Charlotte law by overruling LGBT antidiscrimination measures passed by local governments around the state. It also excluded sexual orientation and gender identity from the state’s antidiscrimination policy. The law also required transgender people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate.

McCrory acknowledged outcry over the law, saying he’d listened to “feedback” from people for several weeks.

He said that “based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

His announcement came hours after Deutsche Bank announced that it’s halting plans to add 250 jobs in North Carolina because of the law.

The German bank with a large U.S. presence adds another loud voice to a chorus of business leaders who have urged the repeal of the law by Republican leaders who promote the state as business-friendly.

Previously, the bank had planned to add the jobs through next year in Cary. But on Tuesday the bank said it was freezing those plans.

Co-executive officer John Cryan said in a news release that “as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now.”

He said the bank may revisit the plans later. The bank currently employs 900 people at a Cary software development center, and it said it plans to sustain that existing operation.

Previously, PayPal reversed plans to open a 400-employee operation center in Charlotte, and more than 130 corporate CEOs signed a letter urging the law’s repeal. A number of states and cities have restricted public employee travel to the state.

This week, the law prompted several more groups to cancel planned conventions or gatherings in the state.

Ryan Smith, a spokeswoman for the Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, said five groups totaling about 1,000 attendees have already canceled. She said in an email the canceled events would have brought $730,000 to the area.

Smith said another 16 groups are considering cancellations of events expected to have an impact of $24 million.

The B Lab, a group organizing a gathering for socially conscious companies, says that it’s relocating the event that was expected to bring 550 attendees to Durham in October. Certified B Corporations are for-profit but meet strict criteria for social and environmental responsibility.

Charlotte tourism officials have previously said that several events were canceled around that city.

Some major music acts have also responded to the law. Bruce Springsteen canceled a Greensboro show over the weekend because of it.

Jimmy Buffett, meanwhile, said that he considers the law “stupid” but will proceed with scheduled shows in Raleigh and Charlotte this month. He said future dates would depend on whether the law is repealed.

Buffett wrote on his blog that tickets to his shows sold out long before the law was enacted. “I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year,” he said.

Supporters of the law on Monday held their biggest rally yet, drawing several hundred supporters.

**McCrory wants parts of North Carolina rights law changed**

News & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/news/north_carolina/mccrory-wants-parts-of-north-carolina-rights-law-changed/article_8c407489-b06c-5cfb-b522-be06c86b8814.html>

RALEIGH — North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday he wants to change a new state law that prevents people from suing over discrimination in state court, but he's not challenging a measure regarding bathroom access for transgender people.

His announcement comes as fallout widens over the law he signed last month that would limit protections for gay, lesbian and transgender people.

McCrory said he's using an executive order to expand the state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation and gender, as well as affirming private businesses' rights to establish their own bathroom policies.

He also says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation later this month allowing people to sue in state court over discrimination. That right had been wiped out by the law.

But the statement said that his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools. He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity, calling it "a solution in search of a problem."

The state law was passed partly in response to the Charlotte measure.

But it went further than repealing the Charlotte law by overruling LGBT antidiscrimination measures passed by local governments around the state. It also excluded sexual orientation and gender identity from the state's antidiscrimination policy. The law also required transgender people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate.

McCrory acknowledged outcry over the law, saying he'd listened to "feedback" from people for several weeks.

He said that "based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality."

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Co-executive officer John Cryan said in a news release that "as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now."

He said the bank may revisit the plans later. The bank currently employs 900 people at a Cary software development center, and it said it plans to sustain that existing operation.

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Supporters of the law on Monday held their biggest rally yet, drawing several hundred supporters.

In response, ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston issued a statement saying McCrory's actions "are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people."

 Read the ACLU's full response here

Senate Leader Phil Berger, R-Rockingham County responded to McCrory's actions by saying the governor "put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law."

Read Berger's full statement here

**Gov. McCrory Signs Executive Order to Address House Bill 2 Concerns**

By TWC News

<http://www.twcnews.com/nc/triangle-sandhills/house-bill-2/2016/04/12/gov--mccrory-signs-executive-order-to-address-house-bill-2-concerns.html>

RALEIGH -- Governor Pat McCrory has signed an executive order that he says clarifies the state's non-discrimination law, also known as House Bill 2.

McCrory says the measure also provides new protections for North Carolinians.

The order maintains what the governor calls “common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools.”

It also “affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies, affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees, expands the state’s employment policy to cover sexual orientation and gender identity, and seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination.”

Watch McCrory’s video response below:

The ACLU released a statement in respone to McCrory's executive order:

"Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

An impressive and growing number of businesses, faith leaders, and public figures have come out to condemn House Bill 2 as an unnecessary and dangerous measure that unfairly targets gay and transgender people. Regardless of political affiliation, more and more political leaders also understand that discrimination is bad for business and politically toxic. The public believes in equality and fairness and House Bill 2 and measures like it are out of step with the values of most Americans."

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action. We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.”

**How HB2 has impacted visitor spending in Wake County**

by Jason deBruyn

Triangle Business Journal

<http://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2016/04/12/how-hb2-has-impacted-visitor-spending-in-wake.html>

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau has started a running list of how House Bill 2 has affected visitor spending in Wake County.

The figure has grown to 16 groups that were close to signing a contract with GRCVB, but now are having second thoughts with the passage of HB2, the new state law that removes special protections for the LGBT community.

The economic impact of these groups would total 34,543 hotel room nights, 73,579 attendance and an economic impact of $24 million, according to a tally by GRCVB. Already, five groups have canceled outright for an economic impact of $732,000, according to GRCVB.

Those who have expressed concern included sports and corporate groups as well as state and national associations.

GRCVB chief executive Dennis Edwards collected comments to include in a spreadsheet of the potential economic fallout. While he removed the source of the comments, the theme is clearly directed at HB2.

“Furthermore, this policy and the political climate in North Carolina is discriminatory and cannot provide a hospitable environment for the inclusive nature of our membership and attendees,” according to one comment provided. “While the legislation may be beyond either of our control, we strongly urge you to contact state and local leaders to find a resolution and overturn this bill. If a satisfactory resolution is not made by July 1, 2016, we will cancel our 2017 meeting in North Carolina. We appreciate your immediate attention and please do not hesitate to contact us."

HB2 has also had an impact on businesses looking to expand in North Carolina – even in Wake County. On Tuesday, Deutsche Bank said it is putting its planned 250-job expansion in Cary on hold. Elsewhere since the new legislation passed, PayPal canceled a 400-job expansion to Charlotte and Braeburn Pharmaceuticals is re-evaluating its $20 million Durham expansion.

Jason deBruyn covers the biopharmaceutical and health care industries. Follow him on Twitter @TriBizHealth or @jasondebruyn.

**Governor Pat McCrory signs executive order amid backlash of House Bill 2**

WNCT

<http://wnct.com/2016/04/12/governor-pat-mcrory-signs-executive-order-amid-backlash-of-house-bill-2/>

GREENVILLE, N.C. (WNCT) – Governor Pat McCrory has signed an Executive Order to protect privacy and equality for all residents of North Carolina.

Executive Order 93 does the following:

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

Expands North Carolina’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” said Governor McCrory. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

**North Carolina governor signs executive order in response to anti-LGBT law**

Reuters

<http://www.reuters.com/article/governor-pat-mccrory-signs-order-after-b-idUSL2N17F1OK>

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory signed an executive order on Tuesday in reaction to concerns raised about a new state law decried by some as discriminatory, but the Republican stood firm on a provision restricting transgender bathroom access.

The governor's order adds anti-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity for state employees. McCrory also asked lawmakers to restore the right to sue in state court for discrimination.

"After listening to people's feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," McCrory said in a statement. "Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality." (Reporting by Colleen Jenkins; Editing by Chizu Nomiyama)

**Governor calls for substantial changes to LGBT law**

by Erik Spanberg

Charlotte Business Journal

<http://www.bizjournals.com/charlotte/blog/queen_city_agenda/2016/04/governor-calls-for-substantial-changes-to-lgbt-law.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order Tuesday aimed at limiting the damage of House Bill 2, the law that sparked a wave of protests and controversy after its passage in a special session last month. PayPal cited the law as the reason for its decision to scuttle a 400-job operations center in Charlotte. Bruce Springsteen canceled a concert last weekend over the law and the NBA has said it may move the 2017 All-Star Game because of the bill’s effects, which include abolishing a Charlotte ordinance to protect gay and transgender people.

The governor’s executive order reverses some of the most criticized aspects of HB 2, which McCrory signed hours after it passed.

The order would:

•Retain the state law’s requirement that biological gender be the sole defining characteristic for restrooms and locker rooms in government buildings and schools

•Leave it up to businesses and other private establishments to determine their policies for bathrooms and locker rooms

•Affirm private-sector and local government rights to create non-discrimination policies

•Add sexual orientation and gender identity to state employment policies to ensure equal treatment

•Seek legislation to give workers the right to sue in state court for discrimination, a direct reversal from HB 2

In prepared remarks, McCrory said, “After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina. Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

McCrory’s call for changes could be a slog in the General Assembly. The governor’s fellow Republicans in the legislature have said repeatedly they do not see a need for changes to HB 2 and have no plans to propose alterations. State Rep. Dan Bishop (R-Mecklenburg) was the lead sponsor of HB 2. The bill was passed in response to a Charlotte ordinance passed in February that would have gone into effect on April 1.

The ordinance added lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to existing groups protected against discrimination and altered public restroom guidelines so that people could use them based on the gender with which they identify.

Bob Morgan, the Charlotte Chamber CEO, said Tuesday that McCrory’s order may solve one aspect of the controversy over HB 2.

“Today’s action by Governor Pat McCrory sends a positive message to businesses across North Carolina and to our economic development clients throughout the country and world that North Carolina and Charlotte understand the need to attract and retain diverse talent in our workforce,” he said.

Last week, the chamber said HB 2 put the “positive perception of Charlotte and North Carolina ... at risk.”

Erik Spanberg covers government, sports business, hospitality and airlines for the Charlotte Business Journal.

**McCrory executive order seeks change to House Bill 2, but not on bathroom issue**

Winston Salem Journal

<http://www.journalnow.com/news/state_region/governor-seeks-to-restore-right-to-sue-over-discrimination-but/article_af3b894c-00de-11e6-b680-cf63f77caaa8.html>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday he wants to change a new state law that prevents people from suing over discrimination in state court, but he's not challenging a measure regarding bathroom access for transgender people.

His announcement comes as fallout widens over the law he signed last month that would limit protections for gay, lesbian and transgender people. Critics of the law called his statement a step in the right direction, but not enough.

While McCrory's executive order extends further protections to state employees, it leaves intact provisions of the state law that limit protections for the LGBT community in the general public.

McCrory said he's using an executive order to expand the equal employment policy for state employees to include sexual orientation and gender, as well as affirming private businesses' rights to establish their own bathroom policies.

He also says he will ask lawmakers for legislation allowing people to sue in state court over discrimination. That right was wiped out by the law.

But he said his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools. He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity, calling it "a solution in search of a problem."

The state law was passed partly in response to the Charlotte measure.

But it went further than repealing the Charlotte law, overruling LGBT antidiscrimination measures passed by local governments statewide. It also excluded sexual orientation and gender identity from the state's antidiscrimination policy. The law also required transgender people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate.

McCrory acknowledged outcry over the law, saying he'd listened to "feedback" from people for several weeks.

He said that "based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality."

Chris Sgro, executive director of Equality NC, said McCrory's order is a step in the right direction but still "doubles down" on some of the most problematic parts of the law.

"If the governor is truly committed to non-discrimination and wants to undo the harms done by House Bill 2, this is just the beginning of the conversation," Sgro said in a written statement.

The head of the state ACLU, which has filed a lawsuit challenging the law, said the governor had made "a poor effort to save face."

"With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom," said Sarah Preston, the group's acting executive director for the state.

In an interview with The Associated Press, McCrory said he saw no need to change the law he signed March 23 beyond repealing the state court discrimination provision.

He said his actions Tuesday "will not satisfy all the critics who have a litmus test of purity on each side of this issue ... my job is to find a commonsense solution to where we have conflicts between privacy and between equal rights."

As for the equal employment protection for state employees, McCrory said he already believes state government protects LGBT workers but "I thought it needed to be clarified to the citizens of North Carolina."

Attorney General Roy Cooper, a Democrat challenging McCrory this fall, is opposed to the law and announced last week he won't defend it in court. Cooper said in a statement the order "is a day late and a veto short" and doesn't change that last month's legislation "has written discrimination into the law."

McCrory's announcement came hours after Deutsche Bank said it will halt plans to add 250 jobs in North Carolina because of the law. The German bank with a large U.S. presence had previously planned to add the jobs through next year in Cary.

John H. Boyd, of location consulting firm The Boyd Company Inc., said in an email the bank's announcement likely pushed McCrory to take some action.

"The governor correctly sensed he was 'on the clock' and needed to address the national backlash after HB2. The Deutsche Bank announcing today it is canceling plans to add 250 jobs in Cary being the latest shoe to drop," Body said. "That is the type of Cadillac project for Cary and the state that the the governor could not ignore for another minute."

McCrory said he will push for legislation during the upcoming short session that reinstates individuals' rights to sue for discrimination in state court.

The prohibition on filing discrimination lawsuits in state court has drawn stiff criticism for eliminating a less-costly and quicker legal discrimination process than federal court.

"Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common-sense solutions to complex issues," McCrory said. "This is the North Carolina way."

Berger said in a statement that McCrory's executive order "just put to rest the left's lies about HB2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law."

John Dinan, a political sciences professor at Wake Forest University, said the executive order appears to have three intended goals.

"The main part of this executive order that has the force of law — other parts mostly explain HB2 or in one respect urge the legislature to modify HB2 — is the portion that bars discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in state government hiring," Dinan said.

"It allows him to take various actions that are within his executive power, such as setting non-discrimination policy for state government hiring and contracting, and including sexual orientation and gender identity in this policy.

"And third, it gives him an opportunity to call on the legislature to modify one specific portion of the law that has attracted particular opposition" the prohibition on filing discrimination lawsuits in state court."

More than 130 chief executives and business leaders, including with significant business ties to the Triad, have signed the letter to McCrory asking him and the legislature to repeal the law known foremost for overriding Charlotte's transgender restroom ordinance.

McCrory has called the ordinance a "radical breach of trust and security, " while Republican legislative leaders Tim Moore and Berger blame Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts for PayPal withdrawing from a planned Charlotte facility where 400 high-paying jobs would have been created.

The law also prohibited cities and counties from requiring private contractors to pay a higher set wage on their projects.

The N.C. Values Coalition, in one of its initial responses to the protest letter to McCrory, said those corporations "are shamefully bullying the state of North Carolina and Gov. Pat McCrory after HB2 was signed into law."

John Sweeney, an advertising professor at UNC Chapel Hill, said the reaction to the state's legislature and governor on HB2 "has been fundamentally negative across the nation."

"Naturally, there is a need to try and shift blame, so the media is a target, as are outsider values.

"This blame-shifting will work with supporters of the governor and the legislature. It will work with no one else."

Although the McCrory administration's recent 18-point "myth vs. facts" news release concentrates on the restroom issue, it suggests that "for the first time in state history, this law establishes a statewide anti-discrimination policy in North Carolina which is tougher than the federal government's. This also means that the law in North Carolina is not different when you go city to city."

However, lawyers specializing in employment law contacted by the Winston-Salem Journal say that a uniform standard isn't always in the best interest of the plaintiffs.

"While the legislators agreed that individuals have the right to sue an employer for discrimination, they took away their most efficient remedy for doing so," said Harvey Kennedy, with Kennedy, Kennedy, Kennedy & Kennedy LLP of Winston-Salem.

"Therefore, when it comes to state court as a remedy, the anti-discrimination law became meaningless," Kennedy said.

He said he is convinced that the inclusion of the prohibition on filing discrimination claims in state court and the wage restrictions was "a political power grab."

"I understand those two elements were a surprise to most legislators, and may have been to the governor," Kennedy said. During the special session, most legislators did not get a copy of the bill until the beginning of a House judiciary committee meeting.

"There was a will to do something quickly and capture the passion and momentum attached to the restroom ordinance legislation," Kennedy said.

North Carolina had 28,167 claims filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission between fiscal years 2008-09 and 2013-14, representing about 5 percent of national claims during that time period.

Claims based on racial discrimination comprised 39.8 percent, or 11,207, followed by gender at 28.3 percent, or 7,962; national origin at 8.4 percent, or 2,371; and religious at 3.8 percent, or 1,075.

According to The News & Observer of Raleigh, the state agencies responsible for measuring the state's Equal Employment Practices Act — a remedy cited in the bill — said data for those claims was not available.

By prohibiting the state Equal Employment Practices Act as the basis for civil action, Noble said, "this law has essentially eliminated state law sanctions for employers, who can now fire its employees ... with no state law consequences."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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**Governor McCrory Makes Executive Order Regarding HB2**

WFMY

<http://www.wfmynews2.com/news/governor-mccrory-makes-executive-order-regarding-hb2/129617186>

 RALEIGH, NC -- Governor Pat McCrory has signed an Executive Order in reaction to drawback from House Bill 2.

The Executive Order 93 does the following:

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

Now with this Executive Order, NC is one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” said Governor McCrory. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

McCrory says that he has listened to the people of North Carolina and that they are entitled to privacy and equality.

Senate Leader Phil Berger issued the following response Tuesday to Gov. Pat McCrory’s Executive Order:

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

ProgressNC Action, Gerrick Brenner Statement: "Gov. McCrory's discrimination law has done so much harm to North Carolina's image and already chased hundreds of jobs out of our state.  At this point, only a full repeal of HB2 will help to repair the damage McCrory has done in casting North Carolina as a place of state sanctioned bigotry, said Gerrick Brenner, ProgressNC Action Exec. Director in a emailed statement.

 The ACLU said in a statement"Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

Statement from NCDP Chair Patsy Keever on Gov. McCrory's executive order:

“With his actions today, Governor McCrory acknowledged for the first time the full scope and consequences of his discriminatory law. For two weeks, he’s attempted to mislead about the effects of HB2 with long, incorrect memos and Internet videos. But today’s Executive Order does nothing to fix what’s really wrong with his job-killing law: legalized discrimination that will continue to cost the state of North Carolina jobs and respect.” – Patsy Keever, North Carolina Democratic Party Chairwoman

N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper who's also running for Governor released the following statement in response to the Governor McCrory’s executive order:

“Governor McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short. The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue. I’m glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more. The truth is, this executive order doesn’t change the fact that HB 2 has written discrimination into the law. Governor, work to repeal HB 2.”

**McCrory executive order calls for repealing part of House Bill 2**

WXII

<http://www.wxii12.com/news/mccrory-executive-order-calls-for-repealing-part-of-house-bill-2/38988100>

RALEIGH, N.C. —North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory says he wants lawmakers to restore the right to sue over discrimination in state court, but he's not challenging a new law on gender-specific bathroom access.

McCrory announced an executive order Tuesday in response to a wide-ranging bill he signed last month affecting the rights of lesbian, gay and transgender people.

His statement said that his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools.

He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity.

The order would expand the state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation and gender.

He also says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation that allows people to sue in state court over discrimination - which had been wiped out by the law.

McCrory told the Associated Press he's been working on his order since signing the law three weeks ago. He said he listened to lots of feedback but knows it won't satisfy some critics on both sides.

McCrory said he doesn't regret signing the law because Charlotte had forced the issue by its "government overreach" in an ordinance mandating more rules upon private businesses.

The governor also told the AP he's concerned that some companies have halted expansions in North Carolina since the law was approved but believes many businesses are misinformed about its contents. He says recent phone calls with corporate executives have "absolutely" prevented jobs and investment from going elsewhere.

**McCrory Issues Executive Order Regarding House Bill 2**

By Blake Hodge

Chapelboro.com

<http://chapelboro.com/featured/mccrory-issues-executive-order-regarding-house-bill-2>

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory has issued an Executive Order regarding the recently-passed House Bill 2.

McCrory says that the order is a result of “listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks” regarding the legislation that advocates have called the worst anti-LGBT legislation in the nation.

The constitutionality of HB2 is currently being challenged in federal court.

McCrory lists five things that he says the order does:

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

The first three notes reiterate what was put in place by House Bill 2. The legislation does limit local governments’ abilities to extend local nondiscrimination policies beyond the statewide policy, which does not include sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status, among other things.

Critics had also voiced opposition to the portion of House Bill 2 which took away an employee’s right to sue in state court for discrimination, instead forcing them to federal court. McCrory says he will work with the legislature in the short session to restore that right.

**McCrory signs executive order walking back portions of HB2**

By Cammie Bellamy & Tim Buckland

StarNews

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20160412/NEWS/160419914>

RALEIGH -- North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has signed an executive order that appears to walk back portions of the controversial House Bill 2.

In a news release Tuesday afternoon, McCrory's office announced Executive Order 93, which expands North Carolina's state employee policy to cover sexual orientation and gender identity and will call on legislators to reinstate terminated workers' right to sue in state court for discrimination. The order does not overturn HB2's provision on sex-specific bathrooms in public facilities and schools or a ban on local non-discrimination ordinances.

McCrory signed the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act into law March 23. That law has been widely referred to as the "bathroom bill" for requiring people to use public restrooms that correspond to the sex on their birth certificate. But the legislation is far more sweeping, banning municipalities from passing local non-discrimination ordinances or minimum wages and prohibiting workers from filing employment discrimination lawsuits in state court, pushing those on to federal courts.

HB2 has drawn furious backlash from businesses. In response to the law, Deutsche Bank halted plans Tuesday to add 250 jobs in Cary, PayPal withdrew a $3.6 million North Carolina expansion that would have created 400 jobs, and companies including Bank of America, Apple, Lionsgate, Google and American Airlines have blasted the legislation.

In a video Tuesday, McCrory said the backlash distorted the law's purpose.

"After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," he said. "But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality. ... Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals."

In an interview with The Associated Press, McCrory said he saw no need to change the law he signed March 23 beyond repealing the state court discrimination provision.

He told the AP his actions Tuesday "will not satisfy all the critics who have a litmus test of purity on each side of this issue ... my job is to find a commonsense solution to where we have conflicts between privacy and between equal rights."

Locally, N.C. Rep. Susi Hamilton, D-N.C., who was the region's only state legislator to vote against HB2, said the governor's order isn't enough.

"There is no question we are still calling for a full repeal of HB2," she said Tuesday afternoon. "Truthfully, the misinformation that's been cast about has come from the bill's supporters."

McCrory's opponent in the gubernatorial election, Democratic Attorney General Roy Cooper, called the governor's action "a day late and a veto short."

"I’m glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more," Cooper said.

Equal rights advocates agreed that the governor's order isn't enough.

"While Gov. McCrory's Executive Order creates vital protections in public employment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, it does not address the deep concerns we share with members of the business community and citizens across the state about the damaging impact of HB2," Chris Sgro, executive director of Equality NC, said in a statement. The organization and the ACLU have sued the state over HB2.

The governor also told the AP he's concerned that some companies have halted expansions in North Carolina since the law was approved but believes many businesses are misinformed about its contents. He says recent phone calls with corporate executives have "absolutely" prevented jobs and investment from going elsewhere.

Hamilton said she is curious to see what, if any, impact the governor's announcement will have on business interests.

"It will be interesting to see if the business community is satisfied with the governor's remarks," she said. "That remains to be seen."

Reporter Cammie Bellamy can be reached at 910-343-2339 or Cammie.Bellamy@StarNewsOnline.com.

**McCrory order expands discrimination protections, but disappoints critics**

BY CRAIG JARVIS

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/latest-news/article71368717.html>

RALEIGH

Gov. Pat McCrory on Tuesday issued an executive order that he said was needed to clarify widespread misunderstanding about the new North Carolina law regulating protections for gay and transgender people.

The governor’s order didn’t change the most controversial provision of the law: requiring transgender people to use bathrooms of their birth gender. Gay rights advocates criticized McCrory for not doing enough, while Republican leaders supported him.

The order comes amid a political and economic firestorm unleashed by the law. It followed by hours an announcement by Deutsche Bank that it was putting a 250-employee Cary expansion on hold, and just after a top Wake County economic developer said five companies had canceled or postponed plans to bring more jobs. The law has drawn national criticism but praise from social conservatives.

The most concrete part of McCrory’s order expands nondiscrimination protections for all state employees, including those at public universities, to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

McCrory also used the order to call on the General Assembly to restore state residents’ ability to sue employers in state court when alleging discrimination. The new law, commonly called House Bill 2 or HB2, had left only the more restrictive option of federal court.

The remainder of his order affirms the intent of the bill, officially named the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, which was enacted March 23 in a special session of the legislature. The order emphasizes that state law allows private businesses or nonprofit organizations to establish their own policies for their restrooms, locker rooms and showers, and their own non-discrimination policies. It also affirms that cities and counties can set their own policies for their own employees.

The order doesn’t change the provisions of HB2 that prohibit cities and counties from adopting broader anti-discrimination ordinances than state law, which doesn’t include sexual orientation or gender identity protections. Legislators called the session in time to block a Charlotte ordinance from going into effect, which would have permitted people to select bathrooms based on their gender identity, not biological sex.

McCrory’s order says all Cabinet agencies must provide a reasonable accommodation for single-occupancy restrooms, locker rooms and showers when someone requests them because of “special circumstances.” He invites Council of State agencies and the University of North Carolina system to make similar accommodations.

Reactions to the order

Senate leader Phil Berger said McCrory’s order “put to rest the left’s lies” about the new law, but he did not say whether the Senate would be receptive to changing the lawsuit provision when the legislature convenes April 25 for its scheduled 2016 session.

House Speaker Tim Moore could not be reached for comment.

Chris Sgro, executive director of Equality NC, which has sued to overturn the law, said the statement on nondiscrimination in state employment was welcome, calling it a first step. But the order “doubles down on some of the worst provisions” of the new law, he said.

“If he’s really serious about nondiscrimination, he’ll seek full repeal of House Bill 2,” said Sgro, who was nominated last week to a vacant state House seat, representing Greensboro.

State Rep. Nelson Dollar, a Cary Republican, said that repealing the section that bars discrimination suits from state courts “is a reasonable request on behalf of the governor. I would certainly have no problem with that.”

Attorney General Roy Cooper, who is running for governor against McCrory, refuses to defend the state against the lawsuit, saying he has a conflict because he is defending nondiscrimination policies of his office and the state treasurer’s office against the requirements of HB2. It’s unclear whether the executive order extending those protections to all state employees will affect Cooper’s decision not to defend the law.

But it does expand state employees’ rights to match the two departments’ policies that Cooper is defending. The state Republican Party is already making that a political issue.

“Now that Governor McCrory has signed an executive order expanding and affirming non-discrimination policies for North Carolina state employees, the attorney general now has two choices: come up with another excuse to not do his job, or stand up for North Carolina families and defend a common-sense law,” GOP Executive Director Dallas Woodhouse said in an emailed statement.

Berger also took a swing at Cooper “and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women’s bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Cooper’s campaign issued a response from the candidate, renewing his call to repeal the entire law:

“Governor McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short. The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue.

“I’m glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more. The truth is, this executive order doesn’t change the fact that HB2 has written discrimination into the law.”

Being Transgender in North Carolina: Reaction to HB2

Transgender residents of the Triangle area of NC talk about their experiences and the impact of HB2 on their lives.

Elena Boffetta eboffetta@newsobserver.com

Lambda Legal, a national legal organization that defends LGBT rights and is a party to the lawsuit against the state, called McCrory’s move a “band-aid executive order” that cannot fix the damage done by the law. The American Civil Liberties Union said McCrory was dividing the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community by extending protections to some while leaving discriminatory provisions in the law.

Video announces order

McCrory didn’t appear in public to explain the order. He issued a video statement and a news release, and sat down for an interview with Time Warner Cable News, where he said for the first time that he knew when he signed the bill that “fixes” would be necessary.

In his video, the governor said, “After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina. Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

He concluded by saying that he was trying to provide privacy and equality for the state’s residents.

Charlotte businessman and McCrory ally John Lassiter said those goals will help satisfy the business community that North Carolina is still a good place to operate. He said reaction to the new law was unprecedented.

“Today’s action is a clear message to the growing businesses in our state and the businesses from around the country and the world that North Carolina is open for business and can be a leader in how we treat our citizens and our visitors,” Lassiter said.

Staff writer Lynn Bonner and Charlotte Observer writer Jim Morrill contributed

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Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/latest-news/article71368717.html#storylink=cpy

**What Gov. McCrory’s executive HB2 order does and doesn’t do**

BY STEVE HARRISON

Charlotte Observer

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article71414247.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order on Tuesday that extends new protections for state workers based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

But it leaves unchanged statewide nondiscrimination rules that do not provide legal protections for gay and transgender customers in places of public business.

Here’s a breakdown on how McCrory’s executive order impacts House Bill 2, the controversial bill passed by the Republican-led legislature last month.

What McCrory’s order does:

▪ State worker protection – McCrory’s executive action does extend new protections for state workers based on sexual orientation and gender identity. That’s historic for the state, making N.C. the 24th state in the nation to do.

The action appears to protect someone who is transgender from discrimination at their state office, protecting them for being fired or disciplined because they are transgender.

But that same employee can’t use the bathroom of the gender they identify with. So a state worker who is a transgender man – who might have a beard – must use the women’s restroom at their state office.

“We celebrate when any state adopts new protections for state employees, but this has huge holes in it,” said Sarah Warbelow, legal director of the Human Rights Campaign.

What McCrory’s order doesn’t do:

▪ Public accommodation protections – Under the Charlotte ordinance, a business in the city would have been prohibited from refusing to serve someone because they are gay. The hypothetical case most often cited is a photographer or baker who refused to work a gay wedding. The same would have applied for someone who is transgender.

HB2 installed a statewide nondiscrimination ordinance that provided legal protections for race, color, national origin and biological sex. HB2 also nullified all local nondiscrimination ordinances, which meant that Charlotte’s original 1968 ordinance was void.

That doesn’t change under McCrory’s action.

Charlotte or any other N.C. city or town can’t prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in places of public accommodation.

That’s one reason why the ACLU of N.C. and Human Rights Campaign both criticized McCrory’s actions Tuesday. It’s also why HB2 was called the most “anti-LGBT” legislation in the nation.

Scott Bishop led Charlotte’s efforts to expand its nondiscrimination ordinance when he led MeckPAC, a lobbying group for the LGBT community.

“I don’t see anything in here that says that changes,” Bishop said. “It doesn’t reinstate Charlotte’s ordinance.”

HB2 allowed a private business to establish its own rules, so a bank or restaurant could have its own policies protecting people based on sexual orientation or gender identity. At the time, HB2 supporters noted that any business could still enact its own policies.

McCrory’s action doesn’t change that. In his news release, he reaffirmed that local businesses can enact their own policies.

Critics also questioned why, if state employees now have protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity, shouldn’t the public have similar protections?

As governor, McCrory couldn’t unilaterally restore Charlotte’s ability to have its own nondiscrimination ordinance. But the governor didn’t call on the General Assembly to do so.

▪ Transgender bathrooms – McCrory’s action doesn’t change anything in HB2 related to bathrooms.

In the governor’s news release, McCrory said his order “maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools.”

In prohibiting cities and towns from offering nondiscrimination protection for transgender individuals, HB2 nullified the bathroom question in Charlotte.

Charlotte, or any city or town, could no longer argue that its nondiscrimination ordinance requires a business to allow a transgender person to use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity.

HB2 also provided specific rules for the bathrooms in government buildings, which includes K-12 schools and colleges and universities. In the bathrooms of government buildings, the only people who can use a men’s restroom are identified as male on their birth certificates, and women who use a women’s restroom are identified as female on their birth certificates.

Warbelow, of the Human Rights Campaign, said that extends to numerous buildings, such as libraries, the Charlotte Convention Center and airports. She said that remains a significant problem under HB2 and McCrory’s order.

Businesses can still create their own policies about bathroom access for transgender individuals. That was allowed in HB2 and McCrory’s order didn’t change that.

McCrory also said he wants to:

▪  Right to sue in state court - For decades, workers in N.C. had been able to sue in state court in cases of alleged discrimination.

HB2 took that away, and required those lawsuits to be filed in federal court only. Critics of HB2 said that while people were focused on bathrooms, the inability to sue in state court was a critical part of the legislation.

McCrory said he would “seek legislation on the right to sue in state court for discrimination.”

That will be up to the General Assembly.

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Read more here: http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article71414247.html#storylink=cpy

**Amid firestorm, Gov. Pat McCrory seeks to walk back part of NC’s HB2**

BY JIM MORRILL AND KATHERINE PERALTA

Charlotte Observer

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article71367742.html>

Responding to mounting criticism over North Carolina’s House Bill 2, Gov. Pat McCrory on Tuesday expanded anti-discrimination protection for state employees and affirmed the right of local governments to do the same for theirs.

But the governor’s executive order did little to appease critics of the law, which has touched off a national firestorm from businesses, artists and gay rights groups. His order didn’t change the controversial “bathroom” provision that bars transgender people from using the bathroom they choose.

Economic development officials, meanwhile, hailed McCrory’s move as a signal that North Carolina is “open for business.”

Passed last month by the Republican-controlled General Assembly, HB2 nullified a Charlotte ordinance that had extended anti-discrimination protection to the LGBT community and had given transgender individuals the right to use the bathroom of their choice.

McCrory and other supporters of the state law called it a common-sense measure aimed at protecting women and children from predators posing as transgender.

For nearly three weeks, HB2 has drawn fire from national gay rights groups and made the state a punch line on late-night comedy shows. Bruce Springsteen canceled a Sunday concert in Greensboro because of it.

The law also has taken an economic toll: California-based PayPal decided not to bring an operations center with 400 jobs to Charlotte. Four groups have canceled conventions or events in Charlotte, and nine that were considering events in the city have decided to look elsewhere. And Tuesday, Deutsche Bank announced it was freezing plans to create 250 jobs in Cary.

McCrory’s executive order expands state employment policy to cover sexual orientation and gender identity and affirms the rights of local governments and businesses to establish their own anti-discrimination policies for employees.

McCrory also promised to seek legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination, a right eliminated by HB2.

Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts, a Democrat who has harshly criticized HB2, tweeted: “Pleased to see movement from @GovOfficeNC. Historic to include LGBT protections for state employees. Look forward to more dialogue.” A spokesman said she would have no further comment.

Signal to business

Economic development officials said the executive order should restore business confidence.

“Today’s action is a clear message … that North Carolina is open for business and can be a leader in how we treat our citizens and our visitors,” said John Lassiter of Charlotte, who chairs the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, a public-private venture that recruits businesses.

Bob Morgan, president of the Charlotte Chamber, said the order “sends a positive message to businesses across North Carolina and … throughout the country and world that North Carolina and Charlotte understand the need to attract and retain diverse talent in our workforce.”

But gay and transgender rights groups called the move insufficient.

“It’s obvious that Gov. McCrory is trying to save his reputation with this desperate move,” said Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality. “His executive order says that transgender state employees are protected from discrimination, but they still can’t use the restroom at work. It doesn’t make sense.”

Sarah Warbelow, legal director for the Human Rights Campaign, said “private businesses, nonprofits and local governments have always been able to establish their own nondiscrimination policies for their employees.”

“What the governor is unable to do is prohibit discrimination against LGBT people in all areas of state life,” she said. “That is something the legislature needs to tackle.”

Equality NC Executive Director Chris Sgro, who was recently appointed to the state House, called it “just the beginning of the conversation.”

Issue in governor’s race

Like the law itself, the Republican governor’s order quickly became an issue in his re-election campaign.

“Gov. McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short,” said Attorney General Roy Cooper, his Democratic challenger in November’s election. “The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue. ... He needs to do much more.”

Republicans blasted Cooper, who has said he wouldn’t defend the law in court.

“The attorney general now has two choices: Come up with another excuse to not do his job, or stand up for North Carolina families and defend a common-sense law,” state GOP Executive Director Dallas Woodhouse said in a statement.

Lawmakers reconvene April 25 for their short session. Leaders on Tuesday signaled they support McCrory’s order.

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left’s lies about HB2 and proved it allows private and public employers, nonprofits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law,” Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger said in a statement.

“But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob … who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women’s bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Sen. Jeff Jackson of Charlotte, a Democrat, called McCrory’s actions Tuesday contradictory because the order extends protections to only some LGBT people – the ones who work for the state. It’s “an admission that you shouldn’t be fired simply for being gay or lesbian,” Jackson said.

“The governor just admitted that House Bill 2 was a big mistake, even if he can’t come out and say it,” Jackson said.

Groups opposing HB2 are calling for a repeal of the law and a replacement with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.

The head of the state American Civil Liberties Union called McCrory’s actions “a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community.”

“With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom,” ACLU of North Carolina acting Executive Director Sarah Preston said in a statement Tuesday.

In a video message, the governor said he would maintain “common-sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities” in government buildings and schools.

“Simply put,” he said, “I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality.”

STAFF WRITERS STEVE HARRISON AND PAM KELLEY CONTRIBUTED, ALONG WITH THE (RALEIGH) NEWS & OBSERVER.

Read more here: http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article71367742.html#storylink=cpy

**GOV. MCCRORY WILL SEEK CHANGE TO HB2**

By Elaina Athans

WTVD

<http://abc11.com/politics/governor-mccrory-will-seek-change-to-hb2/1287835/>

RALEIGH (WTVD) -- Gov. Pat McCrory is not changing his position on House Bill 2, in spite of the backlash from critics, jobs that are being lost and big money that could evaporate.

The governor is slated to make a special announcement at 9 a.m. Wednesday.

McCrory signed an Executive Order on Tuesday reaffirming what he says maintains "common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools."

He did vow to seek legislation in the short session that would reinstate the right to sue the state for discrimination. That right was eliminated under HB2.

McCrory also is expanding the state's Equal Employment Opportunity policy to include sexual orientation and gender equality.

In a YouTube video released by his office, McCrory acknowledged the heavy criticism of House Bill 2 while defending it.

"I have listened to the people of North Carolina," McCrory said in a video message. "The people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals."

The Executive Order is getting a lot of reaction. The ACLU, which is suing the state for discrimination, calls it a "poor about face." Attorney General Roy Cooper tweeted out the Executive Order was a "day late and veto short."

On Tuesday evening, McCrory added: "Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues. This is the North Carolina way."

HB2, in part, mandates people must use the bathroom that matches the sex on their birth certificates.

Opponents argue it's discriminatory, and there has been a litany of outrage.

Tuesday night, Asheville's city council unanimously passed a resolution calling HB2 unconstitutional and called for it to be repealed. The city plans to send its resolution to state legislators.

Duetsche Bank also announced Tuesday it is freezing expansion in Cary. The move would have created 250 jobs.

Singer Bruce Springsteen has canceled a concert in Greensboro. Singer Jimmy Buffet is still holding two concerts in the state, but calls the law "stupid."

Gregg Allman, who has a concert lined up in Greensboro Wednesday night, posted a message on his official website explaining that he opposes the legislation, but plans to perform.

"I know that North Carolina is a state full of good folks and loyal fans, many of whom are angry about and feel misrepresented by this action," he said in part.

Athletes such as Charles Barkley are demanding that the NBA move next year's All-Star game out of Charlotte. The game alone is worth $100 million in business.

"I'm supposed to stand up for the people who can't stand up for themselves," Barkley said.

McCrory is responding to the backlash.

"I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," McCrory said.

Lawmakers will be back in Raleigh in about two weeks. Some opponents are calling for a special session before then to repeal the law.

On Monday, supporters of the law held their biggest rally yet, drawing at least 700 supporters. Another pro-HB2 rally is in the works for the day when lawmakers reconvene in Raleigh.

The Associated Press contributed to this story

**GOV. MCCRORY ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER ‘IMPROVING’ ASPECTS OF HB2**

By: Elizabeth Bynum

WWAY

<http://www.wwaytv3.com/2016/04/12/gov-mccrory-issues-executive-order-improving-aspects-of-hb2/>

WILMINGTON, NC (WWAY) — Gov. Pat McCrory signed an executive order Tuesday to “clarify” existing state law and asking the General Assembly to put back an old protection against discrimination. The order also provides “new protections,” according to McCrory’s press office.

According to a news release issued this afternoon, Executive Order 93 will protect the privacy and equality of all residents. The release said it will affirm parts of House Bill 2, which include the private sector’s right to establish bathroom policies and non-discrimination policies. McCrory said it also maintains common sense gender-specific restrooms and locker rooms in government buildings and schools.

What’s new in the order is the governor asking for new legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination. The executive order will also expand the state’s employment policy for employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity.

Click here to see Executive Order 93

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

North Carolina is now one of 24 states that has protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for employees, the release said.

The ACLU of North Carolina, which is part of a lawsuit challenging HB2, issued a statement shortly after the executive order was released.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people,” ACLU of NC Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston said. “With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.”

**McCrory announces raises for teachers**

by JANE E. WHITEHORNE

Jamestown News

<http://www.jamestownnews.com/news/top_stories/article_d1c0c02c-00ca-11e6-9cc3-fb97a33c63a0.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory returned to his alma mater once again to announce plans to raise teacher pay.

On April 5, McCrory held a press conference in the media center at Ragsdale High School during which he rolled out the first initiative for the state’s 2017 budget. He proposed a 5 percent average pay increase for all teachers and other certified school personnel as well as a 3.5 percent bonus based on experience.

“Today our No. 1 priority is education,” he said.

However, McCrory’s focus on education was somewhat diminished by the controversy over HB2.

Prior to the press conference, PayPal announced it was withdrawing plans for an expansion in Charlotte that would have created jobs for over 400 people. This withdrawal is a direct result of HB2, which the General Assembly passed and McCrory signed into legislation March 23. House Bill 2, the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, puts in place a statewide policy banning individuals from using public bathrooms that do not correspond to their biological sex. The bill also reserves the right to pass nondiscrimination legislation to the state government, saying state laws override local ordinances.

When pressed on the issue, McCrory said he was focused on what matters to the people of the state.

“I want to respect people who disagree with the basic common sense rules that I had here at Ragsdale High School in which boys used the boys locker room and girls used the girls locker room,” he said. “What we’re trying to correct is government overreach which was going to force businesses and our schools to do just the opposite. If people disagree with that, that’s part of our democratic process and I’m going to respect that. But I also expect to have these basic guidelines of privacy and expectations of privacy respected. I’m not sure what more I can say about that.

“I’m here to talk about education, which ties directly to our quality of life and our economic development. I want to focus on the things that are important to the people of North Carolina and education is one of those important things.”

McCrory called the pay increase for teachers the center point of the budget. The increase would boost teacher pay, including health and retirement benefits, to an average $66,000 per year. This positions North Carolina above average in teacher pay in the Southeast.

The increase is hoped to draw more people to the teaching profession as well as lower teacher attrition. Also, the budget includes an additional investment of $2 million to establish a scholarship program to attract new highly qualified math and science teachers.

The push continues to modernize classrooms. The new budget includes an additional $29 million for classrooms resources and teacher training to use new technology.

McCrory would commit funds to expand opportunities for special needs students. This funding would provide scholarships for students to attend schools that could meet their unique needs.

Also, the budget includes monies for boosting community college graduation and expanding college access.

McCrory said these education initiatives are a fulfillment of his administration’s promise to put teachers first.

“I’m very, very proud of this major teacher commitment,” he said.

Speaking of the late Ruth Revels, his former teacher at Ragsdale who recently passed away, McCrory said he believes she would have rewarded him with a gold star for his efforts to help teachers.

“This is a priority not only of me, but it is a priority of the people of North Carolina.”

Jane E. Whitehorne can be reached at 336-841-4933 or jamestownlegals@northstate.net.

**Gov. McCrory signs executive order to protect 'privacy and equality'**

WBTV

<http://www.wbtv.com/story/31704528/gov-mccrory-signs-executive-order-to-protect-privacy-and-equality>

CHARLOTTE, NC (WBTV) -

Following the national fallout from North Carolina's House Bill 2, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory has signed an executive order to protect the privacy and equality of all North Carolinians.

According to the governor's office, Executive Order 93 "clarifies existing state law and provides new protections for North Carolina residents."

The executive order comes in response to backlash from House Bill 2 (HB2), which was signed into law in late March.

HB2 repealed Charlotte's non-discrimination ordinance, which was passed in February.

The Charlotte City Council voted 7-4 to add sexual orientation, gender identity and marital status as attributes protected from discrimination when it comes to public accommodations including restaurants, retail stores and other businesses. Public schools would not have been affected by the ordinance.

The ordinance quickly became controversial with the majority of the focus revolving around the bathroom.

Republican leaders in North Carolina, including Governor Pat McCrory, expressed concern over the ordinance. A special session of the North Carolina General Assembly was held in late March.

In a one-day vote, the NCGA repealed the Charlotte ordinance, which was slated to take effect on April 1.

The new law required transgender people to use public bathrooms that match their birth certificates. The law also makes clear local measures can't expand anti-discrimination protections for sexual orientation or gender identity.

FULL TRANSCRIPTION: Gov. McCrory on signing of Executive Order 93

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” said Governor McCrory. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

According to the governor's office, the executive order does the following:

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

WEB EXTRA: Click here to read Executive Order 93

The governor's office says North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.

But Charlotte School of Law professor Brian Clarke said the Governor's executive order most likely doesn't carry a lot of weight.

"By and large some positive messaging but without a lot of concrete legal force behind it" Professor Clarke said. "Because he can't in an executive order over-ride something the legislature has done."

Clarke said the "General Assembly can sorta go along with it. The General Assembly has the ability to over-ride his executive order and could do that."

Representative Tricia Cotham, a Democrat from Mecklenburg County, told WBTV "I'm glad that he {McCrory} is acknowledging how many people across the state, especially here in Mecklenburg County, are so upset and concerned about all the economic impact of the bill. However, his executive order is pretty much meaningless so I don't see it as a big win for our county or our state."

Cotham points out while the order wants to protect LGBT transgender people who are state employees in state government buildings, it doesn't address other parts of HB 2 such as local communities passing minimum wage ordinances.

"It still allows discrimination," Rep Cotham said. "It does give back the right to sue but at the end of the day what we have to remember is the legislature that did this legislation - HB2 - still has the final say."

Senator Jeff Tarte, a Republican from Mecklenburg County, said HB2 will never be repealed because of the concerns of men using women's restrooms.

Tarte told WBTV the Governor's executive order "serves as both clarification of language within HB2 and also serves to improve some things."

"I think it's good direction from the Governor," Senator Tarte said. "Sends a loud, clear signal to the business community that we're listening, trying to do the right thing but the heart and soul of the bill though doesn't change."

Tarte said "It's a clear message from the Governor that the intent never has been nor will be to ever enable or allow anyone to discriminate against anybody in the LGBT community."

Attorney General Roy Cooper, who is also the Democratic candidate running against McCrory in his re-election bid, released a statement in response to McCrory’s executive order

“Governor McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short. The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue. I’m glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more," Cooper said. "The truth is, this executive order doesn’t change the fact that HB 2 has written discrimination into the law. Governor, work to repeal HB 2.”

The chair of the North Carolina Democratic Party echoed Cooper's sentiments.

“With his actions today, Governor McCrory acknowledged for the first time the full scope and consequences of his discriminatory law. For two weeks, he’s attempted to mislead about the effects of HB2 with long, incorrect memos and Internet videos," Patsy Keever said. "But today’s Executive Order does nothing to fix what’s really wrong with his job-killing law: legalized discrimination that will continue to cost the state of North Carolina jobs and respect.”

The Charlotte Chamber released a statement about ten minutes after the governor's announcement.

"Today’s action by Governor Pat McCrory sends a positive message to businesses across North Carolina and to our economic development clients throughout the country and world that North Carolina and Charlotte understand the need to attract and retain diverse talent in our workforce," Bob Morgan, Charlotte Chamber President and CEO.

A longer statement from the Charlotte Chamber Executive Committee was sent to WBTV Tuesday afternoon.

"The Charlotte Chamber supports our well-deserved reputation as a city that promotes and embraces diversity, inclusion and equality. The business community, in particular, understands the need to develop, attract and retain diverse talent. We believe that the growing diversity of our population is in fact a competitive advantage for Charlotte’s economy. The Charlotte Chamber of Commerce opposes discrimination in all forms.

We applaud the Governor’s actions today which demonstrate that North Carolina is an open and welcoming state.

We support efforts by all leaders at city and state levels to promote North Carolina and Charlotte as places that promote diversity, inclusiveness and equality.

We strongly encourage the leadership and members of the General Assembly to take quick action to the Governor’s call to ensure citizens have the right o pursue claims of discrimination at the state level.

Charlotte remains open for business as a city where everyone is always welcome."

Charlotte mayor Jennifer Roberts, who has been critical of the state's move to strike the Charlotte ordinance and pass House Bill 2, tweeted that she was "pleased to see movement" from the governor's office.

"Historic to include LGBT protections for state employees," she tweeted. "Look forward to more dialogue."

Senate Leader Phil Berger, a Republican, said with the executive order McCrory "put to rest the left's lies about HB 2."

"[He] proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law," Berger said. "But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

The American Civil Liberties Union called the executive order a "poor effort to save face" for McCrory, saying it "fall far short of correcting the damage done."

"With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom," said ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston.

“An impressive and growing number of businesses, faith leaders, and public figures have come out to condemn House Bill 2 as an unnecessary and dangerous measure that unfairly targets gay and transgender people," Preston continued. "Regardless of political affiliation, more and more political leaders also understand that discrimination is bad for business and politically toxic. The public believes in equality and fairness and House Bill 2 and measures like it are out of step with the values of most Americans."

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action," she said. "We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.”

Lambda Legal, the ACLU, and the ACLU of North Carolina filed a lawsuit challenging House Bill 2 in late March.

"The lawsuit argues that through HB 2, North Carolina sends a purposeful message that LGBT people are second-class citizens who are undeserving of the privacy, respect, and protections afforded others in the state," the groups said in a statement.

WEB EXTRA: Click here to read the full lawsuit filed against HB2

The complaint argues that HB 2 is unconstitutional because it violates the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment by discriminating on the basis of sex and sexual orientation and invading the privacy of transgender people.

“The devastating blow of HB 2 will not be fixed by the band-aid of an executive order," Lambda Legal Staff Attorney Kyle Palazzolo said about the executive order. "While this is an improvement for the state employees it impacts, HB 2’s reach goes far beyond what the executive order addresses and that’s why we are challenging this extreme and discriminatory measure - in order to ensure that everyone who lives in and visits North Carolina is protected under the law."

"HB 2 is an attack on fairness in employment, education, and local governance that encourages discrimination against thousands of LGBT people who call North Carolina home, and it particularly targets transgender people," Palazzolo continued. “This lawsuit is crucial for the entire LGBT community in North Carolina because partial measures, like this executive order, are unacceptable to us, to LGBT North Carolinians, and to others around the country anxious to see an end to these dangerous displays of intolerance."

Equality NC's Matt Hirschy told WBTV the executive order was not nearly enough.

"At the end of the day, this law is deeply discriminatory against trans folks," Hirschy said. "It's also against working class people in north Carolina. It needs to be fully repealed."

While Hirschy appreciates the governors efforts to protect the LGBT community in state government, he believes that only scratches the surface.

"We still need protections in private employment. Anybody in this state who doesn't work for a municipal or state government can now still be fired for being gay or trans," Hirschy said.

But Dr. Michael Brown, director of the Coalition of Conscience, applauded McCrory's efforts.

"Kudos to the governor for saying we're not going to bow down to corporate bullying and threats," Brown said.

While Hirschy hopes the law will soon be completely repealed, Brown looks toward some resolve between two sides who are very much at war.

"We have to live together as neighbors in North Carolina. How about we sit and talk through our differences to at least understand each other," Brown said.

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**McCrory issues executive order on House Bill 2, adds protections for gays and transgender people**

WNCN

<http://wncn.com/2016/04/12/mccrory-issues-executive-order-on-house-bill-2/>

RALEIGH, N.C. (WNCN) – Twenty days after signing House Bill 2 into law, Gov. Pat McCrory announced Tuesday he has signed an executive order that amends that decision and expands the state’s employment policy to cover sexual orientation and gender identity.

The governor said Executive Order 93:

Maintains gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector can establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish their own non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy cover sexual orientation and gender identity for state employees

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

protesters

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said.

“Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

Read Executive Order 93

McCrory’s moves come after a vociferous reaction to the bill that included some companies rolling back expansion plans for North Carolina.

Earlier Tuesday, Deutsche Bank announced it will not add 250 jobs, as planned in Cary because of the bill. A Deutsche Bank spokesman declined comment when reached after McCrory’s announcement.

While much of the public discussion of the bill has focused on which bathrooms transgender people should use, the bill also had broader language that addressed discrimination and, pointedly, did not mention sexual orientation.

That part of the bill, combined with the issue of transgender people and choice of bathrooms, raised concerns about whether North Carolina was inclusive and sparked a national discussion of the North Carolina law.

McCrory, in his executive action, did not change the bill when it comes to transgender people and which bathroom they should use. But he did expand the state discrimination policies to include those who are gay and transgender. He also said he would push to change House Bill 2 to allow for North Carolinians to sue for relief in civil court. Under House Bill 2, any discrimination claim had to go through the Human Relations Commission in the N.C. Department of Administration.

E. Gregory Wallace with the Campbell University Law School said McCrory can not change HB2 through an executive order.

“He can tell us what type of practice North Carolina, at least in the agencies he oversees, is going to have but he cannot change what legally what the law prohibits,” Wallace said.

Rep. Nelson Dollar of Wake County said, “The governor has recommended today an accommodation to take a look at that provision and reconsider that in the General Assembly. And I think that’s a reasonable request on behalf of the governor.”

McCrory, however, did not address the issue of wages, which is a third, and significant, part of the bill. Some American cities and governments have begun to pass “living wage” bills. For example, in Kentucky, private companies with state service contracts will have to pay their workers at least $10.10 per hour, according to the Associated Press.

Birmingham, Alabama, passed a law raising the minimum wage to $10.10 earlier this year. The Alabama legislature overrode that decision two days later.

The issue has gained traction in some North Carolina communities. For example, the Orange County Living Wage group has pushed for higher wages in that county.

House Bill 2 prohibits any North Carolina city or county from instituting such a policy, and that measure has raised concerns from the NAACP and other groups.

The Rev. William Barber of the North Carolina NAACP has raised concerns because, he said, HB2 “discriminates against the working poor  by taking away municipalities’ ability to demand that contractors raise minimum wages to living wages and pay vacation sick leave and have minority set asides.”

Cities with minimum wage laws

McCrory did not address the wage issue in his statements Tuesday.

Chris Sgro of Equality NC said McCrory’s action “doubles down on some of the worst provisions included in House Bill 2.

“So while we are glad to see that the Governor has made progress in anti-discrimination measures specifically around workplace protections, if he’s serious about non-discrimination he’s going to need to seek full repeal of House Bill 2.”

David McLennan, political science professor at Meredith College, said despite the changes, the battle over HB2 is far from over.

“But this is now three weeks. It doesn’t look like it’s going to end either. We’ve got the General Assembly session starting in a couple weeks. There are going to be big protests there, and I think they’ll probably continue into the summer.”

Sarah Preston, acting director of ACLU North Carolina said McCrory’s Executive Action “falls far short of what we would hope for the governor’s leadership.”

Preston said ACLU NC hoped for a full repeal of HB2.

Transcript from the governors’ office (reaction to his comments follow the full statement):

Hi, I’m North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

North Carolina proudly welcomes all people to live, work and visit our great state.

We didn’t become the ninth most populous state in the nation by accident. We have long held traditions of both ensuring equality for all of our citizens and our visitors, while also respecting the privacy of everyone.

We are also a state that strives to allow our people and businesses to be as independent as possible without overreaching government regulations.

These North Carolina values of privacy and equality came into conflict recently when the Charlotte City Council passed a new mandate that forced on businesses a city-wide ordinance of bathroom and locker room regulations, something frankly we had never seen or had before in that great city or in North Carolina.

Simply put, this government overreach was a solution in search of a problem.

In fact, the Charlotte City Council rejected this proposal less than a year ago.

In a letter prior to the most recent vote, I notified the Charlotte City Council that this unnecessary and intrusive mandate conflicts with basic expectations of privacy in the most private of settings.

Therefore, as I expected, the state took action on what was seen as government overreach.

You know, after listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina.

But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.

To that end, today I have signed an executive order with the goal of achieving that fine balance.

This executive order accomplishes the following:

First, it maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and in our schools, and when possible, encourages reasonable accommodations for families and those who have unique or special circumstances.

Second, the private sector can make its own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities. This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector.

Third, I have affirmed the private sector and local government’s right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies.

And fourth, as governor, I have expanded our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.

And fifth, I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.

Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals.

Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues.

This is the North Carolina way.

Thank you very much, and may God continue to bless the great state of North Carolina.

REACTION TO McCRORY’S DECISION

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left’s lies about HB2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women’s bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

– Senate leader Phil Berger

“Gov. McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short. The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue.

“I’m glad Gov. McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more.

“The truth is, this executive order doesn’t change the fact that HB 2 has written discrimination into the law.”

\_ Attorney General Roy Cooper

“Gov. McCrory’s Executive Order affirms the importance of the actions the General Assembly took in passing the Bathroom Bill to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists’ efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives.  Private businesses are free to decide for themselves restroom, dressing room and non-discrimination employment policies that best suit their business and employee needs without inconsistent mandates by cities and counties.”

\_ House Speaker Tim Moore

“Gov. McCrory is now willing to admit the economic toll HB 2 is taking on North Carolina. In the weeks since the Governor signed this new statewide discrimination policy, our state’s reputation has suffered very real damage. This cannot be undone with half measures and political spin. It requires meaningful action. He owes our state nothing short of a full repeal of HB 2 in the opening week of legislative session.”

– House Minority Leader Larry Hall

“With his actions today, Governor McCrory acknowledged for the first time the full scope and consequences of his discriminatory law. For two weeks, he’s attempted to mislead about the effects of HB2 with long, incorrect memos and Internet videos. But today’s Executive Order does nothing to fix what’s really wrong with his job-killing law: legalized discrimination that will continue to cost the state of North Carolina jobs and respect.”

\_ Patsy Keever, North Carolina Democratic Party Chairwoman

“The devastating blow of HB 2 will not be fixed by the band-aid of an executive order.”

\_ Lambda Legal

“This is a major milestone for North Carolina and it represents the start of a reconciliation process that needs to take place in the aftermath of HB2. The executive order itself references current anti-transgender law imposed by HB2, which is just another reminder of how sweeping and harmful HB2 is.

“All eyes now turn to the General Assembly as it reconvenes later this month. They must continue the process of reconciliation and the only way to do that is to repeal HB2.’

\_ American Unity Fund senior adviser Tyler Deaton

**Gov. McCrory signs executive order in response to HB2**

WCNC

<http://www.wcnc.com/news/politics/gov-mccrory-signs-executive-order-in-response-to-hb2/129617246>

RALEIGH, N.C. – Governor McCrory signed an executive order Tuesday that clarifies existing state law and provides new protection for North Carolina residents.

According to the Governor’s Office, Executive Order 93 does the following:

Maintains the common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools.

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies.

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination.

Gov. Pat McCrory said Tuesday he is banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identify in state government personnel decisions and is seeking to reverse a provision of HB2 that made it harder for people to sue over discrimination on other grounds in court.

An executive order McCrory signed Tuesday leaves intact the primary provisions of HB2. They keep local governments from adopting ordinances prohibiting discrimination against LGBT people and require that bathrooms and locker rooms in state and local government buildings be used according to the "biological sex" of the user.

However, the executive order reaffirms that the private sector can set its own restroom and locker room policies and that private businesses and local governments can establish their own policies for their employees. That would be the case with or without McCrory's action, but the executive order makes it clear that that is the position of the state.

In a video, McCrory said he has "listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals."

Before HB2 was passed in a one-day special session of the General Assembly March 23, people who alleged that they were discriminated against on the basis of "race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap" could sue in either state or federal court.

HB2 ended the ability to bring those suits in state court, although those discriminated against on the basis of a handicap could rely on a different state law to sue.

Lawyers who handle employment discrimination lawsuits said the change was a blow to those discriminated against in the workplace because it is cheaper and easier to sue in state court and the period during which lawsuits can be filed in state court is longer than in federal court. A state lawsuit can be filed at a county courthouse while federal cases are heard in a much smaller number of federal courthouses around the state, a potential barrier for people who live in more remote areas.

Changing the part of the law that prevents the cases from being filed in state court would take action by the General Assembly, which returns to Raleigh for its regular session April 25.

McCrory's office said North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.

One provision of the executive order says that private entities leasing property from the state can set their own policies regarding signage and use of bathrooms and locker rooms.

If, as it may do, that provision applies to local governments, it could lessen the chances of the NBA moving its all-star game to another city instead of holding it in Charlotte as planned.

The Charlotte Hornets lease Time-Warner Cable Arena, where the game is to be held, from owner Charlotte city government. Without the clarification in McCrory's order, policies in HB2 might apply in the arena. The order apparently allows the Hornets to decide bathroom and locker room signage and use questions.

Senate leader Phil Berger endorsed McCrory's actions in a statement.

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law," Berger said. "But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

The North Carolina chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union panned McCrory's actions as inadequate.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people," said Sarah Preston, acting executive director, in a statement. "With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

...

Here is the press release and statement from McCrory's office:

"Governor Pat McCrory has signed an Executive Order to protect the privacy and equality of all North Carolinians. Executive Order 93 clarifies existing state law and provides new protections for North Carolina residents.

Executive Order 93 does the following:

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

With this Executive Order, the state of North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” said Governor McCrory. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

Governor McCrory has posted a video statement on the Executive Order.

Transcript (of the video statement):

Hi, I’m North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

North Carolina proudly welcomes all people to live, work and visit our great state.

We didn’t become the ninth most populous state in the nation by accident. We have long held traditions of both ensuring equality for all of our citizens and our visitors, while also respecting the privacy of everyone.

We are also a state that strives to allow our people and businesses to be as independent as possible without overreaching government regulations.

These North Carolina values of privacy and equality came into conflict recently when the Charlotte City Council passed a new mandate that forced on businesses a city-wide ordinance of bathroom and locker room regulations, something frankly we had never seen or had before in that great city or in North Carolina.

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In fact, the Charlotte City Council rejected this proposal less than a year ago.

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Third, I have affirmed the private sector and local government’s right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies.

And fourth, as governor, I have expanded our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.

And fifth, I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.

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Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues.

This is the North Carolina way.

Thank you very much, and may God continue to bless the great state of North Carolina."

The Asheville Citizen-Times contributed to this report.

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**Gov. McCrory wants part of rights law changed but most intact**

WSOC

<http://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/gov-mccrory-signs-executive-order-addressing-hb2-concerns/212008798>

RALEIGH, N.C. —

(AP) Gov. Pat McCrory has signed an executive order which expands protections for state employees covering sexual orientation and gender identity.

McCrory released a statement saying the order is to protect the privacy and equality of all North Carolinians. Executive Order 93 clarifies existing state law and provides new protections for North Carolina residents.

Executive Order 93 does the following:

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

With this executive order, the state of North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees, the release state.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

His announcement comes as fallout widens over the law he signed last month that would limit protections for gay, lesbian and transgender people. Critics of the law called his statement a step in the right direction, but not enough.

While McCrory's executive order extends further protections to state employees, it leaves intact provisions of the state law that limit protections for the LGBT community in the general public.

McCrory said he's using an executive order to expand the equal employment policy for state employees to include sexual orientation and gender, as well as affirming private businesses' rights to establish their own bathroom policies.

He also says he will ask lawmakers for legislation allowing people to sue in state court over discrimination. That right was wiped out by the law.

But he said his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools. He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity, calling it "a solution in search of a problem."

The state law was passed partly in response to the Charlotte measure.

But it went further than repealing the Charlotte law, overruling LGBT antidiscrimination measures passed by local governments statewide. It also excluded sexual orientation and gender identity from the state's antidiscrimination policy. The law also required transgender people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate.

McCrory acknowledged outcry over the law, saying he'd listened to "feedback" from people for several weeks.

He said that "based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality."

Chris Sgro, executive director of Equality NC, said McCrory's order is a step in the right direction but still "doubles down" on some of the most problematic parts of the law.

"If the governor is truly committed to non-discrimination and wants to undo the harms done by House Bill 2, this is just the beginning of the conversation," Sgro said in a written statement.

The head of the state ACLU, which has filed a lawsuit challenging the law, said the governor had made "a poor effort to save face."

"With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom," said Sarah Preston, the group's acting executive director for the state.

In an interview with The Associated Press, McCrory said he saw no need to change the law he signed March 23 beyond repealing the state court discrimination provision.

He said his actions Tuesday "will not satisfy all the critics who have a litmus test of purity on each side of this issue ... my job is to find a commonsense solution to where we have conflicts between privacy and between equal rights."

As for the equal employment protection for state employees, McCrory said he already believes state government protects LGBT workers but "I thought it needed to be clarified to the citizens of North Carolina."

Attorney General Roy Cooper, a Democrat challenging McCrory this fall, is opposed to the law and announced last week he won't defend it in court. Cooper said in a statement the order "is a day late and a veto short" and doesn't change that last month's legislation "has written discrimination into the law."

McCrory's announcement came hours after Deutsche Bank said it will halt plans to add 250 jobs in North Carolina because of the law. The German bank with a large U.S. presence had previously planned to add the jobs through next year in Cary.

Co-executive officer John Cryan said in a news release that the bank may revisit the plans later. The bank currently employs 900 people at a Cary software development center, and it said it plans to sustain that existing operation.

Previously, PayPal reversed plans to open a 400-employee operation center in Charlotte, and more than 130 corporate CEOs signed a letter urging the law's repeal. Some states and cities have restricted public employee travel to North Carolina.

Several groups have canceled planned conventions or gatherings in the state.

Ryan Smith, a spokeswoman for the Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, said five groups totaling about 1,000 attendees have already canceled. She said in an email the canceled events would have brought $730,000 to the area.

Smith said another 16 groups are considering cancellations of events expected to have a $24 million impact.

The B Lab, a group organizing a gathering for socially conscious companies, says that it's relocating the event that was expected to bring 550 attendees to Durham in October.

Charlotte tourism officials have previously said that several events were canceled around that city.

Rock star Bruce Springsteen canceled a Greensboro show over the weekend because of the new law.

Jimmy Buffett, meanwhile, said that he considers the law "stupid" but will proceed with scheduled shows in Raleigh and Charlotte this month. He said future dates would depend on whether the law is repealed.

Buffett wrote on his blog that tickets to his shows sold out long before the law was enacted. "I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year," he said.

**Group Asks Artists to Keep N.C. Shows After Springsteen Pulls Out Over Law**

by JACQUELLENA CARRERO

NBC News

<http://www.nbcnews.com/pop-culture/music/group-asks-artists-keep-n-c-shows-after-springsteen-pulls-n554831>

Bruce Springsteen may be the latest performer to boycott North Carolina over its law seen as discriminatory against the LGBT community, but now one group is urging performers not to follow The Boss' lead.

The organization North Carolina Needs You started a new initiative over the weekend aimed at encouraging performers to keep their shows in the state in order to generate money locally and speak out against the controversial legislation.

The group began their push after Springsteen canceled his date in Greensboro last Friday in response to the so-called "religious freedom" law viewed as an attempt to roll back protections for gay and transgender people.

"We need you here, in North Carolina, helping to raise money and awareness in order to defeat such policies and the politicians who enacted and defend them," a statement from the group said.

Opponents of the law are asking performers to keep their shows and use the stage as a platform to make a statement or to donate their profits to advocacy groups fighting for the LGBT community.

Jimmy Buffett wrote on his "Margaritaville" blog Saturday that he's not pulling out of the state, with upcoming shows this month in Raleigh and Charlotte. He plans to rock on, he said, despite the state's "stupid law, based on stupid assumptions."

"North Carolina was there for me as a performer in the early days and I have always felt a loyalty to fans there that goes deep," he said. "These shows were booked and sold out long before the governor signed that stupid law. I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year."

Buffett is not the only artist or entertainer who is heeding the advice of North Carolina Needs You. Comedian Joel McHale performed in Durham, and said he would donate all of his proceeds to the city's LGBTQ center.

Still, there is a growing list of companies and artists who won't be doing business at all in the state over the law, which prevents any local governments from passing ordinances that prohibit discrimination in public places based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has said the law is meant to protect people's privacy and not allow the government to interfere with private businesses.

Unhappy with the law, Paypal nixed plans for a $3.6 million global operations center in Charlotte.

And on Tuesday, Deutsche Bank announced that it is freezing plans to create 250 jobs at its location near Raleigh.

"We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We're proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now," Deutsche Bank co-CEO John Cryan said in a statement.

Time will tell if other companies or artists will choose to run from North Carolina just like Springsteen.

Pop stars Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez and country singers Carrie Underwood and Dolly Parton are slated to play in North Carolina in the coming months, but have not announced any changes to their concert schedules.

**Deutsche Bank to freeze new jobs in NC due to new transgender law**

by Roger Yu

USA TODAY

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-freeze-new-jobs-nc-due-new-transgender-law/82932994/>

Deutsche Bank said Tuesday it will freeze plans to create 250 new jobs at its software center in Cary, N.C., citing its opposition to the state’s new controversial law that requires transgender people to use bathrooms and changing facilities matching the gender on their birth certificate.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” John Cryan, co-CEO of Deutsche Bank, said in a statement. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now.”

Deutsche Bank currently employs about 900 people at the software development center in Cary. Those jobs aren’t affected.

In September, Deutsche Bank announced the job expansion plans. The company says it hopes to revisit the issue "in the near future."

The fallout from the new law, which replaced local anti-discrimination ordinances, has touched various industries in the state, ranging from arts and culture to manufacturing and service businesses.

Calling it a “fight against prejudice and bigotry,” Bruce Springsteen canceled a concert in Greensboro, N.C. last week. Lionsgate and A+E Network will end filming in the state if the law, House Bill 2, is not repealed, according to The News & Observer of Raleigh. Fox, Miramax and The Weinstein Company have voiced concerns about the law, it says.

In a letter to North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory, a coalition of executives expressed their disappointment with his signing of the bill. "This is not a direction in which

states move when they are seeking to provide successful, thriving hubs for business and economic development," it said. "We believe that HB 2 will make it far more challenging for businesses across the state to recruit and retain the nation’s best and brightest workers and attract the most talented students from across the country."

Those signing the letter include CEOs of Salesforce, Levi Strauss, Goldman Sachs, Barnes and Noble, Kellogg, Northrop Grumman, Oracle, Airbnb, Apple, Kimpton Hotels, Twitter, Facebook, Hyatt Hotels, Uber, Intel, Yahoo, Google and Hilton Worldwide.

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**Local HB2 opponents propose ‘dirty tricks’ As supporters offer cash reward for help**

By Roger McCredie

The Tribune Papers

<http://www.thetribunepapers.com/2016/04/12/local-hb2-opponents-propose-dirty-tricks-as-supporters-offer-cash-reward-for-help/>

The so-called “bathroom bill” recently passed by the North Carolina General Assembly is generating strident calls for action by both supporters and opponents of the measure.

Screenshots (copies of internet conversations) furnished to the Tribune by an outside source show members of a Facebook group apparently seriously discussing the possibility of placing cross-dressing spies in public restrooms.  Meanwhile, two prominent Buncombe County republicans, former City Councilman Carl Mumpower and former county GOP Chairman Chad Nesbitt, have posted a $3,000 cash reward for help in finding a way to sue opponents of the law  who are bringing economic pressure to bear on the state in hopes of getting it repealed.

The dueling calls to action are the latest local fallout from adoption of the bill, passed by state lawmakers on March 23, which prohibits local governmental bodies from passing laws that would abolish male-only and female-only restrooms on grounds that they discriminate against transgendered people.  The term “transgender” encompasses both those who have actually undergone medical procedures to change the sex they were at birth, and those who have come to identify so strongly with their non-birth sex that they adopt the identity, including dress and mindset, of that opposite gender.

The catalyst for the general assembly’s action was the adoption by the city of Charlotte of an ordinance preventing further discrimination, on the basis of sexual orientation, of all public facilities, including restrooms.  The March 23 law, referred to as “HB2” for its original bill designation, struck down the Charlotte ordinance and blocks similar action by other cities in the state.

Only two weeks before the bill’s adoption Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer announced that city council had no plans to enact an ordinance similar to Charlotte’s.  To do so  was unnecessary, she said; Charlotte was “fixing” their own law by plugging a restroom loophole that could be construed as discriminatory.  Asheville, she said, was not in that position.

The mayor’s explanation did not prevent Asheville, often billed as the state’s most progressive city, from splitting into two passionately hostile camps.  The LGBT community and many others denounce the measure as institutionalized bigotry and outright oppression; the bill’s supporters say it is designed to insure ordinary decency and protect the innocent, especially women and children, from possible exploitation or even molestation.

From the beginning, HB2, which requires that individuals use restroom facilities associated with their “birth gender,” has been problematic as to how it would be enforced.  And that conundrum is apparently behind a proposal on a local facebook page to form a “dirty tricks squad” to call attention to the law’s shortcomings.

The screenshots furnished to the Tribune are taken from the Facebook page “Asheville Politics,” beginning with a comment by a page member named Jane Wallace, who says:

“Ok here’s an idea for an HR2 protest.  Ladies, get 2 or 3 friends and dress up in costumes.  Preferably masculine ones, preferably with convincing looking beards.  Go in a lot of bathrooms.  Get challenged.  Show your driver’s license.  Do it a lot.  Don’t make the transgender folks carry this burden.  Let’s do it for them.  Basically just mess them up.  What if we did it all over the state?  What do you think would happen?”

“Or guys in dresses headed to the men’s room,” member Brian Lee suggests.

Apparently seriously, Wallace then says, “Ok, so what’s the date?  How long would it be [to] get a sizable number of people to do this?  To spread the word.

“If we go with cartoon characters, like my husband suggested, it would be satire,” Wallace says.  Later she repeats, “It would be satire, you know, like Monty Python.”

Further on, a member named Matthew Ensley observes, “This whole scaring them into trying to enforce the new law in this manner only could make it worse.  I’m ALL for creative civil disobedience but this manner kind of feeds the faux fears.”

A member who goes by the screen name of “Billy Detroitt” seconds that. “Sounds like a great idea but these things have a way of backfiring sometimes,” “Detroitt” says.

“Yeah,” says reader Karenna Awtry, “I guess he [Ensley] has a point.  But I like where you were going.”

Awtry is the wife of regional Gannett Vice President and former Asheville Citizen-Times publisher Josh Awtry.

Ensley then proposes, “Stand in front of restrooms like you are supposed to be there and ask to see birth certificates before allowing entry.”

To this, member E. Rachel Gilley replies, “Your idea is better.  I do not like the idea that masculine presenting people showing up in women’s bathrooms is supposed to be upsetting – this is the opposite of what is helpful.”

“I like Matthew’s idea better too,” Wallace says, having apparently reconsidered her original plan.

There ensues a discussion about when and where to meet to strategize.  Then a member named Whit Rylee asks, “See if we can get [“Asheville Politics” administrator and former council candidate] Rich Lee on board?”

To which Wallace replies, “Hey Rich, do you wanna be Elmo, or Santa, or the officer checking ID’s outside the bathrooms?”

The screenshots show no response from Lee at any time during the conversation.  Either he did not reply or his comments, if there were any, were not visible to the person who took the screenshots.  That would happen, for instance, if Lee himself had “blocked” the other party from seeing his comments, but there is no indication this happened.

No further reports have surfaced of Wallace’s proposal’s being acted upon.

Meanwhile, Mumpower and Nesbitt, who have collaborated in the past to generate community action on specific topics, posted a joint statement saying they had upped their original reward of $2,000 for help in bringing legal action against anti- HB2 activists to $3,000, saying the $1,000 had been contributed by a supporter.

The pair say they are working to combat an “organized effort to exert financial pressure against our elected officials with the explicit agenda of reversing legislation [that] has the taint of extortion, blackmail, intimidation or other form of intentional coercion,” referring to a spate of highly publicized statements from companies, organizations and entertainers [indicate] that they will boycott North Carolina until such time as HB2 is repealed.

Mumpower has stated that such groups and individuals are “attacking the rule of law” and he and Nesbitt are appealing to the public for funds to explore “viable means to bringing civil, criminal, administrative, or other form of legal redress against the parties involved in this act of coercion.”

**Bank won’t add 250 jobs in NC due to HB2**

by JONATHAN DREW

Associated Press

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/2016/04/12/bank-add-jobs-nc-due-rights-law/82938312/>

RALEIGH - Deutsche Bank announced Tuesday that it’s halting plans to add 250 jobs in North Carolina because of a state law limiting protections for lesbians, gays and transgender people — the latest fallout from the business community over the law.

Several more groups have also canceled conventions or gatherings, depriving the state of hundreds of thousands of dollars in visitor spending.

The German bank with a large U.S. presence adds another loud voice to a chorus of business leaders who have urged the repeal of the law by Republican leaders who promote the state as business-friendly.

Previously, the bank had planned to add the jobs through next year in Cary. But on Tuesday the bank said it was freezing those plans.

Co-executive officer John Cryan said in a news release that “as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now.”

He said the bank may revisit the plans later. The bank currently employs 900 people at a Cary software development center, and it said it plans to sustain that existing operation.

The law passed last month overrules LGBT antidiscrimination measures passed by local governments. It also excludes sexual orientation and gender identity from the state’s antidiscrimination policy and prevents people from filing employment discrimination lawsuits in state courts.

Champions of the law have rallied around a provision requiring transgender people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate, saying the law is needed to promote public safety.

But many business leaders and other public figures disagree. PayPal reversed plans to open a 400-employee operation center in Charlotte, and more than 130 corporate CEOs signed a letter urging the law’s repeal. A number of states and cities have restricted public employee travel to the state.

This week, the law prompted several more groups to cancel planned conventions or gatherings in the state.

Ryan Smith, a spokeswoman for the Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, said five groups totaling about 1,000 attendees have already canceled. She said in an email the canceled events would have brought $730,000 to the area.

Smith said another 16 groups are considering cancellations of events expected to have an impact of $24 million.

The B Lab, a group organizing a gathering for socially conscious companies, says that it’s relocating the event that was expected to bring 550 attendees to Durham in October. Certified B Corporations are for-profit but meet strict criteria for social and environmental responsibility.

Charlotte tourism officials have previously said that several events were canceled around that city.

Some major music acts have also responded to the law. Bruce Springsteen canceled a Greensboro show over the weekend because of it.

Jimmy Buffett, meanwhile, said that he considers the law “stupid” but will proceed with scheduled shows in Raleigh and Charlotte this month. He said future dates would depend on whether the law is repealed.

Buffett wrote on his blog that tickets to his shows sold out long before the law was enacted. “I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year,” he said.

Supporters of the law sought to strike back against the cascade of negative publicity on Monday with their biggest rally yet, drawing several hundred supporters to hear speakers outside the old Capitol.

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**Deutsche Bank says "nein" to North Carolina LGBT law**

CBS News

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/deutsche-bank-says-nein-to-n-carolina-lgbt-law/>

North Carolina is facing more fallout from its recent move to pass an anti-gay law.

Deutsche Bank (DB) on Tuesday said it would halt plans to add 250 new jobs in its Cary, North Carolina, location, citing state legislation enacted in march that blocks anti-discrimination rules for gay and transgender people.

The new law has "invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future," according to Deutsche Bank.

"We're proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now," John Cryan, co-chief executive officer of Deutsche Bank, said in a statement. "We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future."

Deutsche Bank, which employs about 900 people at the software application development center in Cary, said it would maintain those staffing levels there.

In September, Deutsche Bank confirmed plans to add 250 jobs in Cary through 2017. The bank had also said it would invest $9 million in the center, according to a release touting the expansion put out by Gov. Pat McCroy, a Republican who took office in 2013.

The move by Germany's largest lender follows in the footsteps of PayPal (PYPL), which a week ago pulled the plug on its plans to open a global operations center in Charlotte, North Carolina, that would have employed more than 400 people, with the online payments company citing the new state law.

Musician Bruce Springsteen has also cancelled a scheduled performance in North Carolina over the law.

Apple (AAPL) and Google (GOOG) are among the other companies that have denounced the law, the state's response to a Charlotte City Council ordinance approved in February that would have extended protections to gays and lesbians, as well as bisexual and transgender people, at hotels, restaurants and stores. Charlotte also would have allowed transgender people to use restrooms aligned with their gender identity.

The law blocked Charlotte's rules and prevented other local governments from approving similar ordinances.

Atlanta's mayor has reportedly banned taxpayer-funded travel to North Carolina over the law, following similar actions by officials in states including New York, Connecticut, Minnesota and Washington. And Bruce Springsteen recently canceled a concert in North Carolina in protest.

"There's no doubt there is a well-coordinated, national campaign to smear our state's reputation after we passed a commonsense law to ensure no government can take away our basic expectations of privacy in bathrooms, locker rooms and showers," Josh Ellis, McCrory's communications director said Thursday in a statement.

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**Porn giant xHamster blocks N.C. users who support anti-LGBT law**

by Mary Bowerman

USA TODAY

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/nation-now/2016/04/12/porno-xhamster-website-blocks-anti-lgbt-law-north-carolina-users/82934350/>

A popular porn site is blocking some North Carolinians' access to its material due to the state’s law preventing cities from banning discrimination against the LGBT community.

The porn site, xHamster, tweeted on Monday that it was “blacking out access for North Carolina” because of newly passed House Bill 2,  which also dictates which public restrooms transgender men and women can use.

When users with a North Carolina IP address visit the website they will be asked if they support the anti-LGBT law, xHamster Chief Marketing Officer, Alexander D. Hawkins, said in an email. If they choose in the affirmative they will be blocked from the site, he said.

“We blacked out the access to our website because we want to draw the attention of millions of people to patterns of human rights violations,” Hawkins said.

While some North Carolina lawmakers have argued that the sweeping law defends religious liberty, opponents say the law turns its back on the LGBT population in the state.

And the porn-giant is just the latest organization to penalize the state in the wake of the anti-LGBT bill, which North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory passed into law on March 23.

Last week, PayPal announced it was canceling its planned $3.6 million North Carolina operations center, while Bruce Springsteen canceled a scheduled show, and several state and local governments have banned non-essential employee travel to the state.

Hawkins said the company plans to stand their ground in the “fight for equality.”

“All the fuss about moral values being destroyed by porn is ridiculous when checking the statistics on the porn consumption state-on-state, including North Carolina,” Hawkins said.

The pornographic content provider tweeted a photo showing that searches for gay and transgender content are popular among users in North Carolina.

“The incredible hypocrisy of North Carolina, the land where Homophobia is law,” the company said on Twitter.

According to the company, 50,612 North Carolina searches contained the word ‘gay’ and 48,585 contained the word “shemale,” in 2016.

Hawkins said the company has a simple take on the issue: "Make love and watch porn!"

Follow @MaryBowerman on Twitter.

**North Carolina brewers collaborate in opposition to HB2**

Courier Tribune

<http://courier-tribune.com/news/local/north-carolina-brewers-collaborate-opposition-hb2>

DURHAM — Two North Carolina breweries are leading the charge in a unique response to North Carolina’s recent HB2: by brewing beer.

“We didn’t feel like HB2 represented us as businesses or as residents of North Carolina,” said Erik Lars Myers, Mystery Brewing Company CEO and Head Brewer, “We wanted to do something in response and making beer is what we do.”

The beer will be called “Don’t Be Mean to People, A Golden Rule Saison” and will be brewed at Ponysaurus Brewing Company in Durham, with North Carolina grown barley, wheat, and sorghum on April 16. It will be available for purchase in May.

Asheboro-based Four Saints Brewing Company is participating in the effort.

“Our support of the brewers collaboration in opposition of HB2 rests in our belief that the legislation diminishes civil rights for multiple groups of people, reduces the ability of local North Carolina governments to govern locally, and places North Carolina in a unfavorable position regarding positive economic expansion,” said co-owner Joel McClosky

One hundred percent of the profit from the sales of the beer will be donated to two North Carolina based charities, EqualityNC (<http://equalitync.org/>) and QORDS (<http://qords.org/>).

“We’re fortunate to be in a tight-knit and collaborative industry,” said Keil Jansen, owner and brewmaster at Ponysaurus Brewing Company, “We’ve gathered support from dozens of our fellow brewers, and we have the ability to make a significant social impact by working together for a greater good.”

“Together, we can show people another side of North Carolina,” Myers added.

So far, over 30 breweries and brewing industry businesses have pledged support, labor, or ingredients to the collaboration beer and the collaborators expect that number to grow.

In addition to profits from the sale of the beer, the brewers have launched a fundraising campaign via generosity.com allowing the community at large an opportunity to give to the cause, while receiving something in return for their generosity. The fundraising campaign can be found at <http://bit.ly/ncgoldenrule>.

North Carolina’s craft beer industry is one of the fastest growing in the country and has created more than 10,000 jobs along with an annual economic impact of $1.2 billion, according to Brewers Association statistics.

- See more at: <http://courier-tribune.com/news/local/north-carolina-brewers-collaborate-opposition-hb2#sthash.bMZpH9HN.dpuf>

**Deutsche Bank cancels 250-job expansion in Cary, citing HB2**

News & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/news/local_news/deutsche-bank-cancels--job-expansion-in-cary-citing-hb/article_fea19dc6-e2c6-575d-adb9-d4a435d2863f.html>

CARY — A bank announced it will not create 250 jobs in Cary, citing House Bill 2 as the reason.

Deutsche Bank, which currently employs about 900 people at its software application development center in the Triangle city, announced on its website today that it will freeze plans for the job expansion.

"The Bank's decision is due to state-wide legislation enacted in North Carolina on March 23 that invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future," Deutsche Bank said in its statement.

It initially announced the expansion Sept. 22.

The bank is the second big company to cancel expansions in the state, citing HB2. A week ago, PayPal announced it was canceling a $3.6 million expansion at its Charlotte facility, which would have provided 400 jobs.

Bruce Springsteen canceled his concert this past Sunday in Greensboro, again citing HB2. It's estimated to have cost the city $100,000 in revenue.

Some people have said they'll boycott the furniture market in High Point because of the law.

More than 130 chief executive officers of major corporations — including big North Carolina employers like American Airlines, Dow Chemical, BioGen and LabCorp — have called for repeal of the law.

**Concert opposing HB2 to be held in Saxapahaw**

News & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/news/north_carolina/concert-opposing-hb-to-be-held-in-saxapahaw/article_1a1a98d3-b1e7-5f10-bd09-c9c315718a9a.html>

SAXAPAHAW — Some North Carolina musicians have planned a concert May 15 in order to voice their opposition to HB2. The event is being called "Stand Against HB2 - North Carolina Musicians United for EqualityNC"

According to the Haw River Ballroom website, tickets will range from $15 to $17 with 100 percent of the ticket sales going toward supporting the group, EqualityNC. The concert is scheduled from 2 to 9 p.m with doors opening at 1 p.m.

The line-up is still forming but here's who is scheduled to perform:

Peter Holsapple

Chris Stamey

Will Rigby

Jon Heames

Rod Abernethy

Robert Kirkland

Robert Sledge

Brett Harris

Caitlin Cary

Johnny Folsom Four

Jeffery Dean Foster

Somebody's Sister

For more information, go to the ballroom's website

**Citing HB2, Deutsche Bank freezes 250-job expansion in Cary**

WRAL Techwire

<http://wraltechwire.com/citing-hb2-deutsche-bank-freezes-250-job-expansion-in-cary/15637354/>

CARY, N.C. — Deutsche Bank on Tuesday announced that it will freeze plans to create 250 jobs at its Cary location due to North Carolina's new discrimination law, House Bill 2.

The announcement on the company's website said the statewide legislation "invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future."

House Bill 2, which was signed into law last month after a one-day special legislative session, prohibits transgender people from using public bathrooms that align with their gender identity, excludes gays, lesbians and transgenders from discrimination protection in employment and public accommodations and bars cities and counties from extending such protection to them.

Currently, Deutsche Bank employs 900 people at its software application development center in Cary. In September 2015, the bank announced its plan to add the 250 jobs through 2017 and invest $9 million there through the end of this year. North Carolina agreed to provide about $3.3 million in incentives for the expansion.

In a statement, Deutsche Bank's Co-Chief Executive Officer John Cryan said, "We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

CREDITS

Web Editors: Evan Matsumoto, Matthew Burns

Read more at <http://wraltechwire.com/citing-hb2-deutsche-bank-freezes-250-job-expansion-in-cary/15637354/#TJgACsvIKqYek4eC.99>

**Brewers unite against HB2 legislation**

by Tony Kiss

Citizen Times

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2016/04/12/brewers-unite-against-hb2-legislation/82929976/>

Brewers across North Carolina including some in the Asheville area are backing a collaboration brew against North Carolina's HB2 legislation which removed discrimination protection for gays, lesbians and transgender people.

Thirty breweries and beer-related businesses have joined the project to brew Don't Be Mean to People: A Golden Rule (Saison). Local supporters were listed as the Thirsty Monk pubs, Wedge Brewing, Innovation Brewing, Heinzelmannchen Brewing, New Belgium, Riverbend Malt House and Land of Sky Mobile Canning. An online fundraising campaign has already generated more than $9,400, way beyond its initial goal of $1,500.

Participating breweries will sell the beer, a farmhouse ale made with 100 percent North Carolina grain and North Carolina sorghum molasses. All the proceeds will go to Equality North Carolina, which supports lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and QORDS which hosts summer camps for gay and lesbian youth or members of their families, with a focus on the South.

The HB2 law, passed by the North Carolina General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Pat McCrory on March 23, has generated a groundswell of reaction in and outside of the state. The law struck drown a Charlotte ordinance that would have prohibited discrimination against gays and lesbians in employment and public accommodations and keeps other local governments from passing similar rules.

In response, PayPal announced it would not build a planned expansion in the state. Last weekend, rock legend Bruce Springsteen pulled out of a concert in Greensboro citing HB2 as the reason.

"It seems like such an unnecessary law," said Wedge Brewing owner Tim Schaller. "It is not a friendly statement and not good for business in general. It was foolish and unnecessary."

The Thirsty Monk pubs "are not a particularly political" business, but "we feel that people's rights are of great importance," said vice president Chall Gray. "This law is not fair to everyone." The project "came together quickly,"  he said.

The project was headed by Erik Lars Myers of Hillsborough’s Mystery Brewing Company and Keil Jansen  of Ponysaurus Brewing in Durham, where the beer will be made this weekend. "This is our home, where we're trying to establish roots and grow," said Myers in a statement. "We can't leave. We are left to deal with the consequences created by our General Assembly."

**NC professor explains implications of HB2**

By WBTV

<http://wncn.com/2016/04/07/nc-professor-explains-implications-of-hb2/>

BOONE, N.C. (WBTV) – Students at Appalachian State University are protesting against House Bill 2. It’s the latest round of protests against the bill that has put North Carolina firmly in the national spotlight.

Many have reached out to WBTV for a deeper explanation of what the law means.

“HB2 affects everyone,” said law professor Brian Clarke. Clark said if you face discrimination at work, you can no longer go straight to the courthouse and sue your employer.

“Trying to put it in normal human terms rather than in civil procedure terms – it’s much easier to file a case in state court,” Clarke said.

HB2 delivered on what state lawmakers promised.

“It creates a state-wide non-discrimination ordinance and public accommodations which we’ve never had before, which is a perfectly good thing to do,” Clarke said. “But it, of course, limits the protection categories to race, age, national origin, religion, color and biological sex to avoid any potential expansion of that in the courts.”

Clarke said the law goes beyond the stated goals.

“Then it deals with employment, so it deals with things that are utterly unrelated to LGBT rights, to bathroom usage, to public accommodations. And it deals specifically and directly with employment,” Clarke said.

The law addresses the minimum wage, and does not allow any local government to set a minimum wage.

“The legislature took that power expressly away, so forbade any local government from raising the minimum wage beyond what federal and state law require,” Clarke said.

Clarke teaches employment law at the Charlotte School of Law after being an employment lawyer for 11 years. He says one sentence in the law was very big.

The law states, “This Article does not create, and shall not be construed to create or support, a statutory or common law private right of action, and no person may bring any civil action based on the public policy expressed herein.”

“In a very hidden way, it eliminated the ability for employees in North Carolina to file claims under state law for employment discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, color and age,” Clarke said, “And that’s a right that North Carolina employees have had since 1982… and it’s gone.”

Clarke said North Carolina is now only one of two states that don’t provide these employment protections.

“Mississippi has never had a state anti-discrimination law. We had one and had one since 1977, but now we don’t anymore. The words are still in the statute book but there’s no way to enforce them,” Clarke said.

Proponents of the law point to the federal protections, but Clarke says the remedy under federal and the old state law were not the same.

“Under federal law you have 180 days to go to the EOCC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission]. Under North Carolina law, as it existed before HB2, if you were fired based on discrimination you had three years to file that claim. You didn’t have to go to any government agency you just went and filed your claim at the courthouse,” Clarke said.

The old state law also allowed an employee to file within three years versus the federal law that state within 180 days. Also, under the federal law, Clarke explained there are caps on damages up to $300,000. The state law had no cap.

“I was a management side employment lawyer for more than a decade, and I can’t see the ‘why,’” Clarke said.

A couple of weeks ago, Representative Dan Bishop – who drafted the law – said the federal system still protects people. Governor McCrory has also said HB2 does not take away any rights.

Clarke disagrees. He told his students that the lawsuit the LGBT community has filed could only allow the courts to overturn the parts of HB2 dealing with those rights.

“Even if that lawsuit is successful, the rights taken away on the employment side of things are not going to be affected,” Clarke said. “Those are the law unless they are specifically repealed.”

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**Deutsche Bank Freezes Plans to Exand in NC, Cites HB2**

WFMY

<http://www.wfmynews2.com/news/deutsche-bank-freezes-plans-to-exand-in-nc-cites-hb2/129490659>

CARY, N.C. -- Another company is pulling plans to expand in North Carolina and again, the business is blaming House Bill 2. Tuesday, Deutsche Bank announced it will freeze plans to create 250 new jobs at its Cary location.

In a statement, the bank says its decision to freeze its plans is due to HB2 which it says, "invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future."

Deutsche Bank's Co-Chief Executive Officer said, "We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future."

Last September, Deutsche Bank announced its plans to add 250 jobs to its Cary location through 2017. Currently, 900 people are employed at its software development center.

The company says it is committed to "sustaining that existing presence."

**Deutsche Bank freezes hiring plans in Cary over HB2**

by Lauren K. Ohnesorge

Triangle Business Journal

<http://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-expansion-freeze-cary-nc-hb2.html>

Deutsche Bank is freezing plans to expand in Cary, citing North Carolina's contentious House Bill 2 in its decision.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” says John Cryan, co-CEO of the bank, in a prepared statement Tuesday. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

The company had pledged in September to expand its DB Global Technology unit in Cary, a plan that meant a $9 million investment before the end of 2016 and 250 job additions (with an average salary of $85,600).

To support the project, the state had approved a JDIG incentive package worth $3.38 million over 12 years.

It was the company’s third major job announcement since its first state incentives grant was approved in 2009. Back then, the company committed to opening the new office with the hiring goal of up to 319 employees. A second grant was awarded in 2013 with the promise to create another 431 local jobs. As of Tuesday's announcement, the bank said it employs 900 people at its software application development center in Cary “and is committed to sustaining that existing presence." The bank clarified that the 250 jobs was to be in addition to the 900 currently in Cary.

Deutsche Bank is the latest company to act out against the bill, which legislators said was intended to strike down a Charlotte ordinance that allowed transgendered people to use the restroom they identified with. The measure, passed by state legislators in March, went further than just the Charlotte bathroom ordinance, however, overturning all local discrimination ordinances, as well as local employment regulations regarding minimum wage. Under the new bill, state ordinances supersede local regulations in those areas.

PayPal, which had been planning to bring 400 jobs to Charlotte, canceled its plans citing the bill, and other companies with North Carolina expansion plans, including Red Ventures and Braeburn Pharmaceuticals, have publicly said they’re considering changes.

John Boyd, founder of New Jersey location consulting firm The Boyd Company, says he’s not surprised, calling the legislation “antibusiness.” It’s Boyd’s job to help companies looking to relocate or expand with site selection, and he says North Carolina has consistently been a popular state on short lists.

Read: N.C. Commerce Secretary doesn't foresee economic fallout from HB2

“But these companies look for reasons to scratch companies off their short lists,” he cautions. The bill, he says, provides a reason. He’s predicting that legislators will roll back the legislation when they reconvene later this month, a move he says will “stop the bleeding."

“We saw that happen in Indiana after their religious freedom bill where the backlash was similar,” he says. "Politicians can quickly demonstrate some nimbleness here.”

Lauren Ohnesorge covers information technology and entrepreneurship.

**250 New Jobs on Hold Due to HB2**

By Blake Hodge

Chapelboro.com

<http://chapelboro.com/featured/250-job-expansion-on-hold-due-to-hb2>

Deutsche Bank is freezing plans to create 250 new jobs in Cary.

The bank announced the decision on Tuesday in a message on the company’s website that said the decision is “due to state-wide legislation enacted in North Carolina on March 23 that invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future.”

The legislation the message is referring to is House Bill 2, which has drawn national criticism from groups ranging from LGBT advocacy groups, who are challenging the law’s constitutionality in federal court, to the editorial board of the New York Times.

Deutsche Bank is joining PayPal in canceling plans to expand in the Tar Heel state.

Governor Pat McCrory and state GOP leadership have repeatedly called the bill “common sense” legislation that will prevent grown men from entering a women’s bathroom or changing room. The bill came in a special session after the Charlotte City Council approved extending the city’s nondiscrimination ordinance to the LGBT community. House Bill 2 says that individuals must use the bathroom of the sex on their birth certificate rather than the facility that matches their gender identity. The bill also repeals all ordinances from local governments that enact protection beyond the state’s nondiscrimination ordinance, which does not cover sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status, among other areas.

The bill also prohibits local governments from requiring businesses to pay employees a living wage.

Duetsche Bank co-chief executive officer John Cryan said in the bank’s announcement that the company takes its commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously.

“We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now.” Cryan added. “We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

McCrory has defended the legislation amid backlash from business leaders around the state and country, saying the bill does not require private businesses to change their policies.

The release from Deutsche Bank says it is committed to sustaining the existing presence of 900 employees in Cary. The plan to add 250 jobs to the Cary location was announced in September and was to be rolled out through 2017.

**ASC: HB2 threatens Charlotte arts and culture community**

by Ashley Mahoney

The Charlotte Post

<http://www.thecharlottepost.com/news/2016/04/12/local-state/asc-hb2-threatens-charlotte-arts-and-culture-community/>

HB2 could have a negative impact on Charlotte’s arts community.

In a statement released Tuesday, the Arts & Science Council expressed concerns about how the legislation could impact their role in the community should others follow rocker Bruce Springsteen and take their business outside North Carolina. Springsteen cancelled a concert scheduled for Greensboro Sunday to protest the law, which prohibits local governments from passing anti-discrimination rules. HB2, signed last month by Gov. Pat McCrory, also bars local jurisdictions from considering ordinances that affect wages, work hours, benefits, work leave and minority vendors set-aside programs.

“HB2 puts our cultural sector and its role in attracting a talented workforce, creative individuals, major exhibitions and performances, educators, tourists and other cultural opportunities at risk,” read the ASC statement.

With an economic impact of over $203 million per year, Charlotte’s arts and culture community is one of the region’s largest industries.

“In fact, over 50 percent of the 3.1 million members of our audience in 2015 traveled from outside Charlotte-Mecklenburg to experience innovative, relevant and diverse arts and cultural programming,” ASC stated. “In 2014, through the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Cultural Vision Plan, residents articulated to ASC and the cultural community that they want arts and culture to play a more intrinsic role in enlivening, engaging and enriching all of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s communities, helping to build strong bridges and increase dialogue and understanding across differences.”

As a city of transplants, the ASC advocates for Charlotte to welcome people who spend time in the Queen City.

“Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s cultural sector is a major contributor in building community, driving economic development and supporting educational attainment,” ASC stated. “Arts and culture enrich the quality of life of residents and visitors. Attracting talent to grow businesses requires a vibrant, welcoming and accepting community.”

ASC’s statement does not call for the HB2 to be repealed, but rather modified.

“We urge city and state leaders to work together to find common ground and modify HB2 to build an even more vibrant, inclusive and equitable vision for our shared future,” ASC said.

**Deutsche Bank freezes plans to create 250 jobs in Cary, cites HB2**

Winston Salem Journal

<http://www.journalnow.com/news/state_region/deutsche-bank-freezes-plans-to-create-jobs-in-cary-cites/article_d4b908e9-7cb3-5bcc-9266-fa216eca026a.html>

Deutsche Bank announced Tuesday it is freezing plans to create 250 new jobs at its Cary location because of the state's passage of House Bill 2.

In the statement, the bank state its decision is because of the March legislation passed to stop Charlotte’s so-called bathroom ordinance allowing people to use a restroom for those other than their biological sex if they identified themselves as another gender.

The ordinance went beyond restrooms, setting a uniform anti-discrimination standard for public accommodations that does not include sexual orientation or gender identity.

The new law also limits requirements that local governments can impose on businesses that contract with a local governments, and it basically requires that anyone pursuing an employment discrimination complaint must do so in federal court, not state courts.

John Cryan, Co-Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank, said in a statement: “We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

Deutsche Bank currently employs approximately 900 people at its software application development center in Cary and is committed to sustaining that existing presence, the statement said.

On 22 September, Deutsche Bank confirmed plans to add 250 jobs in Cary through 2017.

**Citing HB2, Deutsche Bank freezes 250-job expansion in Cary**

WRAL

<http://www.wral.com/citing-hb2-deutsche-bank-freezes-250-job-expansion-in-cary/15637071/>

Deutsche Bank on Tuesday announced that it will freeze plans to create 250 jobs at its Cary location due to North Carolina's new discrimination law, House Bill 2.

The announcement on the company's website said the statewide legislation "invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future."

Currently, Deutsche Bank employs 900 people at its software application development center in Cary. In September 2015, the bank announced its plan to add the 250 jobs through 2017 and invest $9 million there through the end of this year.

In a statement, Deutsche Bank's Co-Chief Executive Officer John Cryan said, "We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

Read more at <http://www.wral.com/citing-hb2-deutsche-bank-freezes-250-job-expansion-in-cary/15637071/#Z5veSGfVw5Ky5RPG.99>

**McCrory asks for $750,000 to prevent Zika outbreak in NC**

by: Joe Bruno

WSOCTV

<http://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/mccrory-asks-for-750000-to-prevent-zika-outbreak-in-nc/211518813>

CHARLOTTE, N.C. —

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials are warning about a possible Zika virus outbreak in the United States.

At a news conference Monday, the deputy director of the CDC said the virus “seems to be a bit scarier than we initially thought.”

Currently there are 346 cases of Zika confirmed in the United States, all people who have recently traveled to a Zika-infected country. According to the most recent CDC report, 32 were pregnant women and seven were sexually transmitted.

In North Carolina, there have been eight confirmed cases of the Zika virus.

Gov. Pat McCrory is calling for $750,000 to prevent an outbreak in the state.

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**NORTH CAROLINA CRAFT BREWERIES PLAN ANTI-HB2 BEER**

WTVD

<http://abc11.com/politics/north-carolina-craft-breweries-plan-anti-hb2-beer/1287506/>

RALEIGH -- A group of North Carolina craft breweries is teaming up to make a special beer that will be sold to raise money to fight the state's new House Bill 2 law.

The News and Observer reports more than 30 breweries are taking part.

They're calling the project the Don't Be Mean to People: A Golden Rule Saison and have set up a fundraising page on generosity by Indiegogo.

Critics say the law unfairly discriminates against LGBT people.

The North Carolina law overrules LGBT anti-discrimination measures passed by local governments. It also excludes sexual orientation and gender identity from the state's anti-discrimination policy and prevents people from filing employment discrimination lawsuits in state courts.

Conservatives have championed a provision that requires transgender people to use public restrooms that match the sex on their birth certificate, saying the law protects women and children from men who would use anti-discrimination measures as a pretense to enter the wrong restroom.

**DEUTSCHE BANK FREEZES CARY JOB EXPANSION OVER HB2**

WTVD

<http://abc11.com/politics/deutsche-bank-freezes-cary-job-expansion-over-hb2/1287518/>

CARY, NC -- Deutsche Bank says it's putting plans to create 250 new jobs at its Cary location on hold because of HB2.

The bank said the new law invalidates existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future.

John Cryan, Co-Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank, said: "We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We're proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future."

Deutsche Bank currently employs approximately 900 people at its software application development center in Cary.

**HB2 billboard on NC highway asks drivers to set ‘clock back 100 years’**

By WNCN Staff

<http://wncn.com/2016/04/12/hb2-billboard-on-nc-highway-asks-drivers-to-set-clock-back-100-years/>

LYNN, N.C. (WNCN) – A new billboard about House Bill 2 on a highway in Polk County is catching the eye of drivers as they make their way into North Carolina from the South Carolina border.

The Tryon Daily Bulletin reported the billboard went up in April at the Highway 108 and Skyuka Road intersection in Lynn.

According to the billboard, it was paid for by Planting Peace. According to the group’s website, Planting Peace is a “global nonprofit organization founded for the purpose of spreading peace in a hurting world.

In a photo taken by Leah Justice of Tryon Daily Bulletin, drivers are asked to set their clocks back 100 years. The billboard is in opposition to HB2. That law that requires people to go to the bathroom based on their biological sex on their birth certificate and not by the gender they identify with. The law also does addresses what can be considered discrimination and sets new rules for how wages can be regulated.

On April 10, the organization issued a statement on its website about the billboard.

“Our billboard is a reminder that laws such as HB2 move us backwards in the movement for equality and fundamental human rights for all. It is also meant to show the LGBT community and North Carolina that advocacy groups such as Planting Peace and others are willing to fight,” according to the statement.

**2 NC breweries creating ‘Don’t be Mean to People’ beer in opposition of HB2**

By: Molly Oak

WECT

<http://wncn.com/2016/04/12/2-nc-breweries-creating-dont-be-mean-to-people-beer-in-opposition-of-hb2/>

WILMINGTON, NC (WECT) – Two people are combating the brewing issues with House Bill 2 by creating a new beer to promote positivity.

Erik Lars Myers, the Founder and Head Brewer of Mystery Brewing Company in Hillsborough and Keil Jansen, the owner and brew-master of Ponysaurus Brewing Company in Durham, are collaborating to make “Don’t Be Mean to People: a golden rule (saison).”

They are set to brew the beer Saturday in Raleigh, and more than 30 breweries in North Carolina are going to be selling it, including Ironclad Brewery in Wilmington.

Ironclad Brewery’s CEO said breweries serve as an economic and social engine, explaining the brewery is a good place to talk about HB2.

“The whole concept is to take the high road and promote the idea of welcoming,” explained Ted Coughlin, Ironclad Brewery CEO. ”The craft breweries of Wilmington and North Carolina are welcoming to all.”

One hundred percent of the profits earned from this beer will go to two different organizations.

The first is Equality NC, which promotes equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. The other is QORDS, an organization that hosts overnight summer camps for gay, lesbian, and transgender youth or kids from LGBTQ families.

Coughlin said he expects residents to be open to the new brew because it encourages kindness.

“Be good to people, be good to others, that’s what we want to do,” said Coughlin.

He said it will take a couple of weeks for the beer to be ready to go, but he expects it to be ready around May 7 or 8.

Watch Carolina in the Morning to hear more.

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**City to discuss HB2 resolution -- again**

By Wesley Young

Winston-Salem Journal

<http://www.journalnow.com/news/local/city-to-discuss-hb-resolution----again/article_02c61c28-1a1c-507a-8d76-fade32b32c37.html>

A city committee will tackle Council Member Dan Besse’s proposed resolution opposing House Bill 2 this afternoon, with action by the full council likely on April 18, if the measure comes out of committee.

Besse’s resolution drew a packed house on March 28 when he first brought it to the Winston-Salem City Council, as an audience composed mostly of people opposed to HB2 filled the council chamber and a nearby conference room.

Besse said Monday that he has not changed the text of his resolution opposing HB2, which the N.C. General Assembly passed to stop Charlotte’s so-called bathroom ordinance allowing people to use a restroom for those other than their biological sex if they identified themselves as another gender.

The ordinance went beyond restrooms, setting a uniform anti-discrimination standard for public accommodations that does not include sexual orientation or gender identity.

The new law also limits requirements that local governments can impose on businesses that contract with a local governments, and it basically requires that anyone pursuing an employment discrimination complaint must do so in federal court, not state courts.

Besse’s resolution calls the new law “inadequately considered” and said his resolution is meant to “politely encourage” the county’s delegation in the N.C. General Assembly to reconsider the law.

The city is taking no chances on turnout for today’s committee meeting, and moved the setting from the second floor committee room to the council chamber on the same floor, which has more seating.

Angela Carmon, the city’s attorney, said she would be discussing her interpretation of the new law with committee members today.

Some of Besse’s concerns have to do with language in the law that Besse believes could derail or complicate city efforts to include minority- and woman-owned businesses in city construction projects. The city requires general contractors to meet, or try to meet, participation goals for subcontracting with minority- and woman-owned businesses as a condition for getting a city contract.

Besse said that while the city attorney has identified legal arguments that back up the city’s practice, he is concerned that the courts will at some time “choose to interpret the impact of the new statutory language in ways we can’t immediately anticipate.”

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**Bank drops adding 250 jobs in Cary over HB2; groups cancel events in Raleigh**

WNCN

<http://wncn.com/2016/04/12/bank-drops-plans-to-add-250-jobs-in-cary-cites-hb2/>

CARY, N.C. (WNCN) – Deutsche Bank announced Tuesday that it will freeze plans to create 250 new jobs at its Cary, North Carolina, location, the company said in a news release.

The bank said its decision was “due to state-wide legislation enacted in North Carolina on March 23 that invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future.”

Deutsche Bank becomes the latest company to announce it will not expand in the state. After the law passed, many national companies raised concerns. PayPal followed up by announcing it would not add 400 jobs in Charlotte, as it had previously announced. Also, WBTV reported that four conventions had pulled out of Charlotte.

The Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau has confirmed that five groups totalling about 1,000 attendees have already canceled.

Bureau president Dennis Edwards said the canceled events would have brought $730,000 to the area. Smith said 16 other groups are considering canceling.

Bruce Springsteen also canceled a concert last Sunday in Greensboro. Jimmy Buffett said on his website he will perform in Raleigh April 21 and Charlotte April 23 but future shows could depend on whether the law is repealed.

The Deutsche Bank announcement Tuesday was the first from a company that directly impacted the Triangle.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” said John Cryan, co-chief executive officer of Deutsche Bank. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

The company said it currently employs approximately 900 people at its software application development center in Cary and plans to continue at that level.

The company had announced Sept. 22 it would add 250 jobs in Cary through 2017. The News and Observer reported in 2015 that the 250 jobs in Cary were expected to pay an average of $85,600.

**Jimmy Buffett Not Canceling Shows over HB2**

By TWC News

<http://www.twcnews.com/nc/triangle-sandhills/news/2016/04/12/jimmy-buffett-wont-cancel-shows-in-nc-despite-non-discrimination-law.html>

NORTH CAROLINA - Jimmy Buffett will not cancel his North Carolina shows despite the new non-discrimination law.

The musician says he is basing this decision on his loyal fans, saying "North Carolina was there for me as a performer in the early days."

Buffett says he believes the majority of his fans here feel the same way he does, saying he's not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for his fans.

He did go on to say that future shows would depend on whether the "stupid law" is repealed.

Buffett will play shows in Raleigh and Charlotte next week.

**Deutsche Bank Halts North Carolina Growth Plan Over Anti-Gay Law**

by Yalman Onaran

Bloomberg

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-04-12/deutsche-bank-halts-north-carolina-growth-plan-over-anti-gay-law>

Deutsche Bank AG said it is freezing expansion plans at a North Carolina location in response to a state law that invalidates protections based on sexual orientation.

The German lender in September said it planned to add 250 jobs to the 900 existing positions at a software development center in Cary, just west of Raleigh. The bank is putting that expansion on hold following the state legislature’s decision last month to overturn protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents in some cities, according to a statement Tuesday from the Frankfurt-based firm.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” co-Chief Executive Officer John Cryan said in the statement. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now.”

PayPal Holdings Inc. said last week it was scrapping plans to build an operations center in Charlotte in protest of the law. Executives of more than 100 companies, including Bloomberg LP’s Peter Grauer, also sent a letter to Governor Pat McCrory expressing opposition to the measure. Bloomberg LP is the owner of Bloomberg News.

**Deutsche Bank Freezes North Carolina Expansion, Citing Transgender Law**

By JON KAMP and  VALERIE BAUERLEIN

Wall Street Journal

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/deutsche-bank-freezes-north-carolina-expansion-citing-transgender-law-1460469042>

In the latest sign of fallout over a controversial North Carolina law that eliminates antidiscrimination protections for lesbian, gay and transgender people, Deutsche Bank AG said Tuesday it is halting plans to add 250 new jobs outside Raleigh.

The German bank already employs about 900 people at a software-application development center in Cary, N.C., and announced plans in September to add 250 new positions to its operations in the Raleigh suburb.

A week ago, online-payment firm PayPal Holdings Inc. said it wouldn’t open a new 400-employee global operations center in Charlotte because of the new state law.

The controversial law requires transgender people to use the public bathroom corresponding to the gender on their birth certificate.

LGBT advocates and members of the business community there called that measure discriminatory.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” said John Cryan, co-chief executive of Deutsche Bank, in a news release. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now.”

He said the company hopes to revisit its plans to grow the center in Cary in the near future. The canceled plans are a blow to Cary, with a population of roughly 155,000 people. City officials have been trying to attract more new white-collar jobs.

Republican Gov. Pat McCrory praised Deutsche Bank’s expansion when it was announced last fall, saying, “North Carolina and DB Global Technology both enjoy rich legacies when it comes to innovation in banking and technology.”

He said the state’s technology talent pool, competitive costs, “great quality of life” and proximity to New York City “will continue to help foster the growth and success of pioneering businesses like DB Global.”

Mr. McCrory’s office didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment Tuesday morning.

—Jenny Strasburg contributed to this article.

Write to Jon Kamp at jon.kamp@wsj.com and Valerie Bauerlein at valerie.bauerlein@wsj.com

**Citing HB2, Deutsche Bank freezes plans to add 250 jobs in Cary**

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/business/article71314817.html>

Deutsche Bank announced Tuesday that it is freezing plans to create 250 jobs at its Cary campus because of the state’s recently adopted House Bill 2.

The company said in a statement that the legislation “invalidated existing protections of the rights of gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future.”

Deutsche Bank announced in September plans to add 250 jobs in Cary by 2017. The company has 900 employees at its software application development center in Cary. The bank said it is committed to sustaining its existing presence in North Carolina.

“We take the commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” John Cryan, Deutsche Bank’s co-CEO said in a statement. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope to re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/business/article71314817.html#storylink=cpy>

**NC town passes resolution opposing House Bill 2**

by Carleigh Griffeth

WNCN

<http://wavy.com/2016/04/12/nc-town-passes-resolution-opposing-house-bill-2/>

HILLSBOROUGH, N.C. (WNCN) – Hillsborough’s Board of Commissioners voted unanimously Monday night to pass a resolution that opposes House Bill 2.

The Board of Commissioners meeting was held in a small room of a historic barn that was filled with those who oppose the law.

“Lawmakers passed HB2 on the pretense of protecting women and children from a problem that’s virtually non-existent and has really trivialized real issues for women and children,” said Hillsborough Mayor Tom Stevens.

Both town residents and board members said the bathroom portion of the law, while egregious, isn’t the worst part of HB2.

“This is about control and taking away the rights of people at large. And we’ve got to do something about it,” said Brian Lowen, Hillsborough Board of Commissioners member.

Read: House Bill 2

Hillsborough, following in the footsteps of Chapel Hill and Durham, called the law a front and an attack on a locality’s right to govern. HB2 restricts local governments from changing minimum wage rates.

“We all can do better and I think it is right and proper for this body on the behalf of the town of Hillsborough to call for the repeal of HB2,” Stevens said.

And after a day of protests in the Capital City, board members called on their community to take action against the law they said is not for North Carolinians.

“We’ve got to join hands, everyone, and fight this ridiculous stuff that’s coming out of Raleigh,” Lowen said.

Also Monday, Greenville’s City Council passed a similar resolution that opposes HB2.

In Raleigh, five groups have canceled meetings at the Convention Center that would have brought 1,015 in attendance, with 2,218 room nights, and an economic impact of $732,472, according to the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau.

**University avoids conference at UNC Asheville over HB2**

by Julie Ball

Citizen Times

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2016/04/12/university-avoids-conference-unc-asheville-over-hb2/82910366/>

ASHEVILLE - City University of New York canceled plans to send students to an undergraduate research conference at UNC Asheville last week because of a new state law that keeps local governments from banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Ten students from the university were supposed to attend the National Conference on Undergraduate Research last week, according to Amy Jessee, a spokeswoman for UNC Asheville.

The City University of New York was the only “official cancellation” due to the new law. There were some others who didn’t attend the conference, but they didn’t provide a reason, Jessee said.

About 4,000 people did attend the event, which featured undergraduate students presenting research on a range of topics.

The new law known as HB2 prevents cities and counties from extending protections to cover sexual orientation and gender identity at restaurants, hotels and stores.

It also requires schools and other government agencies to designate restrooms designed for use by more than one person at a time for either male or female use under the bill, and requires transgender people to use the restroom of the sex listed on their birth certificate.

The law has sparked protests, and some states and cities including New York City and New York State have banned non-essential public-employee travel and taxpayer funded trips to North Carolina.

**Hundreds Against HB2 Make A Call For Action**

WFMY

<http://www.wfmynews2.com/news/hundreds-against-hb2-make-a-call-for-action/128872256>

WINSTON-SALEM - Hundreds of people packed Green Street United Methodist Church in Winston-Salem to speak out against HB 2.

The new law requires people to use the bathroom of the sex, listed on their birth certificate. And it also doesn't allow people to sue in state court, if they believe they were fired because of their race, religion, age or sex.

Attorney David Freedman was also at Monday night's meeting to review the wider legal implications of House Bill 2.

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**Hundreds gather in Winston-Salem to speak out against HB2**

BY KIM WYNNE

FOX 8

<http://myfox8.com/2016/04/11/hundreds-gather-in-winston-salem-to-speak-out-against-hb2/>

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. -- Hundreds of people gathered at Green Street United Methodist Church to speak out against House Bill 2.

"If we do not stop this now, in its tracks, none of us are safe and none of us are free," said Pastor Liam Hooper.

Religious leaders from all backgrounds, community members and attorneys explained that the bill was about much more than just bathrooms.

Wake Forest University law professor Sid Shapiro says the bill also prevents cities and counties from setting their own minimum wage and from passing anti-discrimination laws.

"These changes make North Carolina the most repressive state in the union," Shapiro said.

Senior pastor of the church Rev. Kelly Carpenter says he organized the event to address unanswered questions about the bill and the transgender community.

"When this bill became law, we were very, very concerned," Carpenter said.

Carpenter says the church is one of many congregations in Winston-Salem which has welcomed the LGBT community.

"We have a number of transgender folks that are part of our congregation so we really wanted to speak out about this," he said. "The misinformation and the myths and the fears and the transphobia that has been projected because of this bill needs to be addressed."

**Communities of Faith Come Together to Speak Out Against HB2**

By TWC News

<http://www.twcnews.com/nc/triad/news/2016/04/11/communities-of-faith-come-together-to-speak-against-hb2-.html>

WINSTON-SALEM -- Communities of faith came together in Winston-Salem on Monday night to speak against House Bill 2.

Many packed green street United Methodist Church to form a call to action opposing the state's non-discrimination law passed last month.

It was organized by Interfaith Voice, a coalition of various religious congregations in the Twin City that work for greater inclusion of the LGBTQ community.

Two lawyers also addressed the wide legal implications of House Bill 2, including it forbidding local governments to raise the minimum wage above the state's $7.25 an hour.

"These changes make North Carolina the most oppressive state in the union in terms of its failure to protect its citizens from discrimination and poverty,” said Sid Shaprio, a Wake Forest University law professor.

The Winston-Salem city council is looking closely at a resolution opposing the law.

The General Government Committee will review it Tuesday afternoon.

**Greenville City Council passes resolution to oppose House Bill 2 law**

By Josh Birch

WNCT

<http://wnct.com/2016/04/11/greenville-city-council-passes-resolution-to-oppose-house-bill-2-law/>

GREENVILLE, N.C. (WNCT) – The Greenville City Council made a big statement as they passed a resolution to oppose House Bill 2, with only Councilman P.J. Connelly who opposed.

During their Monday meeting, the council addressed whether HB2 infringed on local government’s rights to govern their communities. Councilman Calvin Mercer said it is a trend that is alarming.

“They have done this many times before, it is an unhealthy pattern,” he said.

The controversial bill eliminated local government’s rights to set their minimum wage and also repealed Charlotte’s transgender ordinance while also establishing sweeping discrimination protection laws. However, some argued those protections didn’t including religion or sexual orientation, making it legally to be fired or discriminated against for being gay.

Those against HB2 also argued that to sue your employer in the state, you now had to go to federal courts, as established in the bill.

“Our legislature has wrongly used the law to segregate our trans and gay brothers and sisters, and to set them up for further abuse,” said former Councilwoman Marion Blackburn, who urged the council to send a strong message to lawmakers in Raleigh.

Those in support of HB2 asked the council to remain in line with state law.

“I don’t want to be in the bathroom with a transgender, or someone who is queer,” said James Harris. “I don’t want to be around them because I don’t like them.”

Nearly one hundred people gathered to protest HB2 before the council meeting even began. After the vote, they were somewhat disappointed because the council had only voted to oppose it, not ask for HB2 to be repealed.

“We’re just like everyone else,” said Lara Nazario, a transgender woman. “We just had to take a different set of steps to be who we are.”

Nazario said since the bill passed, there have been witch hunts in the state to find, and hurt, members of the trans community. She said the state should be passing more laws to protect them, not hurt them.

However, others disagreed.

“When he takes that fist of his and strikes a man across the nose, that man has a right to say your rights end where my rights begin,” said Tim Creole.

Greenville Mayor Pro-Tem Kandie Smith said lawmakers shouldn’t have rushed this legislation. She wanted them held to the same standards she holds herself to.

“If I sit here on the council and say we need to be transparent, then I expect those people who represent me at the state level to be transparent as well,” she said.

Greenville now joins Nags Head, Chapel Hill, Greensboro and Carrboro in opposing HB2.

**Greenville City Council passes resolution opposing House Bill 2**

By Beth Lawrence

WCTI12

<http://www.wcti12.com/news/greenville-city-council-passes-resolution-opposing-house-bill-2/38978002>

GREENVILLE, Pitt County -

The City of Greenville formally opposes House Bill 2. The city council passed a resolution Monday night in response to the state's new law which effectively prevents transgender people from using public bathrooms of the sex they identify with. However, some say the council's resolution doesn't go far enough.

"It has extreme negative consequences for the rest of us," New Greenville Executive Director Uriah Ward said. "You know if you want a job then this is a bad bill because it's driving jobs out of the state."

Many asked that the council go even further and call on the legislators to repeal House Bill 2, but a few at the meeting stood in support of the governor and the bill.

"I don't want to be told I have to condone it," Greenville resident James Harris said. "I leave them alone. I don't want to bother them. I don't want them to bother me."

Councilmen Calvin Mercer and Kandie Smith argued in favor of including a request for the repeal of the bill in the resolution. In the end, the council did not add that request.

"There is not much we can do about it on the local level," Mercer said.

The council voted 4-1 in favor of the resolution opposing HB2. Councilman P.J. Connelly was the only vote against the resolution.

"It should have called for a full repeal and there should have been language in there to talk about the discriminatory nature of this bill," ECU GBLTSU President Amy Bright said.

Greenville joins several other North Carolina cities that have passed similar resolutions. Those cities include Durham, Chapel Hill and Carrboro. However, those resolutions did include requests for the repeal of HB2.

Here is the full resolution passed by the council:

RESOLUTION NO. - 16

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREENVILLE REAFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES IN RESPONSE TO THE ENACTMENT OF HOUSE BILL 2

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2016, the North Carolina General Assembly in special session ratified and Governor Pat McCrory signed House Bill 2 (Session Law 2016-3), the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act;

WHEREAS, House Bill 2 establishes specific preemptions to the authorities of local governments relating to the regulation of discriminatory practices in employment and in places of public accommodation, relating to the regulation of the employment practices of companies doing business with the local government, and relating to the regulation or imposition of any requirement on employers pertaining to employee compensation;

WHEREAS, the loss of these municipal authorities impacts the ability of each community to carry out their local vision through decision making by their locally elected boards;

WHEREAS, the loss of these municipal authorities limits the ability of local elected officials to govern in a manner in which they are able to effectively represent their constituents; and

WHEREAS, North Carolinians elect local officials to propose, debate, and implement policies best suited for the community in which those officials were elected in order to provide services such as economic development, public safety, recreation, and transportation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Greenville as follows:

1)     The City Council reaffirms its support for the preservation of municipal authorities which allows the needs of the community to be effectively and efficiently met.

2)     The City Council believes that the North Carolina General Assembly, in enacting House Bill 2, unduly restricted the ability of local elected officials to make decisions that meet the needs of their community by taking away, from all North Carolina cities and counties, the ability to implement ordinances and policies narrowly tailored to affect their individual citizens.

3)     The City Council respectfully requests the North Carolina General Assembly, through the delegation representing the House and Senate districts of which Greenville is a part, to address during the 2016 session the erosion of municipal authorities established by House Bill 2.

This the 11th day of April, 2016.

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**McCrory: Revels inspired pay proposal**

By Sarah Willets

Red Springs Citizen

<http://redspringscitizen.com/news/4845/mccrory-revels-inspired-pay-proposal>

RALEIGH — Gov. Pat McCrory says his plan to bump teacher pay statewide was inspired by a longtime Lumbee educator who died recently.

“Ruth Revels was one of those teachers who had a lasting impact and influence on me. I will always remember her passion and strong belief in each one of her students,” McCrory said. “In honor of Mrs. Revels who recently passed away, I announced a plan to reward teachers for their hard work and raise average pay to over $50,000 plus benefits.”

Revels, who died March 14, helped establish the Guilford Native American Association along with her husband, Lonnie. Revels served as the organization’s first director. She served as a member of the N.C. Commission of Indian Affairs, which advocates for Indian communities, tribes, and organizations, and was appointed chair of the commission in 2013.

The former Miss Pembroke State taught McCrory when he was a student at Ragsdale High School.

“I have lost a very special friend,” he said upon her death.

Unveiled on April 5, McCrory’s proposal includes giving North Carolina teachers a 5 percent pay increase with the aim of pushing average teacher pay above $50,000 per year. Under the plan, teachers and principals would see average bonuses of 3.5 percent. The permanent pay raises, according to McCrory ’s office, would cost about $250 million each year while the one-time bonuses would run $165 million for teachers and $10 million for principals.

McCrory also plans to propose that $2 million go toward funding 300 scholarships for aspiring math and science teachers; $5 million for scholarships for K-12 students with disabilities; and more money to expand access to Wi-Fi and electronic textbooks. The Associated Press reports that McCrory also wants to add 400 pre-kindergarten spots for at-risk 4-year-olds.

In addition to education, McCrory’s budget priorities include more taxpayer spending on mental health, the elderly and children.

According to the Associated Press, McCrory is asking legislators to spend more on emergency housing for adults with substance abuse or mental problems. The governor also wants to expand Medicaid and state services for the elderly.

Sarah Willets can be reached at 910-816-1974 or on Twitter @Sarah\_Willets.

**Durham County condemns House Bill 2**

BY VIRGINIA BRIDGES

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/article71311912.html>

DURHAM

The Durham County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution condemning House Bill 2 Monday night.

The county joins other local governments, including the Durham City Council and school board, condemning the law with a resolution that urges its repeal and sending it to the leadership of the General Assembly, Gov. Pat McCrory and others.

“The passage of House Bill 2 has clearly taken the state backwards on human rights,” Commissioner Ellen Reckhow said. “And I hope that our citizens recognize that all of their local officials – the city, the school board and the county – are united in fighting to restore and protect the rights of all of our citizens.”

The General Assembly adopted the law after Charlotte passed an ordinance that permitted transgender people to use the bathroom of the gender that they identify with, along with other non-discrimination requirements.

HB2 supporters say the law protects women and children’s privacy and safety in bathrooms and locker rooms.

Commissioner Wendy Jacobs said the county’s resolution isn’t just about expressing opposition but educating the public that HB2 is a “smoke screen for a labor bill.”

“People in the community need to understand that this is not just about bathrooms,” Jacobs said. “This bill takes away the rights of every single person in the state of North Carolina to say they have in been discriminated in their employment and take that to a state court.”

The legislation sends a message of intolerance and threatens the state’s economy by hampering efforts to attract and retain business, the county’s resolution says. It will hurt efforts to support a livable wage for workers and appears to eliminate the right to bring a civil action in a North Carolina court for claims of discrimination in employment or public accommodations on account of race, religion color, national origin, age or biological sex, the resolution says.

PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT JUST ABOUT BATHROOMS.

Durham County Commissioner Wendy Jacobs

“We, the members of the Durham County Board of Commissioners urge immediate repeal of the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act which discriminates against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens and greatly diminishes local governments’ authority to govern in the best interest of their local citizens,” the resolution says.

“Durham County opposes discrimination of any form and will work to ensure that all persons are treated with dignity and respect without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, religious affiliation, age, familial status, marital status and all protected categories,” it says.

In other actions, the board approved:

▪ Allocating up to $200,000 in economic development investment funds to Aurobindo Pharma USA Inc., the fifth largest pharmaceutical company in India and the 14th largest in the United States.

The company manufactures specialty products for COPD, a chronic lung disease, and asthma, as well as other pharmaceuticals.

The company is considering building a manufacturing plant and R&D center in Durham or expanding on the 90 acres it owns at its current U.S. headquarters in Dayton, New Jersey. The company’s expansion in Durham would result in $31.7 capital investment and the creation of 200 new full-time jobs. Ted Conner, vice president of Economic Development and Community Sustainability at the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, touted job opportunities cover a cross-section of skills, specifically manufacturing jobs that don’t require a college degree.

▪ Allocating $62,500 to support free community programming at the inaugural Durham Moogfest.

The four-day festival will be held May 19-22.

The total cost of free community programming is $275,000. The City Council has also approved contributing $62,500.

The event is estimated to produce nearly $7 million in direct and indirect economic impact as well as nearly $200,000 in local taxes.

Commissioners, who pointed out that it was unusual for the county to support a downtown festival, urged festival organizers to work hard to raise awareness about the free programming.

Virginia Bridges: 919-829-8924, @virginiabridges

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/article71311912.html#storylink=cpy>

**Hundreds Rally For HB2 And The GOP Lawmakers Who Approved It**

By JORGE VALENCIA

WUNC

<http://wunc.org/post/hundreds-rally-hb2-and-gop-lawmakers-who-approved-it#stream/0>

Hundreds of supporters of the controversial North Carolina law that prevents cities from expanding rights for gay and transgender people gathered outside the state capitol building on Monday, cheering Gov. Pat McCrory and the Republican legislators who wrote the law.

Supporters - many raising signs saying “Keep NC Safe” - yelled thanks to McCrory and the legislators who approved House Bill 2 in a day-long session in late March, and decried local and out-of-state leaders who have criticized the law.

The rally was the largest public show of support in the three weeks since the law was passed, and often veered on political campaign. In a speech, Republican state Sen. Buck Newton criticized Attorney General Roy Cooper, who has refused to defend the state in a federal lawsuit challenging the law.

PayPal, which last week canceled plans to open an office in Charlotte, and other businesses have criticized the law as part of an orchestrated effort by LGBT rights groups to attack the state, Newton told the crowd.

“They want corporations throughout this country to defame North Carolina,” Newton said. “They insist on forcing us to bow and kiss the ring of their political correctness theology.”

Newton, who ushered HB2 in the Senate, is the Republican nominee for attorney general. His Democratic counterpart, former state Sen. Josh Stein, has called for the law to be repealed.

On a sidewalk across the street from the Capitol Building, a few dozen protesters chanted and held posters with signs such as “HB2 = Disgrace.”  The law stigmatizes transgender people because it requires people to use bathrooms that match the gender on their birth certificate, said one protester, Shane Thrapp of Cary. But the law has a wider reach.

House Bill 2 prohibits cities and counties from extending discrimination protection ordinances to LGBT people and prohibits the residents from filing workplace discrimination claims in state court. Claims can still be filed in federal court, where suits can be more costly and time-consuming than in state court.

“That’s a smokescreen that they put in place so that they can justify their bigotry and justify the actual focus of the law,” Thrapp said.

The competing rallies underscore the ongoing struggle to control the public dialogue over HB2, and the state appears to be split.

A recent poll for Time Warner Cable News North Carolina, conducted by Survey USA, showed 51 percent of state voters believe legislators did the right thing in nullifying a Charlotte ordinance that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms in line with their gender identity. But the same poll showed that 53 percent of voters said LGBT people should be included in any law preventing discrimination along with race, religion, color, national origin or biological sex.

**Deutsche Bank Freezes North Carolina Expansion, in Protest of Bias Law**

Peter Eaves

New York Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/business/dealbook/deutsche-bank-freezes-north-carolina-expansion-in-protest-of-bias-law.html?_r=0>

Deutsche Bank, the German financial giant that has a significant business in the United States, said on Tuesday that it would freeze its plans to add jobs in North Carolina, a response to the passage last month of a state law that, among other things, eliminates antidiscrimination protections based on sexual orientation.

Deutsche Bank had planned to create 250 positions at its technology development center in Cary, N.C., a municipality near Raleigh, that currently employees 900 people.

In explaining why those plans had been delayed, John Cryan, co-chief executive of Deutsche Bank, took aim at the new law, which also bars transgender people from using bathrooms that do not match their gender at birth.

“We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now,” Mr. Cryan said in a statement, “We very much hope that we can revisit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

PayPal, an electronic payments company, announced last week that it was not going ahead with a plan to add 400 jobs, in protest of the law. And scores of chief executives of other large corporations spoke out against the law in a letter sent to North Carolina’s governor, Pat McCrory.

Deutsche Bank has had operations in Cary since 2009. The bank had planned to spend $9 million in the expansion this year, and the additional jobs were expected to pay out total compensation of more than $21 million a year. North Carolina agreed to give Deutsche Bank tax reimbursements if the bank fulfilled job creation requirements. In a news release in September, Mr. McCrory spoke positively about Deutsche Bank’s expansion, saying it highlighted features that drew companies to the state, including competitive costs and a “great quality of life.”

*Opinion/Blogs*

**Editorial, April 12: Will McCrory fight for teacher pay?**

StarNews

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20160412/ARTICLES/160419939?p=all&tc=pgall>

Perhaps Gov. Pat McCrory really is worried about the state of public education in North Carolina. Or maybe he's desperate to talk about something, anything, other than House Bill 2.

We like to believe the best of people, so we'll go with “really worried.”

Anyway, last week, the governor visited his old high school in Greensboro and delivered a speech calling for a 5 percent raise for teachers, along with a $5,000 one-time bonus for teachers with more experience. (Those with less than 24 years' experience would get a $1,100 bonus.) Critics were cynical, noting that, well, it's an election year.

Also, the chances of the governor's raise becoming reality are somewhat slim. House Speaker Tim Moore has already said we can't afford more this year than a 2 percent raise. House budget chairman Craig Horn earlier said the state just might be able to stretch a 3.5 percent raise.

These gentlemen are both Republicans, members of Gov.

McCrory's party. In the past, though, they've shown scant respect for the governor's opinions. Some General Assembly Republicans have essentially said McCrory's opinion doesn't matter. Of course, the legislators answer only to their districts, often carved out into political safe spaces. McCrory, on the other hand, answers to the much more politically balanced statewide electorate.

McCrory's proposal is almost exactly half of the 10 percent raise that state school superintendent June Atkinson, a confessed Democrat, called for back in January. So you could see it as a step toward compromise. As we said, we like to put the best spin on things. So, let's just call it a pretty good start.

The fact is that, before the Great Recession, North Carolina ranked almost exactly in the middle of the pack nationwide in teacher pay. Democrats - and Republicans, after they took over the legislature - let that slide.

Now, after the “raises” approved last year, North Carolina is about 42nd out of the 50 states in teacher pay. Tar Heel teachers make an average of slightly more than $47,000 a year, compared with $53,000 for Georgia teachers.

Of course, it costs more to live in Atlanta than in Pender County.

But this might help explain why a number of our teachers are moving out of state - and why, according to UNC officials, enrollment in teacher-training programs has dropped by nearly one-third.

Teacher pay is only part of the equation, of course. There's spending on classroom aides (cut in recent years) and things like classroom supplies, which too many teachers buy out of pocket.

North Carolina's per pupil spending, in all, actually dropped from 2013-14 to 2014-15. In per pupil spending, we're now 46th out of the 50 states.

The governor's plan, assuming it stands a chance, wouldn't close the gap, but it would take us closer to where we used to be.

If there are bad teachers, yes, get them out of the classroom. We need great teachers and we need to pay them well.

If Gov. McCrory wants to perform some damage control on his reputation, he can do this by pushing hard for those raises and being as tough on legislative honchos as he is on reporters.

**Congratulations, N.C.: You've Made Me Scared to Pee**

BY LACEY WINTER

Advocate.com

<http://www.advocate.com/commentary/2016/4/12/congratulations-north-carolina-youve-made-me-scared-pee>

As a 43-year-old transgender woman living in Asheville, N.C., for the past three years, I have been blessed to find western North Carolina, on the whole, to be very accepting of me. While I know this hasn’t been the case for all trans people in the state, for me it has been fairly easy to integrate my transition and gender presentation over the past year into the social fabric of this surprisingly progressive mountain town.

Up until last month, I haven’t had to give much thought to what it means to be a trans woman living in North Carolina — most people have been tolerant, if not celebratory, of my authentic identity. When I moved here from Boston, I knew I was stepping into a very conservative, Christian region of the country that could be much less willing to embrace my beliefs and values. But I loved the Asheville community and landscape enough to forge a life for myself here, and the community has returned that faith — until this spring.

It was February when transgender rights first came to the forefront of public conscience in North Carolina. Charlotte’s City Council passed an ordinance guaranteeing equal access to public accommodations for transgender residents and visitors. It felt like North Carolina was taking a positive step into the future with the passage of this ordinance, and I hoped that the inclusive trend would catch on in Asheville.

Inspired and hopeful, I took a huge step out of my own comfort zone during the Asheville City Council meeting in March. I publicly discussed my gender identity, going on the record as a member of Asheville’s transgender community, and expressing my support for a trans-inclusive ordinance in our town. Coming face-to-face with the opposition at that meeting provided my first taste of the fight to come. The opposition’s comments were negative at best and hateful, outright lies at worst. After hearing public testimony that featured twice as many people supporting the LGBT ordinance as opposing it, I was stunned to hear the mayor say that Asheville doesn’t believe it needs such an ordinance, because the town doesn’t have any “broken” laws to fix.  I left the meeting in tears, visibly shaken, and fearing for my safety as I walked back to my car.

The next day on Facebook, one of the local leaders of the opposition celebrated their “success” with a vitriolic statement that equated me, specifically, to a predator who targets women and children for lewd and unforgivable acts of aggression and violation. This post painted me — and everyone like me — as someone who “chooses” to be transgender, and as someone who is living in sin and going to hell.

Two weeks later, the governor and the state legislature sent that same message loud and clear from the General Assembly in Raleigh. Contrary to my own lived experience in the state, House Bill 2 made it crystal clear that North Carolina is not a welcoming state for law-abiding transgender persons. The devastation and dehumanizing effect of the hateful rhetoric coming from those elected to represent my friends, my community, and me, was profound. I couldn’t believe that state lawmakers were so hell-bent on depriving me of basic equal rights that they would shotgun a bill through both houses of the legislature and the governor’s office in a 12-hour period, spending more than $40,000 of taxpayer funds to host a special session that pulled lawmakers out of a scheduled recess.

In case we weren’t sure whether this Republican-led effort was really about transgender people, lawmakers laid bare their denial of our humanity by including a key provision of the bill that bars us from using public restrooms, locker rooms, and other spaces that match our gender identity. To add insult to (very probable physical) injury, the bill also prohibited localities from passing equal rights legislation on their own.

Before the bill passed, and before the vocal backlash arose in opposition to the Charlotte ordinance, I never thought twice about entering a women’s bathroom in the state, whether it was at a rest area on the interstate, a local business, a city building, or a church. Now, unless that restroom is in a business or organization that I know has expressed support for the transgender community or has posted gender-neutral bathroom signage, I hesitate. I think about how I look and what I’m wearing — am I passing? I look around and see who’s looking at me. I try to determine in advance if the bathroom is a single-stall or multiperson facility. I seriously consider the risk to my person, to my career, my loved ones, and my community if something were to happen based on my choice. I take personally the comments on social media, the repeated, but still provably false statements equating transgender people to sexual predators. It’s impossible not to feel anguish at the hatred with which some people regard me — even to the point of stating that I should die.

As I stood at the Vance Monument in downtown Asheville April 2 protesting House Bill 2, people swore at me from passing cars or gestured obscenely through their windshields. I saw supporters of HB 2 parading a 20-foot-long banner of so-called transgender “mugshots,” presenting this exhibition to passing motorists as if to “prove” that “transgender” equals “criminal.”

But despite of all this negativity, there is a groundswell of support for me and for the transgender community locally, regionally, and nationally. For every person who has been negative or hateful, there have been just as many who have expressed support. At the Saturday rallies in Asheville, attendance in opposition to HB 2 far outweighed support, and we had many Asheville citizens encouraging us. I am gratified every time I read about another company or organization signing on to the Human Rights Campaign letter to Gov. Pat McCrory demanding that the state repeal HB 2. I am encouraged by each new company that announces it won’t do business in our state in the wake of this law, because I believe economic pressure might be the most powerful way to force lawmakers to reconsider their position.

During a community walk in Asheville March 31, members of our local trans group secured support from many businesses that were happy to put up gender-neutral bathroom signage and sign pledges of equal service for people of all genders. People from all over the world are expressing their solidarity with us on social media. It’s this reality that gives me hope, that allows me to have faith that those who speak — and legislate — with hate will not be victorious. I know this is true, because I have seen the beauty, the bravery, and the strength of my community, here in North Carolina and beyond. We will not relent until we have secured equality for everyone in the Tar Heel State.

**The good news hidden in the debate over HB 2**

By Rob Schofield

NC Policy Watch

<http://www.ncpolicywatch.com/2016/04/12/the-good-news-hidden-in-the-debate-over-hb-2/>

Why Gov. McCrory and legislative leaders may be doing the state an inadvertent favor

There are a lot of reasons for caring and thinking North Carolinians to feel pretty discouraged these days about their home state and, in particular, its new, all-purpose discrimination law.

We are, for what seems like the umpteenth time in recent years, the butt of jokes on late night comedy shows and the object of scathing national editorials. What’s more, scores of large corporations have condemned the bigoted actions of state leaders, and numerous employers, convention planners and entertainers have already commenced a boycott. It’s gotten so bad in recent days that even dedicated hard right politicians from other states are shaking their heads in embarrassment. As was noted on The Progressive Pulse blog yesterday:

“The news regarding his LGBT discrimination law didn’t get much better for Gov. Pat McCrory over the weekend. Just days after South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley rejected his decision to sign HB2, one of the nation’s highest profile Republicans followed suit. Here’s Ohio Governor and presidential candidate John Kasich on CBS News’ Face the Nation:

‘In our state, we’re not facing this, so everybody needs to take a deep breath, respect one another, and the minute we start trying to write laws, things become more polarized, things – they become more complicated. Obviously I don’t want to force people to violate their deeply held religious convictions, but we’d have to see what that’s all about. I wouldn’t have signed that law from everything I know, I haven’t studied it.’”

Not even three weeks after the General Assembly’s kangaroo session to enact House Bill 2, there is a growing sense that the law could soon have a real, negative and perhaps, lasting impact on the state’s already tepid economic recovery. At a minimum, it’s clear that the jobs of individuals seeking to recruit people and businesses to North Carolina have gotten a lot more complicated.

Perhaps that’s why even newly appointed UNC President Margaret Spellings has started to voice concerns about the law and allowed chancellors like UNC Chapel Hill’s Carol Folt to issue emails with statements like this:

“It is clear that the impacts to Carolina go well beyond the personal toll. There are implications to us, ranging from conferences that will no longer send delegates to North Carolina and our campus; concerns and a pause among some prospective students, faculty, researchers and staff; current and prospective donors who are signaling a reconsideration of their gifts; grants and relationships with businesses that are now in jeopardy; and more.”

Meanwhile, in an act that had to have gone over like a lead balloon in the boardrooms of the nation’s Fortune 500 corporations and leading tech outfits, Gov. McCrory and legislative leaders have lashed out at the boycotts and demands for repeal (and the companies behind them) as being part of an orchestrated “smear campaign” by leftist activists.

To which, all a real leftist activist could have thought in reply is: “Darn! Who knew? To think we could have been getting giant corporations like PayPal and establishment symbols like retired Bank of America CEO Hugh McColl to do our radical bidding for years!”

Did someone say “good news”?

Finding a silver lining in this five star mess that’s overtaken North Carolina in recent days might seem like a bit of a stretch but, truth be told, it’s not as outlandish an idea as it appears at first blush – especially in the medium-to-long run. Consider the following:

Forcing some issues out into the open – The issue of LGBT equality has received a lot of attention in the public square in recent years – especially with the way in which same-sex marriage ultimately went from impossible dream to the ho hum fodder of TV sitcoms in what seemed like about 20 minutes. But, let’s be honest: when most North Carolinians have talked about the issue during this period of awakening, they haven’t often said much about the “T” in “LGBT.”

Happily, this has changed dramatically in recent months as more and more courageous transgender people have stepped out of the shadows to express their desire for the simple human rights most Americans take for granted.

Last week, at a remarkably inspiring “revival” meeting led by Rev. William Barber of the North Carolina NAACP, a large and mixed audience of old and young, black and white, Christian, Jew, Muslim and irreligious, gay, straight and trans came together at Raleigh’s Temple Beth Or. Under just about any circumstances, this would have been an impressive and inspiring gathering of people.

But when a young transgender high school student mustered the courage to stand up and speak and was welcomed with open arms and loud applause by an audience that included scores of straight, silver-haired church, synagogue and mosque goers, one felt a palpable sense that real change and progress was afoot.

Simply put, such an event wouldn’t have happened even a year ago. Or, if it had, it would have been different. The hatred and bigotry embodied in HB 2 has clearly opened the eyes of hundreds of thousands of people to a reality that they only grasped in the most general sense not that long ago.

Painting conservatives into an ever more isolated corner of the landscape – It’s funny how this works: Sometimes in order to bring about social change, you need a blustering bully who will unwittingly symbolize what hanging onto the status quo would mean. A half century ago in the United States, it was George Wallace and Bull Connor who helped spur millions of moderate apolitical Americans to support civil rights. Three decades ago in South Africa, grumpy and frightening old defenders of apartheid did the trick. It’s the same now in North Carolina: When it comes to human rights for transgender people, thousands upon thousands are sizing up the opposition and saying “I don’t want to be with those guys.”

As one insightful political observer put it the other day with respect to the state’s conservative elected leaders:

“They got caught and found out that the world changed while they weren’t looking. Companies do care about how their employees are treated by the larger society and they believe that progressive social policies are good for their bottom lines. All the excuses in the world won’t change that.”

Speeding up the pace of progress – And speaking of good news, check out who was appointed over the weekend to serve as a new state representative from Guilford County to replace the recently deceased Ralph Johnson. Chris Sgro is the executive Director of Equality North Carolina and his appointment to fill the unexpired portion of Johnson’s term stands as an important symbolic statement that clearly heralds a new era of openness and progress in a state in which even Democrats helped maintain laws criminalizing consensual homosexual behavior as recently as the 1990’s.

While Sgro’s presence in the General Assembly will clearly not change things overnight, anyone who thinks such an appointment would have happened without the blustering recent behavior of Gov. McCrory, Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore isn’t paying attention.

In other words…

The HB 2 mess is unlikely to simply evaporate anytime real soon. The defenders of the law are determined to hang on to it for as long as possible (or as long as it serves their electoral designs) and their allies on the religious right are more than happy to play along.

(As an aside, the fact that conservative Christians feel obliged to hold public “prayer vigils” in support of the law sure would seem to indicate that it’s a lot more about keeping LGBT people in their place than it is about “bathroom safety.” Interesting isn’t it, that sexual assault and domestic violence advocates haven’t chimed in to support the law?)

Regardless of the intentions and motives of the law’s supporters, however, the overriding lesson of the last three weeks is that neither the law nor the attitudes that underlie it will last long. To paraphrase the late, great Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis’ famous observation, as with so many other dark and closeted secrets from North Carolina’s past, the sunlight of public debate is proving to be “the best disinfectant” for LGBT discrimination.

**N.C. Rep. Billy Richardson: I was wrong to vote for HB2**

By Billy Richardson

Fayetteville Observer

<http://www.fayobserver.com/opinion/local_columns/n-c-rep-billy-richardson-i-was-wrong-to-vote/article_62dee8b6-ac42-52b4-b51a-cc23a3358da6.html>

By enacting House Bill 2, the legislature did the wrong thing. I made the wrong vote and we must now make it right.

My parents raised me to avoid any rush to judgment and to consider the consequences of my decisions. They stressed to me that I will make mistakes but, when made, never, never compound a mistake by sitting silent and failing to own up to the error.

Upon prayer and reflection, I have come to realize that I need to take action now. I will not be silent and allow North Carolina's values to be undermined by the travesty that is HB2.

As a lawyer, I have stood with the defenseless because our Constitution says - actually demands - that all Americans have basic rights and, by protecting those rights, we can all truly share in the blessings of being an American.

Since our hasty vote on HB2, I have been haunted by the fact that in one rushed action, I undermined a lifetime of fighting against those who would demonize a group of citizens to gain political advantage and to advance an unjust agenda.

Instead of recognizing the right to be free of discrimination based on one's sexual orientation, HB2 gives green light to this discrimination in housing, employment and other areas. To paraphrase Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, we must never make any group of citizens a stranger to the laws of their own state.

Closing courts

Because of HB2, we now live in a state that has closed our state courts to citizens who suffer discrimination for practicing their Christian faith or other religious beliefs, or because of their race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability. HB2 prevents local governments from enacting laws that respond to the concerns of their constituents.

HB2 also costs our state and our citizens jobs - high-paying, life-enriching jobs - that may now to go South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia or other states that have not taken this divisive path.

I call on my fellow legislators, the speaker, the president pro tem and the governor to repeal this hurtful, overreaching and unnecessary law. When the legislature reconvenes, I will support legislation toward that end.

In America and in the Old North State, we celebrate diversity, we don't condemn it. In North Carolina we defend people's equal protection under our laws, we don't diminish them. In North Carolina, we do the right thing, even when it is hard.

Let's do what we North Carolinians do when we are at our best and choose restraint over raw emotion. Let's choose local government and let it be truly accountable to its citizens. Let's choose rational, deliberative action and enact a law that accomplishes only what we intended to do. Let's not end North Carolina's history of moderation. Let's admit we were wrong and actually fix our real problems.

You can't fix a wrong until you acknowledge a mistake. I was wrong and I will stand with all North Carolinians who dream of fulfilling the words of the official toast for our Old North State, "where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great."

Billy Richardson, a Democrat, represents the 44th District of the North Carolina House of Representatives. He is a lawyer and founding partner of The Richardson Firm in Fayetteville. He also owns a company that operates apartment communities in Cumberland County and elsewhere in North Carolina.

**Deutsche Bank “unwilling” to expand in North Carolina because of anti-LGBT law, freezes 250 jobs**

By Clayton Henkel

Progressive Pulse

<http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-unwilling-to-expand-in-north-carolina-because-of-anti-lgbt-law-freezes-250-jobs/>

Deutsche Bank becomes the latest corporation to announce it is cancelling jobs planned for North Carolina following the signing of House Bill 2.

The global financial services provider announced Tuesday morning that the decision was based on legislation that invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future,” said John Cryan, Co-Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank.

Just last September Deutsche Bank confirmed plans to add 250 jobs in Cary by the end of  2017. The company had planned to invest $9 million in Wake County by the end of this year, according to a news release issued by the governor’s press office.

Last week PayPal announced plans to cancel 400 jobs in North Carolina because of the legislation signed by Governor Pat McCrory on March 23rd.

- See more at: <http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-unwilling-to-expand-in-north-carolina-because-of-anti-lgbt-law-freezes-250-jobs/#sthash.03K2GJNK.dpuf>

**Major European Bank Cancels 250 Jobs and $9 Million Expansion in North Carolina Over Anti-LGBT Law**

New Civil Rights Movement

<http://www.thenewcivilrightsmovement.com/davidbadash/major_european_bank_cancels_250_jobs_expansion_in_north_carolina_over_anti_lgbt_law>

$384 billion Deutsche Bank has just announced it is canceling plans to add 250 jobs to its operations in Cary, North Carolina, citing Gov. Pat McCrory's anti-LGBT law HB2. The jobs were part of a planned $9 million investment in North Carolina by Deutsche Bank's IT unit, DB Global Technology.

"The Bank’s decision is due to state-wide legislation enacted in North Carolina on March 23 that invalidated existing protections of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fellow citizens in some municipalities and prevents municipalities from adopting such protections in the future," Deutsche Bank said in a statement, even posting it to Facebook and Twitter.

"We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously," John Cryan, Co-Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank, said. "We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future."

GOP Gov. McCrory last year issued a press release touting the bank's planned expansion.

“North Carolina and DB Global Technology both enjoy rich legacies when it comes to innovation in banking and technology,” said Governor McCrory in the Sept. 22, 2015 statement. “Our IT talent, competitive costs, great quality of life and convenient proximity by air to New York City will continue to help foster the growth and success of pioneering businesses like DB Global.”

North Carolina Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III also heralded the plan to add 250 jobs by Deutsche Bank's

“Today’s announcement by DB Global Technology illustrates the return North Carolina gets from its proactive support for existing businesses,” Secretary Skvarla had said.

**Say what? NC lawmaker calls for “civility in public discourse” after labeling HB2 opponents a “mob” pushing “a radical agenda”**

By Rob Schofield

Progressive Pulse

<http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/say-what-nc-lawmaker-calls-for-civility-in-public-discourse-after-labeling-hb2-opponents-a-mob-pushing-a-radical-agenda/>

North Carolina State Representative David Lewis appears to have established a new standard for illogic and self-contradiction recently in a defense of HB 2 he included in his recent “Capitol Connection” newsletter. The newsletter, which featured the very civil subject line “NY Liberals Know What’s Right for NC?” included this rather remarkable passage:

“Much of the outrage about this law has been created by those wishing to push a radical agenda forward in North Carolina. If Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts and the mob she’s unleashed really care about the economic future of her city, they’ll stop the misinformation campaign immediately and start telling the truth about this commonsense bathroom safety law before more damage is done to the city she was elected to lead and the state Cooper was elected to protect.

I do respect the input I have gotten on this bill on both sides, but I would like to take this time to stress the importance of civility in public discourse. In order to understand each other, we need to temper the tone of our conversation to reflect the gravity of public discourse. I hope you will join me in doing so.”

Uh, gee whiz, Representative Lewis, we appreciate the sentiment about civility, but isn’t a little odd to issue such a call one sentence after having described those who disagree with you a “mob” pushing “a radical agenda”?

- See more at: <http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/say-what-nc-lawmaker-calls-for-civility-in-public-discourse-after-labeling-hb2-opponents-a-mob-pushing-a-radical-agenda/#sthash.9D04x0Cc.dpuf>

**Letters: Readers continue to weigh in on HB2 issues**

Citizen Times

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/opinion/readers/2016/04/12/letters-readers-continue-weigh-hb-issues/82930518/>

The N.C. Legislature has engaged in a tactic typical of deceptive political legislation. Fully aware that their motivation was greater control of local government and the consolidation of power in Raleigh, and equally aware of the emotional appeal of so-called “putting our children in danger,” they cloaked their initiative with a mantle of controversy that they knew would elicit blind, prejudicial response. Once the torches and pitchforks of irrational fear were turned on the LGBT minority, thanks to the emotional media, the nefarious impact of the bill on local governments was lost in the small print.

Don’t be surprised if “under reconsideration” the restroom issue is scrubbed from HB2 taking the heat off the issue, and leaving the real damage to the independence of local governments as state law. It’s that kind of political subterfuge that belongs in the toilet.

Peter Hartwick, Candler

I have lived in Asheville, North Carolina for close to two years, thinking I had moved to a place I could be proud of and the outside world would share in my pride. That was and is true of Asheville, but I find myself embarrassed by the state politics and the recent passage of HB2. I have come to the wisdom through the passage of time, that fears expressed externally are usually a reflection of the fearful person’s inner world. For example, I am a trustworthy individual, and I have learned I need to be cautious in my interactions with someone who mistrusts me, as invariably they will betray my trust.

I have been hurt in business and personal dealings in the past. Therefore, while I am non-homosexual or transgender phobic, I do not plan to use the restrooms in Raleigh that are used by our state legislators. I urge the rest of you to be equally cautious and perhaps my best advice would be to replace our state legislators with ones we would be comfortable sharing a bathroom with.

Ian Rudick, Asheville

If a person disagrees with the letters printed on the Opinion page of the April 9, 2016 issue of the paper, he was called: “rash, vindictive, inept, arrogant, a despot, a member of The Council of Villains, can’t think, can’t think for themselves, zombies, no common sense, diseased, pitiful, pathetic, an idiot, a moral coward, a bigot, hateful, shameful, unethical, stupid, programmed not to think, politically obtuse.”

Labels such as these (all on one page) make civil discourse impossible.

The letter writers are using an ad hominem argument as usually defined: argumentum ad hominem, is a logical fallacy in which an argument is rebutted by attacking the character, motive, or other attribute of the person making the argument, or persons associated with the argument, rather than attacking the substance of the argument itself.

Jack Wilson, Asheville

**Deutsche Bank Nixes Plan To Expand In North Carolina Over Anti-LGBT Law**

By CAITLIN MACNEAL

TPM

<http://talkingpointsmemo.com/livewire/deutsche-bank-no-nc-expansion>

Deutsche Bank announced Tuesday that it would suspend its plans to add 250 jobs in its Cary, North Carolina office, citing the state's sweeping law that overrode local measures protecting LGBT individuals from discrimination and limited employees' ability to sue over workplace discrimination.

"We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously. We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future," Deutsche Bank Co-CEO John Cryan (pictured above) said in a statement.

The company currently employs 900 people in Cary, and in September 2015 announced plans to add 250 jobs, the Charlotte Observer reported.

Deutsche Bank's decision follow's PayPal's announcement earlier in April that it would not open a new operations center in Charlotte that would have created 400 jobs in the state. Numerous corporations with a presence in the state have spoken out against the law, and several film studios have said they will stop filming in the state.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) signed the legislation into law in March after lawmakers held a special legislative session to rush the bill through. The law directs public bathrooms to require people to use the restroom that corresponds to the sex on their birth certificate, and it keeps local governments from passing measures that protect gay and transgender people from discrimination. It also eliminates private sector employees' ability to sue over workplace discrimination under state law.

**The Cost of North Carolina's HB2**

The Atlantic

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/04/deutsch-bank-north-carolina/477858/>

The German banking giant joins PayPal, other companies, as well as musical acts who are boycotting the state over a law that ends protections for gays, lesbians, and transgender people.

Deutsche Bank already employs about 900 people in the state, The Wall Street Journal reports.

The so-called bathroom bill requires people to use the bathroom corresponding with the gender listed on their birth certificates. The measure sailed through the state’s legislature last week and was signed into law by Governor Pat McCrory, a Republican—but it prompted a massive backlash almost immediately. PayPal announced last week that it was no longer opening a global operations center in Charlotte, costing North Carolina 400 jobs, and the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau says HB2 is also hurting the local economy.

**The Morning Roundup: It'll Be All Right, Buffett Fans**

by Danny Hooley

Indy Week

<http://www.indyweek.com/news/archives/2016/04/12/the-morning-roundup-itll-be-all-right-buffett-fans>

Good morning, folks. Sure is rainy out there.

The good news is:

1. Parrotheads can relax. Rejoice, even. Despite the "stupid law" — HB2, of course — that could have prompted Jimmy Buffet to cancel upcoming shows in Raleigh and Charlotte, the Margaritaville man has announced in a blog post that the shows will go on.

From WRAL:

North Carolina was there for me as a performer in the early days and I have always felt a loyalty to fans there that goes deep,” said Buffett in a blog post on his website. “Rightly so, a lot of people are reacting to the stupid law. I happen to believe that the majority of our fans in North Carolina feel the way I do about the law."

Meanwhile, rocker Bryan Adams (yes, that's his official title — rocker) is looking to N.C. boycotter Bruce Springsteen for inspiration by skipping a show in Mississippi, as reported by Asbury Park Press:

Following the example of Bruce Springsteen, rocker Bryan Adams is cancelling a show in support of LGBT rights.

His Thursday, April 14 concert at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Mississippi is cancelled to protest passage of a recently enacted law in the state that OKs the refusal of service to gay couples by religious groups and some private businesses.

"I find it incomprehensible that LGBT citizens are being discriminated against in the state of Mississippi," said Adams in a statement on his website. "I cannot in good conscience perform in a State where certain people are being denied their civil rights due to their sexual orientation."

2. Where's the pouring rain when we really needed it? Thanks, God.

Jorge Valencia at WUNC turned in an excellent report this morning about hundreds of conservative Christian McCrory supporters that turned out in Raleigh Monday to pray hard for HB 2 — and listen to some windbag political speeches.

The rally was the largest public show of support in the three weeks since the law was passed, and often veered on political campaign. In a speech, Republican state Sen. Buck Newton criticized Attorney General Roy Cooper, who has refused to defend the state in a federal lawsuit challenging the law.

PayPal, which last week canceled plans to open an office in Charlotte, and other businesses have criticized the law as part of an orchestrated effort by LGBT rights groups to attack the state, Newton told the crowd.

“They want corporations throughout this country to defame North Carolina,” Newton said. “They insist on forcing us to bow and kiss the ring of their political correctness theology.”

Newton, who ushered HB2 in the Senate, is the Republican nominee for attorney general. His Democratic counterpart, former state Sen. Josh Stein, has called for the law to be repealed.

Speaking of boobs:

3. Boob: Takes one to know one. Controversy over public breastfeeding is in the state news again. Last week, it was a "nurse-in" protest at the Durham Costco in support of a breastfeeding mom who said she was made to feel unwelcome by an employee.

This time, it's a report from WSOC about a mom getting kicked out of court by a male judge who just wasn't having it.

Stephanie Rhodus said just over five minutes into her court proceeding in Henderson County, judge Peter Knight commented on her breastfeeding.

The judge said he didn't have a problem with the baby being there, but said nursing the child in the courtroom was inappropriate.

"Ma’am you need to cover up. For you not to realize that is absolutely ridiculous. Step outside, and cover up right now. Stand up and go," Knight said.

Is it just me, or does "Peter Knight" sound like a great porn name?

**Deutsche Bank Freezes North Carolina Expansion in Response to Bathroom Law**

by Claire Groden

Fortune

<http://fortune.com/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-north-carolina/>

It joins a growing corporate protest.

Deutsche Bank  DB 0.50%  is freezing plans to bring more than 200 jobs to North Carolina as a part of growing corporate resistance to a controversial law in the state.

Last month, North Carolina’s Republican Governor, Pat McCrory, signed into law a measure that requires people to use bathrooms that correspond to the sex on their birth certificates—a move that many say discriminates against transgender people. The public outcry has been broad: New York Governor Andrew Cuomo declared a ban on non-essential state travel to North Carolina, and Bruce Springsteen cancelled a show there earlier this month.

Deutsche Bank’s reaction to the law comes in the form of denying 250 additional jobs to Cary, N.C. where it already employs 900 people.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” co-CEO John Cryan said in a statement. “We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now. We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

PayPal Holdings has also responded to the new law by freezing a planned expansion in the state. Earlier in April, PayPal CEO Dan Schulman said that the law “violates the values and principles that are at the core of PayPal’s mission and culture” and the company would no longer move forward with its plans to open a new global operations center in Charlotte, according to the Wall Street Journal.

Fortune has reached out to Gov. McCrory’s office and will update this story if it responds.

**Don’t Forget Everything the General Assembly Did Before HB2**

Chapelboro.com

<http://chapelboro.com/columns/the-commentators/dont-forget-general-assembly-hb2>

You’ve heard some of my commentaries here on WCHL about our General Assembly in Raleigh on the crazy bills that have been voted on and signed by our governor.

Pat McCrory has gutted unemployment benefits by 36 percent, while giving his cabinet members, campaign donors and paid election workers an eight percent raise.  Telling us that this would attract the best and brightest to run our state.

We have seen this divide and conquer strategy used in other states turning the public against our teachers and it works.

Requiring unfunded criminal background checks and drug testing on the unemployed without a jobs bill even being drawn up by a single committee.  The house is prepared to end a state tax credit for low income working families while repealing the estate tax that would benefit only 123 people.  You heard that right.  Only 123 individuals in the whole state of North Carolina and raises the taxes on almost a million in our state.

This alone will cost us $52 million.  Attacking the college students who want to vote here in Orange County where they live and pay taxes and not where their parents live.  Passing a voter ID bill that will cost us up to $18 million to fund to defeat the problem of in-person voter fraud that can’t be found.

Just when you thought you had seen it all and nothing else would be worse, you think I’m being silly?  Try keeping up the crazy train that’s in Raleigh.

— Wiley Post

**Democratic North Carolina state rep: ‘I was wrong’ to vote for transphobic ‘bathroom bill’**

by Rafi Schwartz

Fusion

<http://fusion.net/story/290489/north-carolina-rep-william-richardson-anti-lgbt-bathroom-bill-wrong-hb2/>

Fallout from North Carolina’s recent passage of HB2—the anti-trans “Bathroom Bill”—continues, and one local lawmaker seems to have gotten the message loud and clear.

In an op-ed for the Feyetteville Observer published late Monday evening, state representative William Richardson does not mince words, writing, “By enacting House Bill 2, the legislature did the wrong thing. I made the wrong vote and we must now make it right.

“Upon prayer and reflection, I have come to realize that I need to take action now,” Richardson explained. “I will not be silent and allow North Carolina’s values to be undermined by the travesty that is HB2.”

It’s a bold declaration from one of the 11 Democratic representatives who originally supported the bill, which (among other things) mandates transgender and gender non-conforming individuals use public restrooms that align with the sex listed on their birth certificate. When contacted in late March by the Durham, NC-based Indy Week, Richardson did not reply to multiple requests for comment on his support for the bill.

Richardson’s editorial cites the bill’s giving a “green light” to discrimination, and pointedly calls out the new law’s economic impact, as well, saying jobs that had been intended for North Carolina may be relocated to neighboring states, instead. Earlier this month, online transaction giant PayPal announced it had canceled plans to open a new global operations center in Charlotte that would have reportedly created 400 new jobs as a direct response to HB2.

As The Charlotte Observer noted earlier this month, it’s the bill’s economic ramifications which may have prompted at least one GOP lawmaker, State Sen. Jeff Tarte, to consider revisiting the legislation, saying, “I don’t want men in girls’ showers; that’s not negotiable. (But) you can’t have jobs not coming here. … So is (there) some language that allows us to … get between those two? We can’t ignore this. We need to be listening when these businesses have these kind of concerns.

Richardson, meanwhile, is much less circumspect about his HB2 misgivings.

“I call on my fellow legislators, the speaker, the president pro tem and the governor to repeal this hurtful, overreaching and unnecessary law,” he continues in his op-ed. “When the legislature reconvenes, I will support legislation toward that end.”

Richardson, who represents North Carolina’s 44th district, was appointed to the state legislature in Sept. 2015 to fill a vacancy left by Representative Rick Glazier. He is up for reelection in November.

**1,600+ companies pull business from North Carolina due to HB2 bill**

by Steve Lee

LGBT Weekly

<http://lgbtweekly.com/2016/04/12/1600-companies-pull-business-from-north-carolina-due-to-hb2-bill/>

BIn response to HB2, North Carolina’s new law limiting anti-discrimination protections, the global community of nearly 1,700 Certified B Corporations announced Tuesday it will relocate a cluster of October events out of North Carolina. Those events include the annual global gathering of B Corp CEOs and executives; a series of public talks and street festival called B Inspired; a conference for the economic development arms of city governments, corporate supply chain managers, and impact investors called Measure What Matters; and a conference for university educators teaching business as a force for good.

“B Corps seek to build a more inclusive economy, and that is not possible with laws like HB2 on the books,” said Jay Coen Gilbert, co-founder of B Lab, the nonprofit behind the B Corp movement. “Through the upcoming legislative session, we will work closely with the North Carolina B Corp community and the LGBT community most affected by this law to make North Carolina more business friendly and enable us to return as soon as possible.”

HB2 requires people to use public bathrooms associated with the sex assigned on their birth certificate instead of that with which they identify, which most adversely affects transgender people. HB2 appears to remove the civil right of all people to file anti-discrimination lawsuits with the State based on race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap. HB2 also eliminates the ability for cities in North Carolina to support a living wage. The ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) has filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of HB2 under the Equal Protection clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Kevin Trapani, CEO of The Redwoods Group, a Morrisville, North Carolina-based commercial property casualty insurer and Certified B Corp said, “As it actually says in North Carolina law, we believe that discrimination ‘foments domestic strife and unrest, deprives the State of the fullest utilization of its capacities for advancement and development, and substantially and adversely affects the interests of employees, employers, and the public in general.’ We are ready to work with proponents of HB2 to help forge ‘One North Carolina’ that lives up to its own creed so that we can welcome the global B Corp community to our great state as soon as possible.”

John Replogle, CEO of Seventh Generation, who leads the national brand and Seventh Generation Ventures from HQ Raleigh, said, “As a founding B Corp, we stand united with the 1,700 CEOs who are using business as a force for good and will muster all of our resources to overturn this abhorrent law. North Carolina deserves better and the business community must stand united that HB2 is bad for our state and bad for business.”

B Lab is a nonprofit organization that serves a global movement of people using business as a force for good. Its vision is that one day all companies compete to be best for the world and society enjoys a more shared and durable prosperity. B Lab drives this systemic change by: 1) building a global community of Certified B Corporations; 2) promoting Mission Alignment using innovative corporate structures like the benefit corporation to align the interests of business with those of society; 4) helping tens of thousands of businesses, investors, and institutions Measure What Matters, by using the B Impact Assessment and B Analytics to manage their impact — and the impact of the businesses with whom they work — with as much rigor as their profits; and 4) inspiring millions to join the movement through compelling storytelling by its multi-platform branded media company B the Change Media. For more information, visit [www.bcorporation.net](http://www.bcorporation.net).

Certified B Corporations meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability. They achieve a minimum verified score of 80 out of 200 available points on the B Impact Assessment, which measures the positive impact of a company on its workers, customers, community, and the environment, and are legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on all stakeholders, not just shareholders. There are 1,674 Certified B Corporations in 130 industries and 48 countries, including 32 in North Carolina.

**LGBT Activist Cyndi Lauper to Perform in North Carolina Despite Religious Freedom Law**

by DANIEL NUSSBAUM

Breitbart

<http://www.breitbart.com/big-hollywood/2016/04/12/lgbt-activist-cyndi-lauper-to-perform-in-north-carolina-despite-religious-freedom-law/>

Singer-songwriter and LGBT activist Cyndi Lauper will perform in North Carolina after other artists boycotted the state over a religious liberty law they say discriminates against transgendered people, saying she believes those affected “will need us there.”

In a statement to TMZ, the 62-year-old singer and founder of the True Colors Fund said she would perform in North Carolina despite the state’s passage of what has been called the “anti-LGBT” Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, which, among other things, mandates that transgender people use public restrooms that correspond to their biological sex.

“I would play in North Carolina,” Lauper told the outlet. “I think that people will need us there. Wherever there’s a shutout, wherever there’s people who don’t accept other people, the other people need you.”

According to her website, Lauper is scheduled to perform at the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts in Raleigh, North Carolina on June 4.

Lauper joins fellow musician Jimmy Buffett, who said this week that he would play two scheduled shows in North Carolina despite the state’s “stupid” laws.

“These shows were booked and sold out long before the governor [Pat McCrory] signed that stupid law,” Buffett wrote in a blog post. “I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year. We will be playing in Raleigh and Charlotte next week.”

Last week, E Street Band leader Bruce Springsteen said he would not perform a scheduled a concert in Greensboro to protest the state’s passage of HB 2.

“Some things are more important than a rock show and this fight against prejudice and bigotry — which is happening as I write — is one of them,” Springsteen wrote in a message on his official website. “It is the strongest means I have for raising my voice in opposition to those who continue to push us backwards instead of forwards.”

Earlier this week, Canadian rocker Bryan Adams announced that a concert planned for Thursday at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi would be cancelled over that state’s passage of its own religious freedom law, HB 1523.

“Using my voice I stand in solidarity with all my LGBT friends to repeal this extremely discriminatory bill,” Adams wrote on his website. “Hopefully Mississippi will right itself and I can come back and perform for all of my many fans. I look forward to that day.”

On Tuesday, representatives from companies and organizations including CAA, Netflix, SAG-AFTRA and Viacom joined with LGBT advocacy group GLAAD to sign an open letter urging state governments to repeal or refuse to sign “anti-LGBT legislation.”

“Entertainment is not just one of our nation’s most powerful economic drivers, it’s also one of our greatest cultural exports to the rest of the world. As leaders charged with making a difference in your cities, towns, and states, we implore you to stand with us and reject any and all efforts to legalize discrimination,” the open letter, published in Variety, reads. “Send a strong and clear message to the rest of the world that America – and your communities – remain places where all people are respected, welcomed, and treated equally.”

Follow Daniel Nussbaum on Twitter: @dznussbaum

**Pro-, Anti-H.B.2 rallies held at State Capitol**

Jones & Blount

<http://jonesandblount.com/2016/04/11/hb2-rallies-held-at-state-capitol/>

RALEIGH – A rally in support of House Bill 2, the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, organized by the Christian Action League of NC and Return America, along with other social conservative groups, was held at noon Monday on the state capitol grounds.

The rally was met by a counter-protest organized by Tringle Families Against H.B.2.

House Bill 2 was passed in a special session and signed by Gov. Pat McCrory last month,  intended to override a Charlotte City Council ordinance that added “gender identity” and “gender expression” to the city’s anti-discrimination protections and would have outlawed discriminating between males and females even when it came to admittance to restrooms, locker rooms and changing rooms.  The rules would have applied to government facilities as well as private businesses.

The ensuing state legislation clarified the state’s anti-discrimination policies to include those “on account of race, religion, color, national origin, age, biological sex or handicap by employers which regularly employ 15 or more employees.”

Permits were obtained from the city of Raleigh for both events held Monday, according to which the pro-H.B. 2 rally expected approximately 500 attendees, and the related anti-H.B. 2 protest expecting between 50-100 attendees.

State Capitol Police estimated at least 700 were in attendance for the pro-H.B.2 rally, while the counter-protest located opposite the state capitol grounds on Salisbury Street numbered approximately 100.

Rally-goers heard from North Carolina sheriffs, pastors, and religious freedom activists as they were met with opposing chants from the counter-protesters.

“The bill that passed and the one the governor signed, H.B. 2, overturned an egregious Charlotte ordinance and restored basic expectations of privacy people have when using the restroom. The bill also provides that private businesses can make their own decisions regarding accommodations and services and not be forced by a city ordinance to do certain things that could be detrimental to their business. It’s unfortunate this common sense measure has been so grossly misrepresented and maligned,” said the executive director of the Christian Action League, Dr. Mark Creech.

“I’m here to support common sense legislation,” said H.B. 2 supporter Mike McDaniel of Lexington, N.C., adding that special accommodation such as the Charlotte ordinance “opens the door for a lot of different problems.”

Regarding the public opposition of businesses to H.B. 2, McDaniel said, “That’s free enterprise, and that’s their right to do that, but it’s also our right not to support those businesses.”

Attending the counter-protest, Linda Hamburger of Raleigh thinks H.B. 2 is “a bill that discriminates against people for things they cannot change about themselves.”

“The law was written in about 12 hours or one day.  If you’re going to do something like that, that has such a large impact on so many people, at least do it thoughtfully; not off the top of your head,” Hamburger said.

“I think [H.B. 2] will be declared unconstitutional because it’s clearly a discriminatory bill,” Hamburger added.

H.B. 2 supporters Melinda and Carletta of the Raleigh area feel the “governor and General Assembly have done the right thing for North Carolina.”  Both declined to provide their last names for this story.

“There has always been a man’s bathroom and a woman’s bathroom,” said Melinda.

“We’re not against civil rights.  We just want everyone to have rights,” Melinda said referring to the rights of individuals and business owners.

In reference to those businesses that wish to accommodate anyone and everyone, Melinda said, “A third bathroom solves it!”

“Roy Cooper needs to do his job for the State of North Carolina and he has refused to do it. I don’t see how anyone can support him,” Carletta said, referring to the attorney general’s refusal to defend the state against lawsuits filed in response to H.B. 2 by Lambda Legal, the American Civil Liberties Union, the ACLU of North Carolina, and Equality NC.

McCrory has said he is willing to consider minor adjustments to the bill.

**HB2 and You: A Short Guide for North Carolina employers**

by Kevin M. Ceglowski

JD Supra Business Advisor

<http://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/hb2-and-you-a-short-guide-for-north-33657/>

Any North Carolinian not living under a rock has seen or heard something about North Carolina House Bill 2 by now. But what does this law, also known as the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, mean for private employers in North Carolina when it comes to managing employees? Not as much as you might think. Let’s dig into it.

HB2 does not affect private employers’ harassment, discrimination, or EEO policies

Private employers in North Carolina may keep any existing harassment, discrimination, or EEO policies they have. Private employers are free to revise such policies or adopt new ones – including policies preventing harassment or discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

HB2 does not supersede the EEOC’s position on sexual orientation and transgender discrimination or harassment

Employers with 15 or more employees (private employers and also federal, state, and local government employers) are covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits, among other things, discrimination based on sex. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency that enforces Title VII, interprets Title VII to prohibit harassment or discrimination based on sexual orientation or transgender status. This includes a requirement that employers allow a transgender employee to use the restroom that corresponds to the gender with which the employee identifies. Employers that fail to allow restroom use in this way – or that allow employees to be harassed or discriminated against based on their sexual orientation or gender identity – risk being sued by the EEOC or by individual employees under Title VII. We previously wrote about the EEOC’s position on transgender issues here:

<http://www.poynerspruill.com/publications/Pages/TransgenderIssuesintheWorkplace.aspx>

HB2 eliminates a North Carolina state law wrongful termination cause of action

Before HB2, a North Carolina employee who was fired because of his or her race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability could sue his or her previous employer under a state law “wrongful discharge in violation of public policy” claim. These claims could be filed without an accompanying Title VII claim, which allowed a plaintiff to avoid having the case removed to federal court, ensuring his or her case would be litigated in state court. This type of state law claim did not have Title VII’s 180-day deadline to file an administrative complaint, but instead had a three-year statute of limitations. Also, this state law claim did not have Title VII’s cap on maximum damages, but damages were instead theoretically unlimited. HB2 eliminates the possibility of a terminated employee going forward with a “wrongful termination in violation of public policy claim” based on an argument the employee was illegally fired based on his or her race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. Plaintiffs will now have to pursue such claims only under Title VII.

Although HB2 has other provisions and effects, employer-employee relationships for private employers are little changed. Employers with questions about HB2’s effect on the workplace should contact employment counsel for specific, detailed advice.

**Tourism board: Raleigh set to lose $24 million thanks to GOP’s anti-trans bathroom law**

by David Edwards

Raw Story

<https://www.rawstory.com/2016/04/tourism-board-raleigh-set-to-lose-24-million-thanks-to-gops-anti-trans-bathroom-law/>

A report released by the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau this week found that the local economy has already lost out on hundreds of thousands of dollars due to North Carolina’s HB2 bathroom law.

After Gov. Pat McCrory (R) signed the law on March 24 to prevent cities like Charlotte from granting bathroom rights to transgender people, companies like PayPal announced plans to move jobs out of state.

On Monday, a report from Wake County’s tourism agency said that the Raleigh area had already lost $732,000 in economic benefits, citing numerous cancellations of conferences and events, The News & Observer reported.

The Raleigh Visitors Bureau warned that the local economy could lose out on $24 million in economic benefits if the law is not repealed. According to the report, 16 other groups were considering relocating their events outside the state.

The city’s biggest loss could be a four-year contract for an undisclosed sports tournament that would have brought 51,000 people and $4.5 million in benefits to the area each year.

“We just felt that it’s not in the best interest of our membership to go someplace that’s not inclusive,” Johnstone Supply spokesperson Janet Tipton told The News & Observer.

**Open letter to Pat McCrory responds to HB2**

by Layne Pierce

The Blue Banner

<http://thebluebanner.net/open-letter-to-pat-mccrory-responds-to-hb2/>

Dear Governor McCrory:

I, Layne Pierce, your fellow countryman and a denizen of the state you govern, am writing to you in the high hopes that a civil conversation may be started between the people and the government. In writing this letter, I am well aware that we are of differing opinions, differing backgrounds and differing faiths. As such, I find it especially important that we communicate our ideas and express our opinions to one another in a peaceful and effective manner. I do not intend to get into a shouting match, to call names or to partake in needless bipartisan theatrics. I only intend to exercise my right as a U.S. citizen, and that is to criticize my government peacefully.

I am writing to address the nature of House Bill 2. As you know, this bill has received negative attention not only at a state level, but at a national and international level as well. For example, I have a friend who is currently studying abroad in Ireland who says that people who had never previously heard of North Carolina are now greeting him with subtle implications of judgement after the passing of this bill. New York, as well as three other states and seven individual cities, have issued a travel ban to North Carolina and artists such as Bruce Springsteen and Stephen Schwartz, a Tony-Winning Broadway producer, are refusing requests and invitations from North Carolina, crippling our state’s reputation for the arts.

Our economy suffers from HB2 — authors boycott local bookstores, such as Malaprops in Asheville, out of moral obligation. And yet, these bookstores have done nothing to support the bill. North Carolina has lost 400 jobs because PayPal found our state unsuitable. They wish to separate themselves from this government’s bigotry. That is 400 jobs that people counted on to feed their families. My peers in Asheville, North Carolina are furious and scared for themselves, for their friends, for their families and for the economy. So when I write to you, know this: I write to you in the voices of millions around the world who oppose the nature of this new bill. I am not alone, and neither are my LGBTQ+ friends.

First, let me address the direct effect of such a new law on the individual. Two weeks ago, days after you passed HB2, I talked to a friend who I had not seen for some time. My friend is transgender. On her birth certificate, her sex is listed as male, but in every regard, except biologically, this friend is female. She looks “traditionally” female and she feels like she is female. She came to visit UNC Asheville, and she told me that she drove for four hours, from Apex to Asheville. Halfway through the trip, she needed to stop and use the restroom. Despite this, she did not stop to use the restroom for two hours out of fear. Not only fear of verbal discrimination, but also bodily harm. Anyone could have hurt her and gotten away with it under the protection of HB2. Even when she got to UNCA, arguably the most liberal pocket in all of Western North Carolina, she was still afraid to use the restroom and I had to convince her that I would personally protect her should anyone try to do her harm. Only then did she finally use the women’s restroom.

You said in an interview with Fox & Friends that you see it as “basic common sense” for a man to be prohibited from using a women’s locker room, and I understand where that comes from. Men who are allowed into a woman’s restroom might take advantage of a woman in various states of undress. Transgender women, though, are not men. They are women, as their label suggests. Technically they have the body parts that a “traditional” man has, but they have never felt like men. The same can be said for trans-men. Many look like the “traditional” male, they feel like the “traditional” male, and in order to find some place in our dichotomous and binary system, many trans-men feel like they have to act like the “traditional” male. But by your definition, they are women because they have vaginas. In speaking on this matter, let us not forget our friends who were born with both female and male parts, and let us not disregard our kin and kith who feel as though no gender directly suits them — those thousands, perhaps millions, of souls who are uncomfortable using either bathroom.

Another problem with this argument is that women are being sexually assaulted anyway, and we are not doing anything about the perpetrators. Already, we are denying them the rights they need to have agency over their own bodies. Police refuse to investigate legitimate claims and the phrase “boys will be boys” is still used to justify the actions of sexual predators. “She wanted it. You could tell by what she was wearing,” is still used across the state as a means to justify rape and other forms of sexual assault. Somehow, the perpetrators get away with it. According to RAINN, the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, every 107 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted; however, there have been zero reported cases of sexual assault committed by transgender women toward other women, which makes sense. Why would a man go through all the trouble to dress up like a “traditional” woman and sexually assault a woman in the bathroom, if they can assault someone already and get away with it? Why would they risk detection from other women if they can simply drug someone and take her back to their room? If somebody is assaulted in the women’s restroom, it needs to be taken care of immediately, and that perpetrator needs to be charged with sexual assault. But in my view, and the views of my peers, you cannot morally justify charging an entire culture with the hypothetical actions of a few people, especially while cisgendered rapists and sex offenders walk free today. Meanwhile, 70 percent of polled transgender individuals have reported some form of harassment while trying to use the bathroom. You cannot justify it morally, and yet somehow you do.

And you justify this harassment with the concept of religious freedom.

Governor, I don’t know what religion you are personally practicing, but it is not Christianity as I know it. Now let me be clear, I am not a Christian. I used to be, but I discovered that for personal reasons, Christianity did not make sense to me, logistically speaking. That is not to say it is something that should be condemned. In fact, I think Christianity is a wonderful faith, and the message that Jesus Christ sends is very close to the message to which I have dedicated my own life. That message is peace and kindness, acceptance and love, unconditionally.

Prohibiting protection from discrimination is not something that I think Jesus Christ would have advocated for. I don’t know what Jesus’ thoughts on LGBTQ+ rights are. I really don’t. He never mentioned it. But I do know Jesus did say this: “A new command I give you. Love one another as I have loved you, so must you love one another,” and even being a non-Christian, I intend to follow in Jesus’ footsteps. I try (albeit I fail every day) to judge not. I try every day to love my neighbor (though often I fail).

Through discrimination we make it seem as though those who are not like ourselves are not human. How can we love something that does not seem human to us? This is why discrimination goes against this commandment and it is something that we have to purge from our hearts and our souls. And yes, disallowing trans-people to go to the bathroom in public institutions such as UNCA is discrimination.

I agree that what people do in their private lives should be up to them. I doubt any of my friends would be truly hurt in the long term should someone deny them a wedding cake. I don’t see anything in the Bible that condones this, in fact in ancient times, wedding cakes didn’t even exist. There is nothing in the Bible that says anything about being transgender. Even so, if a person’s personal religion should say that they must discriminate against people of the LGBTQ+ community and they own a private business, then there are always other shop owners. If a shop owner wants to lose money from perfectly wonderful people then he or she has such a right, just as a private school unfortunately has the right to discriminate.

In public institutions, though, the separation of church and state is absolutely mandatory. It is something for which our founding fathers fought long and hard. It is something that is directly stated in our constitution. It is the policy that keeps us from the rule of the Roman Catholic Church or Sharia law, or other religious mandates. It is the separation of church and state that also keeps public institutions safe from religious bias: your religious bias, my religious bias and the religious bias of the liberal atheist who might insist on “No religious groups on campus.”

To say that HB2 is a bill of religious freedom is incredibly misguided and considers religion to be synonymous with only some conservative branches of Christianity. It does not represent the will of your people. As such, I am advocating for the LGBTQ+ community and saying that if you want to impose this new bill out of regard for religious freedom, then don’t expect my friends to follow it in regards to their own religious freedoms. My peers and I will respectfully and nonviolently disregard HB2’s demands, while also demanding that those who discriminate in a public setting, those who break the laws that Title IX puts in place, be brought to justice.

Governor, until you respond to this letter, know this: I will send this address to you by several different means; through email, through public forum, through newspapers and articles both public and private until you formally respond through the medium of your choice. I will ask my friends, associates and peers to do the same, and I will ask all activists, allies and advocates for LGBTQ+ rights to do the same. It is not out of the desire to attack you, Governor, but rather out of the desire to make my voice heard that I ask this. I do hope you will understand.

Wishing peace and love on you and your family,

Layne Pierce.

**North Carolina Lawmaker Says His Vote For Anti-LGBT Bill Was ‘Wrong’**

by Paige Lavender

The Huffington Post

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/billy-richardson-north-carolina-anti-gay-law_us_570d1d68e4b0885fb50e4d06>

North Carolina Rep. Billy Richardson (D) admitted his vote for HB 2,a bill that blocks cities and counties from passing anti-discrimination policies, was “wrong.”

“Upon prayer and reflection, I have come to realize that I need to take action now,” Richardson wrote in The Fayetteville Observer.

Richardson called the vote “hasty,” and said he was “haunted” by the “rushed action” to pass the legislation in a special session.

“My parents raised me to avoid any rush to judgment and to consider the consequences of my decisions,” Richardson wrote. “They stressed to me that I will make mistakes but, when made, never, never compound a mistake by sitting silent and failing to own up to the error.”

“You can’t fix a wrong until you acknowledge a mistake,” he added. “I was wrong and I will stand with all North Carolinians who dream of fulfilling the words of the official toast for our Old North State, ‘where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great.’”

HB 2 passed 83-25 in the House of Representatives, and 32-0 in the state Senate. (Senate Democrats walked out of the chamber before the vote.) North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) has defended the bill since signing it into law in March, calling criticism over the measure “political theater.”

Read Richardson’s full op-ed in The Fayetteville Observer.

**Deutsche Bank halts North Carolina expansion due to transgender bathroom law**

By Mark Berman

Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-halts-north-carolina-expansion-due-to-transgender-bathroom-law/>

North Carolina’s new law prohibiting anti-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation has already cost the state a PayPal facility that would have employed hundreds of people as well as a Bruce Springsteen concert. This backlash has now extended to European companies, as Deutsche Bank, German’s biggest bank, said Tuesday that it had called off plans to create 250 new jobs at a facility in North Carolina.

The financial giant said its decision was specifically due to the new state law, which prohibits transgender people from using bathrooms that differ from the genders on their birth certificates.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” John Cryan, co-chief executive of Deutsche Bank, said in a statement Tuesday.

Even as Deutsche Bank became the second major company to scrap a planned expansion in North Carolina due to the law, a tourism agency in Raleigh said that the legislation could also wind up costing the region millions in canceled events.

Deutsche Bank had announced plans to add the new jobs through an expansion at a software application development center in Cary, N.C., about 11 miles away from the state capital in Raleigh. The center already employs 900 people, according to the bank.

When this expansion was announced, Gov. Pat McCrory (R) released a statement saying that North Carolina’s “IT talent, competitive costs, great quality of life and convenient proximity by air to New York City will continue to help foster the growth and success of pioneering businesses like” Deutsche Bank.

State officials said that the Deutsche Bank expansion would have employed enough people for the combined payroll of these new jobs to be worth more than $21 million before benefits. The company would have been eligible for reimbursements after creating jobs.

“We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now,” Cryan said. “We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

Deutsche Bank’s announcement comes a week after PayPal, an online payments firm based in California, said the new legislation prompted it to cancel a planned expansion into North Carolina. That proposed facility in Charlotte was expected to employ 400 people and bring millions to the local economy, according to McCrory’s office.

Last week, Bruce Springsteen also announced that he was canceling a show in Greensboro, N.C., to “show solidarity for those freedom fighters” contesting the new law.

The North Carolina law was hastily introduced by lawmakers and signed by McCrory, who has defended it against criticism by saying it “provided protection of our basic expectation of privacy in public restrooms and locker rooms.” Supporters of the legislation have defended it and similar bills in other states as necessary measures.

The law has come under consistent fire from LGBT rights groups and major companies including Apple, Google and American Airlines. It could also potentially cost the state major events like the next NBA All-Star game, currently scheduled to be held in Charlotte.

Officials in the state are already reporting tourism losses due to the law. As of this week, five groups canceled events planned in the Wake County region, which would have brought the local economy more than $732,000, according to the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Another 16 groups were about to sign contracts to hold events and are considering canceling or changing their minds, according to a spokesman for the visitors bureau. These groups could bring a combined 73,000 people and $24 million to the region.

The visitors bureau did not identify these 16 other groups in a report released by Denny Edwards, president and chief executive of the visitors bureau. But the report did say that one of the biggest hits would come if Raleigh lost its chance to host an unspecified sports tournament, one that the bureau said could bring in $4.5 million to the local economy.

**McCrory signs executive order under pressure over anti-LGBT law**

Washington Blade

<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/04/12/mccrory-signs-executive-order-under-pressure-over-anti-lgbt-law/>

Faced with continued pressure from LGBT advocates and business to undo the North Carolina’s newly enacted anti-LGBT law, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory on Tuesday signed an executive order to mitigate the opposition.

According to a news statement from the governor’s office, the directive, known as Executive Order 93, on one hand “maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools,” which indicates transgender people will still be barred from using public restrooms in those places consistent with their gender identity.

On the other hand, according to the statement, the order prohibits anti-LGBT discrimination among state employees, affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies, affirms businesses right to establishment non-discrimination policies in employment and seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said in a statement. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

McCrory signs the executive order amid continued consternation over House Bill 2, which bars cities from enacting pro-LGBT non-discrimination ordinances and transgender people from using public restrooms in schools and government buildings consistent with their gender identity.

The Washington Blade has placed a request in with the office of Gov. McCrory seeking the actual text of the executive order.

- See more at: <http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/04/12/mccrory-signs-executive-order-under-pressure-over-anti-lgbt-law/#sthash.FtNfQ14d.dpuf>

**North Carolina Governor Does Damage Control After Criticism Of Anti-LGBT Law**

by Paige Lavender

The Huffington Post

 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/pat-mccrory-anti-lgbt-law_us_570d3f18e4b0885fb50e6dff>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) is doing damage control after being criticized for a law that discriminates against the LGBT community.

In a press release Tuesday, McCrory announced he’d signed an executive order clarifying the language of HB2, a bill he signed in March that blocked cities and counties from passing anti-discrimination policies.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said before outlining his executive order.

But it doesn’t appear the executive order changes much, other than expanding North Carolina’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity.

**N.C. Governor Signs Order That 'Clarifies' Controversial Gender Identity Bill**

by BILL CHAPPELL

NPR

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/04/12/473982918/n-c-governor-signs-order-that-clarifies-controversial-gender-identity-bill>

Responding to criticisms over his state's controversial new law that voids cities' anti-discrimination rules protecting members of the LGBT community, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has issued an executive order that "seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination."

The law, HB2, spawned a lawsuit by the ACLU and brought cancellations of high-profile events that were planned to take place in North Carolina – everything from a Bruce Springsteen concert to an expansion by PalPal.

Refusing to defend the bill after its passage, Attorney General Roy Cooper said, "House Bill 2 is unconstitutional. Therefore our office will not represent the defendants in this lawsuit nor future lawsuits."

The governor's move comes one day after competing rallies were held over the legislation at the state capitol, with hundreds of demonstrators voicing their support for McCrory and the law and dozens of counter-protesters calling the law a disgrace, according to member station WUNC.

**North Carolina Governor Amends HB2 ‘Bathroom Law’ — But Doesn't Solve Bathroom Problem**

By Philip Lewis

Mic

<http://mic.com/articles/140641/north-carolina-governor-amends-hb2-bathroom-law-but-doesn-t-solve-bathroom-problem#.yeaSHYZ7Z>

After North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory signed into law in March that prohibits anyone from using a public restroom that does not correspond with their biological sex, the governor's decision has been met with much criticism. The legislation, known formally as the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, also prevents cities from passing anti-discrimination laws.

On Tuesday, the governor signed Executive Order 93, which seeks to "clarifies existing state law," according to a press release.

"After listening to people's feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina," Governor McCrory said in a statement. "Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state's commitment to privacy and equality."

While the executive order is the latest development in the House Bill 2 controversy, it does not appear as though any specific rules for bathrooms or municipalities were changed.

"It maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and in our schools, and when possible, encourages reasonable accommodations for families and those who have unique or special circumstances," McCrory said in a YouTube statement. "Second, the private sector can make its own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities. This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector."

**McCrory issues executive order on #HB2 – Is it at all meaningful?**

 By Rob Schofield

Progressive Pulse

<http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/mccrory-issues-executive-order-on-hb2-is-it-at-all-meaningful/>

Days after blasting critics of his new all-purpose discrimination law for supposedly conducting a “smear campaign,” Gov. Pat McCrory was singing a slightly different tune today in a statement and executive order in which he attempted to walk back some parts of the new law.

Here is the response from the  ACLU of North Carolina, which is helping to spearhead the lawsuit against the the HB 2 statute:

RALEIGH — North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) today issued an executive order that maintains House Bills 2’s provisions that force transgender people to use the wrong restroom while prohibiting workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity for state employees.

The news follows the passage of House Bill 2, a measure that removes existing protections for gay and transgender people, blocks other localities from enacting protections, erodes existing rights for everyone under state nondiscrimination law, and forces transgender individuals to use the wrong restroom in schools and other government buildings.

In response, ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston said the following:

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

“An impressive and growing number of businesses, faith leaders, and public figures have come out to condemn House Bill 2 as an unnecessary and dangerous measure that unfairly targets gay and transgender people. Regardless of political affiliation, more and more political leaders also understand that discrimination is bad for business and politically toxic. The public believes in equality and fairness and House Bill 2 and measures like it are out of step with the values of most Americans.

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action. We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.”

Lambda Legal, the ACLU, and the ACLU of North Carolina recently filed a lawsuit challenging House Bill 2. The lawsuit argues that through HB 2, North Carolina sends a purposeful message that LGBT people are second-class citizens who are undeserving of the privacy, respect, and protections afforded others in the state. The complaint argues that HB 2 is unconstitutional because it violates the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment by discriminating on the basis of sex and sexual orientation and invading the privacy of transgender people. The law also violates Title IX by discriminating against students and school employees on the basis of sex.

The Obama administration is presently considering whether North Carolina’s House Bill 2 makes the state ineligible for billions of dollars in federal aid for schools, highways, and housing. North Carolina receives more than $4.5 billion in federal funding for secondary and post-secondary schools, all of which remains at jeopardy given the state’s policy of systemically violating Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination, including discrimination against transgender students.

- See more at: <http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/mccrory-issues-executive-order-on-hb2-is-it-at-all-meaningful/#sthash.5V7tMdi7.dpuf>

**North Carolina Governor Pretends To Fix Anti-LGBT Law With Symbolic Executive Order**

BY ZACK FORD

Think Progress

<http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/2016/04/12/3768732/north-carolina-lgbt-executive-order/>

After several businesses have abandoned plans to expand in North Carolina and countless others have abandoned their travel to the state, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) issued an executive order Tuesday that addresses various aspects of HB 2, the anti-LGBT law that the state legislature forced through in a single day.

Claiming that there is “a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory said that his order would “affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

It doesn’t.

The very first point of the order doubles down on banning transgender people from using bathrooms and locker rooms in government buildings in schools. McCrory explains it using the smarmy “common sense” rhetoric that he and other Republican lawmakers have used to describe the policy since its introduction. With that piece still in place, little matters in the other corrections.

The second point of the order does nothing except reiterate what is already true about the law. It “affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies.” HB2 did not ban private businesses from establishing LGBT protections, but that doesn’t mean businesses like PayPal want to operate in a state where their employees still experience discrimination in schools and government buildings.

The third point states that cities and counties may establish nondiscrimination protections for their own employees. This sounds promising, but would actually make little difference. This seems to refer not to all employees who live in a city, but only the employees of a city. For example, Charlotte could pass an ordinance promising not to discriminate against its transgender employees, but then all of those employees would still have to work in government buildings in which they are not allowed to use the restroom that matches their gender identity. It would be symbolic equality, but no actual change.

The same is true for McCrory’s fourth point, which extends protections for LGBT employees of the state. In other states, this kind of executive order would be celebrated, as it was last week in Pennsylvania. However, all North Carolina state transgender employees will still continue to work in government buildings where they are prohibited from using the correct bathrooms. Thus, the symbolic embrace of protections still functions in a reality defined by discrimination.

The last point of McCrory’s ordinance calls for legislation to fix one piece of HB2, the ban on state discrimination lawsuits. This will be an important fix to help workers across the state to find justice if they experience workplace discrimination, such as one Charlotte bank vice president who claims he was fired because of his age. But the state still offers no statewide protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, so even if lawmakers came back to fix this one aspect of HB2, it still would not do anything to advance the LGBT community.

“Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone,” McCrory said in his announcement. He probably isn’t wrong about that.

**UPDATING: North Carolina Governor Issues Executive Order in Response to Anti-LGBT Law Backlash**

New Civil Rights Movement

<http://www.thenewcivilrightsmovement.com/breaking_north_carolina_governor_issues_executive_order_in_response_to_anti_lgbt_law_backlash>

Embattled GOP Gov. Pat McCrory has just issued an executive order that appears to override a small portion of HB2, his sweeping, broad, unconstitutional law that voided all local LGBT nondiscrimination ordinances and banned transgender people from using public restrooms that conform to their gender identity.

NCRM will update this story below with reactions from legal experts as they become available.

Executive Order 93 does not change the ban on transgender people using public restrooms based on gender identity. But it states it will add sexual orientation and gender identity protections to the state’s employment policy for state employees. It also says it will seek "legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination." That was taken away when he signed HB2 into law.

In the video accompanying his executive order, Gov. McCrory remains steadfast in his opposition to Charlotte's nondiscrimination ordinance, which was voided by HB2. He called it a "solution in search of a problem," ensuring he will stand in the doorway to continue to ban transgender people from accessing basic civil rights.

The executive order does not even mention the other sweeping changes HB2 ushered in, including stripping local control over minimum wage laws  and employment discrimination laws.

Here is the video and below, the transcript:

“Hi, I’m North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

North Carolina proudly welcomes all people to live, work and visit our great state.

We didn’t become the ninth most populous state in the nation by accident. We have long held traditions of both ensuring equality for all of our citizens and our visitors, while also respecting the privacy of everyone.

We are also a state that strives to allow our people and businesses to be as independent as possible without overreaching government regulations.

These North Carolina values of privacy and equality came into conflict recently when the Charlotte City Council passed a new mandate that forced on businesses a city-wide ordinance of bathroom and locker room regulations, something frankly we had never seen or had before in that great city or in North Carolina.

Simply put, this government overreach was a solution in search of a problem.

In fact, the Charlotte City Council rejected this proposal less than a year ago.

In a letter prior to the most recent vote, I notified the Charlotte City Council that this unnecessary and intrusive mandate conflicts with basic expectations of privacy in the most private of settings.

Therefore, as I expected, the state took action on what was seen as government overreach.

You know, after listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina.

But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.

To that end, today I have signed an executive order with the goal of achieving that fine balance.

This executive order accomplishes the following:

First, it maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and in our schools, and when possible, encourages reasonable accommodations for families and those who have unique or special circumstances.

Second, the private sector can make its own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities. This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector.

Third, I have affirmed the private sector and local government’s right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies.

And fourth, as governor, I have expanded our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.

And fifth, I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.

Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals.

Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues.

This is the North Carolina way.

Thank you very much, and may God continue to bless the great state of North Carolina.

UPDATE I: 3:00 PM EDT –

Buzzfeed Legal Editor Chris Geidner weighs in via Twitter:

UPDATE II: 3:03 PM EDT –

For those who want to read the actual, full legal text:

UPDATE III: 3:10 PM EDT –

Kate Kendall, head of National Center for Lesbian Rights, a national legal organization, calls it "a cynical political move."

UPDATE IV: 3:16 PM EDT –

ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston:

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

There's a good deal more on their website.

ACLU National isn't quite as generous as their local NC affiliate:

ACLU attorney and expert on HB2:

UPDATE V: 3:33 PM EDT –

Some other opinions:

UPDATE VI: 8:08 PM EDT –

Group of US Senators Asks NBA Commissioner to Move All Star Game Out of North Carolina

This is a breaking news and developing story. Details may change. This story will be updated, and NCRM will likely publish follow-up stories on this news. Stay tuned and refresh for updates.

**North Carolina governor refuses to reverse anti-LGBT law in executive order**

The Guardian

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/apr/12/north-carolina-anti-lgbt-law-governor-executive-order>

North Carolina governor Pat McCrory said on Tuesday he wants to change a new state law that prevents people from suing over discrimination in state court, but he’s not challenging a measure regarding bathroom access for transgender people.

His announcement comes as fallout widens over the law he signed last month that would limit protections for gay, lesbian and transgender people.

McCrory said he’s using an executive order to expand the state equal employment policy to include sexual orientation and gender, as well as affirming private businesses’ rights to establish their own bathroom policies.

He also says he will ask lawmakers to file legislation later this month allowing people to sue in state court over discrimination. That right had been wiped out by the law.

Which issue do you want US election candidates to discuss?

 Read more

But the statement said that his order will maintain gender-specific restroom and locker room access in government buildings and schools. He once again condemned a Charlotte ordinance passed earlier this year that allowed transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to their gender identity, calling it “a solution in search of a problem”.

The state law was passed partly in response to the Charlotte measure.

But it went further than repealing the Charlotte law by overruling LGBT anti-discrimination measures passed by local governments around the state. It also excluded sexual orientation and gender identity from the state’s anti-discrimination policy. The law also required transgender people to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate.

McCrory acknowledged outcry over the law, saying he’d listened to “feedback” from people for several weeks.

He said that “based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality”.

His announcement came hours after Deutsche Bank announced that it’s halting plans to add 250 jobs in North Carolina because of the law.

The German bank with a large US presence adds another loud voice to a chorus of business leaders who have urged the repeal of the law by Republican leaders who promote the state as business-friendly.

Previously, the bank had planned to add the jobs through next year in Cary. But on Tuesday the bank said it was freezing those plans.

Co-executive officer John Cryan said in a news release that “as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our US expansion plans for now”.

He said the bank may revisit the plans later. The bank currently employs 900 people at a Cary software development center, and it said it plans to sustain that existing operation.

Previously, PayPal reversed plans to open a 400-employee operation center in Charlotte, and more than 130 corporate CEOs signed a letter urging the law’s repeal. A number of states and cities have restricted public employee travel to the state.

This week, the law prompted several more groups to cancel planned conventions or gatherings in the state.

Ryan Smith, a spokeswoman for the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, said five groups totaling about 1,000 attendees have already canceled. She said in an email the canceled events would have brought $730,000 to the area.

Smith said another 16 groups are considering cancellations of events expected to have an impact of $24m.

The B Lab, a group organizing a gathering for socially conscious companies, says that it’s relocating the event that was expected to bring 550 attendees to Durham in October. Certified B Corporations are for-profit but meet strict criteria for social and environmental responsibility.

Charlotte tourism officials have previously said that several events were canceled around that city.

Some major music acts have also responded to the law. Bruce Springsteen canceled a Greensboro show over the weekend because of it.

Jimmy Buffett, meanwhile, said that he considers the law “stupid” but will proceed with scheduled shows in Raleigh and Charlotte this month. He said future dates would depend on whether the law is repealed.

Buffett wrote on his blog that tickets to his shows sold out long before the law was enacted. “I am not going to let stupidity or bigotry trump fun for my loyal fans this year,” he said.

Supporters of the law on Monday held their biggest rally yet, drawing several hundred supporters.

**Breaking: McCrory Issues Exec Order in Effort to Quell HB 2 Outrage**

by Danny Hooley

Indy Week

<http://www.indyweek.com/news/archives/2016/04/12/breaking-mccrory-issues-exec-order-in-effort-to-quell-hb-2-outrage>

Gov. Pat McCrory tried to look like a boss Tuesday as he blasted lib'rul purveyors of "misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy" for their response to the anti-LGBT, anti-local-government bill he signed into law.

But what he really did, pretty much, was admit he screwed up big-time with HB 2. And now he's trying to walk it back with—gasp—an executive order. (You know, that illegal commie maneuver invented by Barack Hoo-sane Obama.)

From WNCN:

The governor said Executive Order 93:

Maintains gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

Here's the video from Smilin' Pat to announce this development:

And the transcript:

“Hi, I’m North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

North Carolina proudly welcomes all people to live, work and visit our great state.

We didn’t become the ninth most populous state in the nation by accident. We have long held traditions of both ensuring equality for all of our citizens and our visitors, while also respecting the privacy of everyone.

We are also a state that strives to allow our people and businesses to be as independent as possible without overreaching government regulations.

These North Carolina values of privacy and equality came into conflict recently when the Charlotte City Council passed a new mandate that forced on businesses a city-wide ordinance of bathroom and locker room regulations, something frankly we had never seen or had before in that great city or in North Carolina.

Simply put, this government overreach was a solution in search of a problem.

In fact, the Charlotte City Council rejected this proposal less than a year ago.

In a letter prior to the most recent vote, I notified the Charlotte City Council that this unnecessary and intrusive mandate conflicts with basic expectations of privacy in the most private of settings.

Therefore, as I expected, the state took action on what was seen as government overreach.

You know, after listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina.

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Second, the private sector can make its own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities. This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector.

Third, I have affirmed the private sector and local government’s right to establish its own non-discrimination employment policies.

And fourth, as governor, I have expanded our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.

And fifth, I will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.

Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals.

Now I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want common sense solutions to complex issues.

This is the North Carolina way.

Thank you very much, and may God continue to bless the great state of North Carolina."

**NC Gov. Signs Executive Order on Anti-LGBT Law**

Daily Beast

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/cheats/2016/04/12/nc-gov-signs-executive-order-on-anti-lgbt-law.html>

In response to nationwide backlash against his state's new law banning anti-discrimination protections for gay and transgender people, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) on Tuesday signed an executive order slightly amending the policy. In a videotaped message, McCrory explained that while people must use government and school bathrooms matching their gender at birth, private businesses can freely decide their “own policy with regard to restrooms, locker rooms and/or shower facilities." The governor's order also expanded protections for state employees against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. The North Carolina branch of the ACLU dismissed McCrory's actions, calling them a "poor effort" to "save face" after companies like PayPal and mega-stars like Bruce Springsteen announced boycotts of the state.

**North Carolina Gov. Alters Discriminatory Law — Barely**

BY TRUDY RING

Advocate.com

<http://www.advocate.com/politics/2016/4/12/north-carolina-governor-alters-discriminatory-law-barely>

In reaction to the backlash against its new anti-LGBT law, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has signed an executive order that makes modest changes.

McCrory’s order, announced today, maintains the major portions of the law, known as House Bill 2, which prevents local governments from enacting or enforcing LGBT-inclusive employment nondiscrimination ordinances (affecting private businesses or contractors) and bars transgender people from using the restrooms, locker rooms, and other sex-segregated facilities comporting with their gender identity, if these facilities are located in government buildings, including public elementary and secondary schools and state colleges and universities.

The order does affirm that private businesses and nonprofit groups can establish their own policies for these facilities, something that was not affected by the law but has been the subject of some confusion.

McCrory’s action also affirms that private businesses, nonprofits, and local governments can establish their own employment nondiscrimination policies — for their own workers. And it expands the state’s employment nondiscrimination policy to include sexual orientation and gender identity — that is, for state employees.

McCrory said he will also seek legislation allowing workers to sue in state court for discrimination, something that was explicitly barred by HB 2.

In a video (watch below) accompanying the announcement, McCrory decried “selective outrage” over the law and contended it had been misinterpreted. He also denounced what he called “overreach” by the Charlotte City Council in adopting an LGBT-inclusive public accommodations ordinance, which spurred the state legislature to pass HB 2 last month. He called the restroom provisions of HB 2 “common sense,” and noted that it allows for special accommodations — that is, single-occupancy restrooms and locker rooms — in government buildings.

Many major corporations and celebrities have condemned the measure. Just today, Deutsche Bank announced it was canceling a planned expansion of its operations in Cary, which is near Raleigh, the state capital.

Activists said McCrory’s order does not do nearly enough to mitigate the effects of HB 2.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed the harmful House Bill 2 into law which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people,” said a statement issued by Sarah Preston, acting executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina. “With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.” She called on the state to repeal the law, which is the subject of a lawsuit filed by the national ACLU, the North Carolina affiliate, and Lambda Legal.

**HRC and Equality NC to McCrory: Executive Order Doubles Down on Most Damaging Provisions of HB 2**

Human Rights Campaign

<http://www.hrc.org/blog/hrc-equalitync-to-mccrory-EO-doubles-down-on-most-damaging-part-of-HB2>

HRC and Equality North Carolina blasted NC Gov. Pat McCrory following his executive order today for his continued failure to lead on the repeal of HB 2.

While the governor’s executive order extends protections to state workers, it does nothing to fix the vile and discriminatory provisions he signed into law through HB 2. Under HB 2, transgender people are prohibited from using restrooms consistent with their gender identity in public buildings, including the University of North Carolina campus and the Raleigh-Durham Airport. Cities still cannot adopt ordinances designed to prohibit discrimination against their residents and visitors. And, today’s action does not undo the damage to the state nondiscrimination laws, which now prevent individuals from bringing suit in state courts.

HRC Legal Director Sarah Warbelow said, “The governor’s action is an insufficient response to a terrible, misguided law that continues to harm LGBT people on a daily basis. It’s absurd that he’ll protect people from being fired but will prohibit them from using the employee restroom consistent with their gender identity. The North Carolina Legislature must act to right this wrong as swiftly as possible. They created this horrendous law, and they need to repeal it.”

Equality NC Executive Director Chris Sgro said, “While Governor McCrory's Executive Order creates vital protections in public employment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, it does not address the deep concerns we share with members of the business community and citizens across the state about the damaging impact of HB 2. In fact, the order doubles down on the Governor's support for some of the most problematic provisions of HB 2.”

Both HRC and Equality North Carolina continue to call on the governor and North Carolina’s elected officials to repeal HB 2.

HB 2 has eliminated existing municipal non-discrimination protections for LGBT people and prevents such protections from being passed by cities in the future. The legislation also forces transgender students in public schools to use restrooms and other facilities inconsistent with their gender identity, putting $4.5 billion dollars in federal funding under Title IX at risk. It also compels the same type of discrimination against transgender people to take place in publicly-owned buildings, including in public universities, publicly-owned airports, and publicly-owned convention centers.

Lawmakers passed the legislation in a hurried, single-day session, and Governor McCrory quickly signed it into law in the dead of night. North Carolina has the unfortunate distinction of becoming the first state in the country to enact a law attacking transgender students, even after similar proposals were rejected across the country this year -- including a high-profile veto by the Republican Governor Dennis Daugaard of South Dakota.

North Carolina school districts that comply with the law will now be in direct violation of Title IX, subjecting the school districts to massive liability and putting an estimated $4.5 billion of federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education, as well as funding received by schools from other federal agencies, at risk. This section of HB 2 offers costly supposed solutions to non-existent problems, and it forces schools to choose between complying with federal law -- plus doing the right thing for their students -- or complying with a state law that violates students’ civil rights.

Read more about how this bill puts federal funding at risk here.

As a result of North Carolina’s HB 2 law, which puts thousands of youth, citizens, employees, and visitors to the state at risk, more than 140 business leaders are calling for a repeal effort during the upcoming legislative session and a number of businesses have begun to remove investments from the state.

**North Carolina’s bathroom law just keeps on backfiring on Pat McCrory**

By Amber Phillips

Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/04/12/north-carolinas-bathroom-law-just-keeps-on-backfiring-on-republicans/>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory explains his executive action on Apr. 12, after public outcry over the state's "bathroom bill." (Youtube/Office of Governor Pat McCrory)

When Gov. Pat McCrory (R) signed into law one of this year's most controversial and heated bathroom bills last month, we predicted it could backfire on him. And so far, that's exactly what seems to be happening.

After taking heat from businesses, newspapers, the LGBT community and Democrats, McCrory announced Tuesday he's signing an executive order walking back some provisions in the law -- but not the parts that LGBT advocates and businesses have beef with. The whole thing gives the appearance that McCrory has backed down under pressure, but it's unlikely to actually alleviate any pressure on him.

In truth, from the moment the North Carolina legislature decided to convene a special section to override a Charlotte transgender-bathroom ordinance, things haven't gone McCrory's way. He opposed the Charlotte ordinance, which let transgender people use the bathroom of the gender they identity with. Such an ordinance would invade people's privacy, he said. But he didn't necessarily want the legislature to call a special session to deal with it, either.

Lawmakers called one anyway, and roughly 12 hours later, McCrory signed the expansive bill, preventing any municipality from making their own protections for LGBT people, into law.

From the jump, McCrory's camp lost the messaging war. What the law does or doesn't say got so muddled that McCrory's team felt they needed to send out talking points to explain their understanding of it. But fact checkers called him out on some of  those"facts." "Pat McCrory is wrong when he says North Carolina's new LGBT law doesn't take away existing rights," read a March 30 Politifact piece.

Then, just weeks after McCrory signed a deal with PayPal to expand to the state -- and days after saying the law wouldn't cost the state any dollars -- PayPal very publicly backed out of the deal, specifically citing the law.

Now, his executive order, which risks making no one in the state happy. Much of the order "reaffirms" that the private sector can make their own bathroom policy, which was already part of the law.

But that didn't stop businesses from deciding not to open factories there or groups from deciding not to hold their conventions there or Bruce Springsteen from deciding not hold a concert there. It's unlikely McCrory's statement -- and it really is more of a statement than an executive order changing policy --  will change that.

There is at least one change to come out of McCrory's executive order.  State employees now can't be fired for being gay or transgender. But that, too, is unlikely to quiet LGBT advocates' criticisms about the law. LGBT people in the rest of the state still can, and the law takes away LGBT people's ability to sue for discrimination. (On Tuesday, McCrory called on the state legislature to fix that.)

His attempts to change aspects of the law also risk upsetting the Republicans who supported it. It's an open question whether they'll take him up on his request to reinstate the ability to sue for discrimination.

If this saga has gone terribly for McCrory, it's been great for Democratic Attorney General Roy Cooper, who is trying to unseat the one-term governor. Cooper's game plan to win in a socially conservative state like North Carolina had always been to attack McCrory on his job-creating record. Now, Cooper can claim he has tangible evidence to "prove" the governor's proposals are costing North Carolina residents jobs. And he can make the case that McCrory's executive order is an admission the law went too far while still hammering the governor on the law itself.

North Carolina is the first -- and so far only -- state in the nation to require people to use the bathroom corresponding to the gender on their birth certificate. Fairly or not, that has put McCrory in the hot seat from nearly every angle. And how he's handled being there hasn't helped give him any much-needed political cover.

**Can North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory Soothe Fears About HB2?**

by DAVID A. GRAHAM

The Atlantic

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/04/pat-mccrory-north-carolina-hb2/477936/>

DURHAM, N.C.—After weeks of fierce criticism, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory on Tuesday took steps to blunt the backlash to HB2, the state’s controversial LGBT-related law.

That law—introduced, passed, and signed during an unusual one-day special session on March 23—prevents transgender people from using bathrooms corresponding to the gender with which they identify in state schools and government facilities. It also prevents cities from creating LGBT non-discrimination ordnances or raising local minimum wages. The bill was passed in response to a Charlotte ordnance requiring schools and businesses to make transgender bathroom accommodations and prohibiting discrimination against LGBT people.

McCrory’s order seems to be geared at soothing fears about some elements in the law, but it does not appear to make any material changes. The governor cannot unilaterally change the law. There is no change to the transgender-bathroom conditions, one of the most complicated elements. Government buildings, including schools, will still require people to use bathrooms and locker rooms corresponding to the gender on their birth certificate. But the order also notes that private businesses may establish their own restroom and locker-room policies.

The order also “affirms” that local governments and private business may establish non-discrimination employment policies for their own employees—including, presumably, LGBT people. It also expands the state’s nondiscrimination policy for state employees to include sexual orientation and gender identity. But it does not restore cities’ right to establish local non-discrimination ordnances that apply to the private sector, as Charlotte’s ordnance did. In other words, the North Carolina government cannot legally discriminate against employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Businesses can discriminate, but can also choose not to, and cities may not prohibit them from doing so.

Finally, the governor said he will support a push during the upcoming legislative short session that would reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in state court. That right was eliminated by HB2, in what appeared to be a clerical error resulting from haste rather than an intentional step. While the right to sue in federal court remained, advocates say it’s important to allow the right to sue in state court as well.

McCrory, a Republican, explained his intention in a video. The text of the executive order is available here.

It’s unclear what material effect the executive order might have. Much of it is devoted to restating what’s already in HB2—including the new rules on transgender accommodations in state facilities, the right of the private sector to set its own policies, and the right of the private sector and local government to create their own non-discrimination policies.

Meanwhile, the governor does not—and likely cannot—deal with some of the more complicated matters in the controversy over the law. McCrory and the Republicans who dominate the state legislature continue to defend the importance of the transgender-bathroom provisions, insisting they are a commonsense step to prevent abuse. Transgender people in North Carolina and elsewhere have criticized the provision. They point out that transgender people are more likely to be abused while using bathrooms that don’t match their appearance than the reverse; some bearded transgender men tweeted selfies to show why they don't feel comfortable using women’s rooms, even if that’s what their birth certificates say their gender is.

In addition, as long as the law applies to schools, there’s a risk that the state could jeopardize federal funding through Title IX. The Obama administration had said it is reviewing whether HB2 runs afoul of federal regulations for moneys for transportation, education, or housing. The federal government has treated gender identity as protected under Title IX, though the judicial view is not entirely clear. Federal funding for education to North Carolina accounted for $4.3 billion last year.

Senate Leader Phil Berger, a Republican, praised McCrory’s order, saying it “put to rest the left's lies about HB2.” But the North Carolina ACLU, one of several groups that promptly sued to overturn the law, on grounds including due process and equal protection, quickly dismissed the order. The acting executive director, Sarah Preston, said in a statement:

Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people. With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom.

McCrory’s move comes after weeks of intense pressure on the state from many quarters, in addition to the lawsuit against the law. The NBA has discussed moving its 2017 All-Star game, slated to be held in Charlotte. The NCAA is reportedly reviewing its decision to hold portions of next year's basketball tournament in Greensboro. Bruce Springsteen canceled a show, scheduled for Sunday in Greensboro, in protest. A weekend headline in Raleigh’s News and Observer said that the state was “reel[ing] as a national punch line.”

Perhaps most potently, there’s been a serious backlash from businesses, echoing the response when other states considered or passed similar laws dealing with LGBT rights. Major Old North State companies like Bank of America criticized the law, and a slew of big corporations announced they would reverse or halt plans to create jobs in North Carolina. PayPal canceled a planned 400-job center in the state, and Deutsche Bank announced Tuesday morning that it was freezing plans to create 250 new positions. The Raleigh visitors bureau reported the law was already having a negative effect on conferences in the capital.

The governor cannot unilaterally change the law.

It’s not yet clear whether McCrory’s clarifications, perhaps in tandem with supplemental legislation on suing for discrimination, will be enough to assuage those businesses. In Indiana, which in 2015 passed a religious-freedom law that alienated major companies, the legislature ended up taking action to roll back much of the bill. There’s been no such push in North Carolina, despite the demands of some Democrats in the state legislature. The General Assembly is heavily dominated by conservative Republicans from rural areas.

The political effects of McCrory’s order also remain to be seen. There were indications that the governor had misgivings about the law from the start. A former mayor of Charlotte, he had previously criticized state interference in local affairs, declined to call a legislative special session, and said any state action should be narrowly tailored to reversing the Charlotte ordnance. But once the General Assembly called itself back into session, McCrory bowed to the veto-proof conservative Republican supermajority and quickly signed the law, then staunchly defended it.

The law, and the backlash to it, has become a risk to McCrory’s reelection bid, in part because it endangers his attempt to portray himself as a technocratic, pro-business moderate. He’ll face off in November against state Attorney General Roy Cooper, a Democrat, who has called for HB2’s repeal and refused to defend the law in court. The N&O speculates that McCrory’s language in the order expanding protection for sexual orientation and gender identity may be aimed at undermining Cooper’s rationale for refusing to defend the law.

Tuesday’s executive order is McCrory’s boldest step yet to wrest back control over the narrative over HB2—which was first snatched away by his fellow Republicans in the General Assembly in calling their special session, and then by businesses and activists who oppose the law. But the impact of the order will still depend on how each of those groups respond. First, it will depend whether these clarifications are enough to convince corporate leaders that the state is still welcoming enough a place to conduct business. If not, the ball will go back to the same state legislators who passed HB2 in the first place, and who have so far shown little indication that the business backlash has changed their minds.

**McCrory's HB 2 Executive Order Doesn't Actually Change HB 2**

by Paul Blest

Indy Week

<http://www.indyweek.com/news/archives/2016/04/12/mccrorys-hb-2-executive-order-doesnt-actually-change-hb-2>

Governor Pat McCrory's executive order on Tuesday was intended as a way to walk back the effects of the bill, which have has already caused big hits to local economies, as well as 650 jobs between planned Deutsche Bank and PayPal expansions that have been canceled. The problem is that, contrary to various headlines about the executive order, McCrory's move doesn't actually do anything to change the bill.

The order, which you can read here, does add sexual orientation and gender identity to existing state employment protections, although as McCrory confirms in yet another video, transgender employees will still be banned from using the correct bathrooms.

Aside from this one important provision, however, McCrory's order does little. It doesn't reinstate the ability of local governments to create their own jurisdiction-wide nondiscrimination protections; McCrory couldn't do that because he doesn't have that power; only the legislature does, and only a full repeal of HB 2 would change that. When it comes to HB 2, all McCrory's executive order did was formalize the error-riddled press release he sent out a few weeks ago.

McCrory also says that he'll "immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina courts," which was taken away in HB 2. Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger's statement in support of McCrory's executive order, interestingly enough, doesn't mention that part at all.

"Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people," said ACLU acting executive director Sarah Preston in a statement. "With this executive order, LGBT individuals still lack legal protections from discrimination, and transgender people are still explicitly targeted by being forced to use the wrong restroom."

Sgro, who was recently appointed to the state House of Representatives, said that while the executive order creates "vital protections" in public employment, it "doubles down on the Governor's support for some of the most problematic provisions of HB 2."

"After weeks of harsh scrutiny directed at him over the sweeping anti-LGBT "Hate Bill 2" that he made law, the Governor responded today by dangling benefits for some, while North Carolina's transgender community, workers, and reputation as a welcoming place to live, travel, and work continue to needlessly suffer," Sgro said.

ACLU staff attorney Chase Strangio added his own thoughts:

**Letter: HB 2 gives clarity to workplace law**

Fayetteville Observer

<http://www.fayobserver.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/letter-hb-gives-clarity-to-workplace-law/article_098b62fb-2914-5c87-b838-41190bb282ab.html>

Obscured in the "Bathroom Bill" controversy is a technical correction bringing clarity to a confusing area of workplace law. This correction isn't related to bathroom use.

In 1977, our state rightly rejected attempts to duplicate the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eeoc.gov). We chose to enact a law affirming the intent of federal law, but declined to establish a state level "mini-EEOC" with our own staffs, offices, IT department, fleet of cars, investigators and unique set of remedies.

It was the right position then and now. EEOC handles nearly 5,000 discrimination claims in four local offices in our state each year. Unfortunately, our Court of Appeals decided years ago our simple statutory statement of support could now create a state court "public policy wrongful discharge" lawsuit with an end-run around the EEOC.

Suddenly, someone unhappy with the EEOC process, or who chose never to try the process, could file a lawsuit years later. The witnesses are gone, the records may be gone, and our state court system isn't equipped to handle these matters. EEOC spent decades building an investigation, mediation and litigation process that respects employer and employee rights. While imperfect, it's fairer for all than a late-filed ambush in a state court system with little expertise.

This portion of House Bill 2 took our law back to its original intent of supporting civil rights in the workplace without setting up a duplicative or conflicting state agency or court process. Employers and employees are best served by timely and expert resolution of these claims.

A. Bruce Clarke, JD

Raleigh

**Our View: Political crossfire is an environmental hazard**

Fayetteville Observer

<http://www.fayobserver.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-political-crossfire-is-an-environmental-hazard/article_1f6cedf8-71b2-5a84-a489-5722fe81bb20.html>

It's hardly a surprise that there's no love lost between Attorney General Roy Cooper's office and some of Gov. Pat McCrory's appointees who lead important branches of state government.

Cooper, after all, is running for governor against McCrory. And most recently, he refused to defend the controversial new law - House Bill 2 - that defines discrimination and forbids cities and counties from exceeding its limits. The law essentially ended any civil-rights protection for gay, lesbian or transgender people in North Carolina - and for many others too.

Cooper expressed outrage over the law, which was hastily passed in a special session of the General Assembly. It's clear HB2 will be a big issue in the campaign.

Last week, the Department of Environmental Quality notified Cooper's office that it wouldn't renew its contracts for representation by the AG's office. In a written statement, DEQ spokeswoman Stephanie Hawco said, "North Carolina's environment is too important to place in the hands of an attorney general's office that has a record of making political decisions about which cases it wants to defend." DEQ, she said, has been moving its legal work in-house and would continue in that direction.

Hawco's statement didn't cite any specific instances of Cooper interfering with DEQ cases, and if he has, the environmental agency hasn't raised any public complaint.

The department used nine specialist lawyers and support staff in Cooper's office to handle environmental cases. Those lawyers are being encouraged to apply for positions within DEQ, Hawco said.

A former assistant environmental secretary told a WRAL reporter that the lawyers in Cooper's office did the legal work because the environmental regulators didn't have the funding for enough in-house legal representation.

Molly Diggins, the Sierra Club's state director, said Friday that the lawyers on Cooper's staff did enforcement work, including imposing penalties on polluters. This could leave state environmental regulators without legal staff to enforce, for example, coal-ash disposal regulations. "It takes a leap of faith," she said, "to think that the Department of Environmental Quality, given their track record, will step into this void."

North Carolina residents need the DEQ to show us where those replacement lawyers are. The last thing we need is for environmental protection and enforcement to get caught in a political crossfire. And that's exactly what this looks like.

**Corporations Criticize N.C. LGBT Law — But Aren’t Dropping Donations To GOP Governors Group**

by Tarini Parti

BuzzFeed

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/tariniparti/corporations-criticize-nc-lgbt-law-but-arent-dropping-donati#.ipww6JjmYk>

WASHINGTON — When North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory signed a controversial LGBT law, dozens of major corporations quickly came out and condemned it, telling him in a letter they were “disappointed” in his decision to “sign this discriminatory legislation into law.”

But many of those companies and influential trade associations that represent them will likely continue to financially support the group backing McCrory’s re-election bid, the Republican Governors Association.

RGA, which is set up as a 527 political organization and therefore eligible for corporate donations, has raised millions over the years from companies such as Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Dow Chemical, Pfizer, Citigroup, and Pepsi Co. — all of whom signed a letter to McCrory last month criticizing the law, which limits protections for the LGBT community and requires people to use bathrooms based on the sex listed on their birth certificate. McCrory attempted to clarify the law on Tuesday, allowing private companies to set their own policies on restrooms, but his executive order kept the contentious elements intact.

Although the group supports Republican governors across the country, RGA will spend a significant amount of its resources in 2016 focusing on the Tar Heel state. McCrory’s re-election battle against Democrat Roy Cooper is expected be one of the closest gubernatorial contests in the country this cycle. Another state where the RGA will spend some resources is Indiana, where some of the same companies criticized Indiana Gov. Mike Pence’s decision to sign a religious freedom law last year.

BuzzFeed News reached out to nearly two dozen companies and trade groups that have given to RGA in the past to become corporate members of the group and have come out against the North Carolina law. None of them said they would be making any changes in their giving over the law. (Felicia McLemore, a spokeswoman for Marriott International, was the only one to say the company “did not anticipate making such contributions this year,” but said that wasn’t necessarily a result of the law).

A few, including California-based tech company Cisco, said their giving would continue. “Cisco has had equal membership in both the Republican and Democratic Governors Associations for many years,” said spokeswoman Andrea Duffy said in an email.

“Our involvement has never been about any specific party or candidate,” Duffy wrote. “We use our memberships to educate members on issues of importance to the tech industry and our funds are directed towards non-political purposes. We anticipate continued focus on these areas, and don’t expect our support to go up or down based on partisan topics.”

(Duffy didn’t respond to a follow-up on how it ensures its contributions to RGA are only used for “non-political purposes.”)

Others either declined to comment on their plans to give to RGA, beyond their public criticism of the law, or did not respond to repeated calls and emails.

RGA also declined to comment.

Most major companies looking to influence policy or maintain their relationship with lawmakers on the state level typically give to both Democratic and Republican gubernatorial groups. Although they didn’t waste any time in criticizing McCrory’s decision, not giving to to the RGA — especially at a time when Republicans control the majority of statehouses and governorships — is a much more difficult decision.

Companies could risk missing out on facetime with governors and further straining the party’s coalition of pro-business and social conservatives, GOP fundraisers say. Even though shareholders for public corporations are becoming increasingly curious about political giving, it could set a precedent where companies have re-evaluate their contributions anytime there’s a controversial bill.

“These big corporations have been acting in bad faith,” said Brad Todd, a GOP consultant who worked for now-Sen. Thom Tillis’ campaign in North Carolina in 2014, about the business community siding with the left on religious and LGBT issues. “Large businesses would be wise to be very careful.”

McCrory signed the bill late last month in response to an ordinance from Charlotte allowing transgender people to use bathrooms based on the gender they identify with. The passage of the law has already resulted in PayPal canceling plans to invest in the state, which could reportedly cost North Carolina 400 jobs. Musicians like Bruce Springsteen have also canceled appearances in the state, citing the law.

Despite the criticism and attacks from Democrats, Republicans who have experience handling statewide races in North Carolina insist McCrory made the right political calculation — one that might seem odd outside of the Tar Heel state but makes sense in a purple state that still has a sizable number of conservative Democrats.

Republicans point to a survey by right-leaning think tank Civitas Institute, which found in a poll that 69% of those surveyed believed the Charlotte ordinance to be “unreasonable and unsafe.”

Most acknowledge that it wasn’t ideal for this issue to come up in an election year, but believe the Republican base would have viewed vetoing the bill as McCrory caving. Some are even pushing back on attacks that McCrory is hurting the state’s economy by blaming the companies, alleging they are being hypocritical in condemning the North Carolina law while continuing to operate and invest in countries with bad human rights records.

“They do business in Cuba, which has a horrible human rights record,” said Dallas Woodhouse, executive director of the NC GOP, when asked about PayPal. “People don’t want PayPal telling them what to do when it comes to their kids bathrooms and locker rooms.”

Ferrell Blount, a businessman and former NC GOP chairman, made a similar argument: “Bank of America operates in Saudi Arabia. I mean we know what goes on in Saudi Arabia with gay people.”

**McCrory spins on HB2 when he should back its repeal**

BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/editorials/article71455462.html>

To borrow a phrase from Bruce Springsteen, Gov. Pat McCrory must have sensed some “darkness on the edge of town” in his re-election campaign.

That is the only reason the governor is running for political cover in pretending to correct HB2, the disastrous bill passed by Republican leaders in the legislature. The bill – signed immediately by the governor – has cost the state hundreds of jobs and made North Carolina a national laughingstock.

In a news release and with his standard smiling video, McCrory implies that with an executive order, he’s fixing HB2, which, in reaction to a Charlotte city ordinance, banned transgender people from using bathrooms based on the gender with which they identify. But HB2 also took away the rights of local governments to install anti-discrimination laws protecting people from discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. And it also, just because Republicans wanted to do so, prohibited local governments from establishing a minimum wage higher than the state standard of $7.25 an hour.

Office of the Governor

In his video, the governor repeats his complaint that HB2’s critics are trying to hurt North Carolina, but it’s McCrory and his fellow Republicans who are dismantling the state’s hard-won reputation as an enlightened place. Phil Berger, president pro tem of the state Senate, praised the governor’s “action” and then ducked into the last refuge of politicians who make huge mistakes that backfire: He blamed the media.

In fact, the governor’s claims are muddled. His executive order really has little authority behind it. HB2 is on the books. Its provisions are in place. In the news release about his order, the governor is said to want to “encourage” lawmakers to reinstate the rights of workers to sue employers for discrimination in state courts. HB2 limited such action to federal courts. But legislators, who have shown little interest in following any of the governor’s suggestions for nearly four years, aren’t bound to do anything by the governor’s “order.” Berger’s response, notably, made no mention of eliminating the ban on discrimination cases in state courts.

The governor’s order expands to state employees protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Those protections already exist in the Office of the State Treasurer and the Attorney General’s Office.

Otherwise, the governor, according to his news release, seems to affirm HB2 while claiming to modify it. He should stop spinning the law and call for its total repeal.

Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/editorials/article71455462.html#storylink=cpy

**Robin Kirk: Give me a bathroom break**

BY ROBIN KIRK

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/dn-opinion/article70904212.html>

Shakespeare famously wrote, “All the world’s a stage.”

A question North Carolinians are asking is why our state legislature is so focused on the stage that is public bathrooms.

Full disclosure: I’m stealing this opening from a friend, the writer Jenn Bishop. While we were pursuing writing degrees together at the Vermont College of Fine Arts, she wrote a thesis on why bathrooms are prominent in young adult fiction. The paper is fabulous. Jenn made a convincing case that in bathrooms characters can be at their most private or exposed, yet while often still inhabiting a public sphere.

Think about it. In public bathrooms, we fuss with our appearance in front of shared mirrors. We take respite from fraught conversations. We’re sick or elated or freaked out. We talk to – or avoid eye contact with – perfect strangers. In bathrooms, we can consult friends or, in heated moments, curse friends out. There’s sex in bathrooms, sickness, life-changing decisions. In bathrooms, we can be our ugliest or best selves.

It’s not for nothing that North Carolina is having a bathroom freak out with the passage of HB2 (properly known as the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act). Passed by our legislature and signed by Gov. Pat McCrory in a single day, the law requires that anyone needing a public restroom use the one corresponding to the gender marked on their birth certificate.

It’s crucial to note that legislators went well beyond the bathroom by explicitly limiting how people can pursue claims of discrimination because of race, religion, color, national origin, biological sex or handicap in state courts. HB2 also nullifies local ordinances that expand protections for the LGBT community and prevents cities and counties for setting a minimum- wage standard for private employers, among other things.

It’s a law that belongs in the business end of a toilet, if you get my meaning.

But let’s linger for a moment in the stalls.

The law was a rebuke to Charlotte, which in February passed an ordinance that protected transgender people who use public restrooms based on their gender identity. That means these fellow citizens identify or look like a gender they weren’t born with. Supporters argue the bill protects women from predators who enter women’s restrooms to do harm. Certainly, the bill reflects deep fears about just the kinds of things my friend Jenn wrote about, when we are in public, yet about intensely private business.

I’ve done a bit of a tour de bathroom lately with HB2 in mind. I may have felt a little ooky now and again, but it was never because a fellow patron was threatening. On a recent Duke potty break, I didn’t spend any time at all contemplating the birth gender of my fellow users. I’m an in and out kind of gal: find a stall, get the job done, wash and leave. As a rule, I’m not locking eyes or examining the crotches of others.

I rarely even look at others while I’m checking my teeth for spinach. I did wonder once what that stickiness was, exactly, on the Motorco floor. I realized: better not to know.

WAS THERE SOME RASH OF TRANSGENDER ATTACKS I MISSED?

Despite my best efforts, I’m still unclear on what has our elected representatives in such a lather. Was there some rash of transgender attacks I missed? Have I been negligent about following the bathroom-related incidents Twitter feed, if such a thing exists (I checked – it doesn’t). Where are the hordes of be-skirted men clamoring for a potty break in the ladies?

The answer is nowhere. I would venture that in the entire history of our great state, there hasn’t been a single such attack in a state-owned restroom.

I can say for a fact I’ve spent exactly zero seconds in my life worrying about transgender assault. If anything, I’d appreciate a little transgender assistance. The transgender women I know are much better with fashion and makeup than I am. I’d appreciate any advice they can spare.

But the men we elected to run our state apparently spend a lot of taxpayer-funded time musing about other people’s genitalia. It’s the fashion, apparently, at least in the Grand Old Party, where a central plank seems to be “mess about in people’s personal business.”

Here’s a question, though. When did 11 Democrats become so potty-preoccupied?

The Independent called the men (Lord love them, they are all men) who voted for the bill. The reactions went from utter silence to a level of confusion that truly merits the adjective “incredible.” Basically, the specter of things they don’t understand and never really thought about made them run from the stalls in a legislative panic.

It’s crystal clear, in high heels and with just the right accessories, that not a single one bothered to speak to a constituent whom this bill directly harms. Now that the financial fallout is becoming painful, are the people we pay to pass laws having second thoughts?

Not a chance. When PayPal recently announced its decision to cancel plans to open a global operations center in Charlotte, Senator Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore deflected blame to Charlotte’s mayor, Jennifer Roberts. Charlotte, they spewed, started this by passing a law protecting people.

As the Charlotte Observer wrote dryly, “Someone needs to take the wheel back from the teenagers.”

In honor of my friend Jenn, I beg to correct the Queen City’s paper. At least teenagers know what bathrooms are for.

Robin Kirk, a writer and human rights advocate, teaches at Duke University. You can reach her at robinkirk13@gmail.com

Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/dn-opinion/article70904212.html#storylink=cpy

**Flying a flag of unfulfilled promises**

By Andy Winemiller

Mt. Airy News

<http://mtairynews.com/opinion/39688/flying-a-flag-of-unfulfilled-promises>

As anybody who follows the news well knows, the North Carolina General Assembly recently passed legislation to overturn a Charlotte ordinance.

State lawmakers and the governor are now taking a beating in the media. A large company also halted plans to open a location in North Carolina as a result of our General Assembly’s actions. With that decision, nearly 500 jobs were lost. North Carolina has also made its way to the center of a debate regarding the rights of LGBT citizens.

Our state Republican Party has really stepped up to the plate to exemplify everything which is wrong with one side of that debate.

I’ve called myself a Republican my entire adult life. However, I don’t think I’m a North Carolina Republican.

In short, I’m not a clown, and I’m also not a bigot.

Of course, I’m not calling anybody either of those names. I’m just stating what I am not.

There have been calls among Republicans to get behind Gov. Pat McCrory. For this reason and many others, I just can’t do that.

I’ve been watching McCrory for more than a year now, and I can’t help but view him as a bit of a bumbler.

It took our good governor and state lawmakers nearly three months beyond their allotted time to pass an operating budget for the state. At $42,000 a day they remained in Raleigh to complete their most important job — well behind schedule.

When McCrory refused to call a special session regarding the famed Charlotte bathroom ordinance, lawmakers showed him who was actually boss in Raleigh and called it anyways.

When I see McCrory I can’t help but compare him to a step-father who lacks any authority in the life of his teenage step-daughter.

When McCrory says “no,” his 16-year-old stepdaughter (the legislature) slams the door in his face while yelling. “You’re not my dad.” Then they take the keys to his car and head to the party they were planning to attend.

When it gets really tough — like when folks ask why education lottery monies aren’t being properly allocated — McCrory and other Republicans also know what to do. Blame it on mom. It was all Gov. Bev Purdue’s fault.

I’m not sure who the true leader of the N.C. GOP is, but strong leadership isn’t exactly an attribute which emanates from the governor.

When legislators went to Raleigh this last time to “correct” a Charlotte transgender bathroom ordinance, they did that and more.

I guess they figured they ought to give taxpayers their $42,000-worth.

They set something up which should have been done a long time ago. They wrote anti-discrimination legislation into the new state statute.

“It is the public policy of this State to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to seek, obtain and hold employment without discrimination or abridgement on account of race, religion, color, national origin, age, biological sex or handicap by employers which regularly employ 15 or more employees,” reads the legislation

No matter how one feels about bathrooms, the legislature and governor left one group notably out of the legislation.

It seems all those matters such as religion and race are covered. Sexual preference isn’t, however.

That means it’s OK in North Carolina to look at a potential employee and say, “I’m not hiring you because you are gay.”

Maybe that’s the North Carolina way, but it’s simply not in keeping with the ideals of America.

This nation is one which provides opportunities to all, regardless of race, religion or whom a person loves. Anything short of that spits in the ideals of a free nation and a land of opportunity.

North Carolina officials could have done something good in their special session.

They could have created a law which extended employment protections to all people in North Carolina.

Such a law wouldn’t have been “pro-gay.” It would have been pro-rights. It would have been pro-American.

Instead, the legislature produced a law which makes it OK for an employer to direct bigotry and hate at one group of people.

Some will read this and say, “take your liberal views and head north.”

To that I say, “take your un-American bigotry and head out of my country.”

When I see our flag — a flag for which I fought — waiving on the skyline, I see hope, freedom and a land of opportunity.

That concept doesn’t stand true here in North Carolina if you’re a member of an out-of-favor group of people.

Yesterday McCrory signed an order correcting many of the problems in the legislature’s version of bathroom policy. However, he and the legislature have already sent a message as to how they feel about the rights of North Carolina residents.

That message was heard loud and clear, and if not for the lashing officials received for their disgusting display of so-called leadership the discriminatory policy would remain in place.

That message was in this state, Old Glory is a flag which fails to fulfill her promises.

**Hooray for McCrory and legislature**

The Dispatch

<http://www.the-dispatch.com/article/20160413/OPINION/160419950/1004/news05?Title=Hooray-for-McCrory-and-legislature>

Editor: Thank goodness for our governor and legislature for passing HB2 over ruling the ordinance passed by Charlotte's city counsel that allowed a "transgender" person to go into any restroom they choose according to the gender they choose. I can't imagine a dad or mom passing something like this that would allow some man to go into a restroom their daughter is in because he chooses that day to be a woman. How stupid is this?

If you didn't know, the push in Charlotte to pass this mess was sponsored by a man who is a convicted child molester and has served time in prison for it. He was president of an organization of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people. Back when this country had morals this was spelled QUEER. Now they are the only ones that can say that word, if anyone else says it they are politically incorrect. I guess I am politically incorrect.

Demonstrations have started to try to force the Governor and legislature to repeal HB2. Several corporations, the NBA and our federal government has said they would boycott N.C. or withhold federal money if they did not repeal HB2. I say fine, let them boycott, we don't need them anyway and if they are going to be that way, we don't WANT them. As for the federal government... this is our money, not theirs. I don't think we should be surprised feds would blackmail us like this, after all, some of them most likely fit into one of these categories.

It's time we the people stood up to this blackmail. I'm sure if you think about who's behind these protests you would say the same thing, "we need to stand up for our country before it's too late". And .... thank Gov. McCrory and any legislator you know that voted to pass HB2.

Tim Temple

Reeds

P.S. We need to consider impeaching our attorney general who refuses to perform his constitutional duties and enforce this law ... his name is Roy Cooper a Democrat running for governor. I urge you not to vote for him.

**Opinion: McCrory's Near-Meaningless HB2 Order**

BY GREG LACOUR

Charlotte Magazine

<http://www.charlottemagazine.com/Charlotte-Magazine/April-2016/Opinion-McCrorys-Near-Meaningless-HB2-Order/>

Well, it’s … something. Very, very little, when you examine it closely, but something.

What’s most notable about Governor Pat McCrory’s Executive Order No. 93 To Protect Privacy and Equality, which he signed Tuesday afternoon, is what it doesn’t do: change anything of substance in House Bill 2, which continues to cost North Carolina jobs, events, prestige, and Springsteen.

The key line in the order, in fact, is the last one: “Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as an abrogation of any requirements otherwise imposed by applicable federal or state laws or regulations.” Put more simply, HB2 remains the law. Any change is subject to the General Assembly's, not the governor's, approval. Businesses and nonprofits can refuse to serve or employ LGBT people because they’re LGBT.

Breaking it down more specifically:

The only benefit to McCrory’s order is its clarification that local governments have the authority to adopt nondiscrimination policies for their own employees—which local officials, such as those in Charlotte, had assumed was the case but couldn’t rely on because the law wasn’t clear. It’s a good thing for McCrory to clear up. But it changes nothing.

Another provision that seems a lot more encouraging than it is: “I support and encourage the General Assembly to take all necessary steps to restore a State cause of action for wrongful discharge based on unlawful employment discrimination.” This refers to a section of the law, unrelated to any LGBT issue, that nullifies the right of employees fired because of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability to seek relief in North Carolina courts.

The problem here is that the decision lies with the General Assembly, not McCrory (it’s odd for a governor to work a suggestion into an executive order, but that’s our Pat). Republicans have veto-proof majorities in both legislative houses and don’t have to do a thing, as everyone involved surely knows. If the General Assembly ends up removing the state courts provision, that would be a good thing. But it’s by no means guaranteed just because the governor “encourage[s]” it.

But here’s the real shell game. At first blush, the governor seems to have enacted a significant change in state policy, adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes for state employees. But keep reading. In the next section:

Under current law, every multiple occupancy restroom, locker room or shower facility located in a cabinet agency must be designated for and only used by persons based on their biological sex. Agencies may make reasonable accommodations upon a person’s request due to special circumstances.

Therefore, when readily available and when practicable in the best judgment of the agency, all cabinet agencies shall provide a reasonable accommodation of a single occupancy restroom, locker room or shower facility upon request due to special circumstances.

Catch that? It is the policy of the state of North Carolina not to discriminate against state employees who may be transgender—but they have to use the bathrooms that correspond to their birth genders, and it’s up to each agency to provide “reasonable accommodations upon a person’s request.”

So the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity amounts to, no pun intended, a pat on the head. “I’m not sure it makes any difference,” Luke Largess, a Charlotte employment attorney, told me this afternoon. “It’s a commitment by the governor, but it doesn’t give anyone any rights to assert anything.”

So why’s it even in there? Attorney General Roy Cooper, McCrory’s Democratic opponent in this year’s gubernatorial race, has refused to defend North Carolina against the ACLU’s HB2-related lawsuit in part because the law runs counter to his own office’s nondiscrimination policy. Including sexual orientation and gender identity as mere gestures amounts to an effort to undermine Cooper’s argument while leaving HB2 intact.

McCrory’s order isn’t an olive branch to anyone. It’s cover for a thornbush.

**Opinion: UNC Greeks can help further fight against HB2**

Daily Tar Heel

<http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/opinion-unc-greeks-can-help-further-fight-against-hb2>

In light of the passing of House Bill 2, several organizations have been taking action. A great deal of this organizing has centered queer and transgender folks of color, prompting some to believe that their ability to organize or participate is unwelcome. As untrue and privileged this line of thinking is, white, “conscious” liberals have mistaken calls to decenter white supremacy as a command not to contribute. Simply put, this bill has an enormous impact on every North Carolinian. While all organizations concerned ought to denounce the bill, UNC’s Greek organizations are in a unique position to actively fight House Bill 2. Many of these organizations already boast service mindsets, large member populations and maybe most importantly, a large alumni base. Their support and contributions are needed now more than ever. Gov. Pat McCrory’s executive order is a mere distraction from the larger issues of discrimination that the bill still allows. All his actions prove is that pressure from the state’s people does not go unnoticed by state officials.  It is imperative that any analysis or movement building we seek to do includes black queer and transgender people. It is how we undo and avoid the anti-blackness that our rights-based movements so typically employ. We are calling on Greek organizations that have not already done so to join the fight against House Bill 2. If done equitably, they can become a great addition to the coalitions forming against bigotry in this state.

Read more: http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2016/04/opinion-unc-greeks-can-help-further-fight-against-hb2

Quoted from The Daily Tar Heel

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**NBA urged to move All-Star Game over N.C. anti-LGBT law**

Washington Blade

<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/04/12/nba-urged-to-move-all-star-games-from-n-c-over-anti-lgbt-law/>

A bipartisan group of lawmakers led by Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) urged the National Basketball Association on Tuesday to relocate the upcoming “All-Star Game” from North Carolina over the state’s recently enacted anti-LGBT law.

In a letter dated April 12, the U.S. senators call on NBA Commissioner Adam Silver to move the 2017 NBA All-Star game away from Charlotte because “discrimination has no place in modern America.” The game is currently set to take place Feb. 19, 2017, at Time Warner Cable Arena in Charlotte, which is home to the Charlotte Hornets.

“We hold no ill-will towards the people of Charlotte, who passed an anti-discrimination measure that HB2 overturned, or towards the people of North Carolina,” the letter says. “However, we cannot condone nor stand idly by as North Carolina moves to legalize and institutionalize discrimination against the LGBT community. Nor should the NBA allow its premier annual event to be hosted in such a state. Doing so, we believe, would be inconsistent with the NBA’s history and values.”

Echoing words from NBA Hall of Famer Charles Barkley, who said the NBA should relocate the All-Star Game after passage of House Bill 2, the senators say they “call on the NBA to move the All-Star game from Charlotte.”

In addition to Merkley, the signatories of the letter are Sens. Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Sens. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), and Patty Murray (D-Wash.), who are co-sponsors of the Equality Act.

The NBA, which has already said it’s considering whether it can still host the game in Charlotte now that the anti-LGBT law has been passed, didn’t immediately respond to the Washington Blade’s request to comment late Tuesday on whether the association would accede to the request from senators.

Also calling for moving the game from Charlotte is Detroit Pistons president and coach Stan Van Gundy, who on Monday likened HB 2 to laws enforcing segregation against blacks in the South, according to Mlive.com.

Signed by Gov. Pat McCrory after a special session of the legislature last month, House Bill 2 bars cities in North Carolina from enacting pro-LGBT non-discrimination ordinances and prohibits transgender people from using public restrooms in schools and government buildings consistent with their gender identity.

News the NBA would move the All-Star Game over HB 2 was, incorrectly, reported over the weekend after a fake report fooled media outlets into believing Silver had given North Carolina 30 days to repeal the law, or else he would relocate the game. A hoax website with the address, “abcnews.com.co,” which has a logo similar to the real ABC News, published the bogus story.

- See more at: http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/04/12/nba-urged-to-move-all-star-games-from-n-c-over-anti-lgbt-law/#sthash.tVfZCzc7.dpuf

**Citizen Green: First Flint and New Orleans, then North Carolina**

by Jordan Green

Triad City Beat

<http://triad-city-beat.com/citizen-green-first-flint-and-new-orleans-then-north-carolina/>

Take it as a given that the state General Assembly will pass legislation to increase teacher pay when it reconvenes for the short session on April 25, albeit somewhere below the 5-percent raise Gov. Pat McCrory wants.

Improving teacher salaries is the kind of popular public policy the governor can take to the voters, in addition to the infrastructure bond referendum that passed last month, in his reelection bid. He’s the only one who will have to face voters across the state in November, but the ultra-conservatives in the legislature who are protected by gerrymandering owe McCrory big time after he signed HB 2.

But also expect the emboldened Republican super-majority to aggressively push through a legislative agenda that radically promotes for-profit education while punishing students in poor, low-achieving schools.

The NC School Board Association is closely monitoring a proposal by state Rep. Rob Bryan (R-Mecklenburg) to create a so-called Achievement School District. The proposal, released in the form of draft legislation in January, would yank five low-performing schools across North Carolina from the control of local school boards and place them under the administration of a statewide Achievement School District to be operated by a private company contracted by the state.

The model of states superseding local control of education by turning academically struggling schools over to charters was pioneered in 2003 in Louisiana, where it rapidly expanded in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Tennessee followed suit in 2010, and Michigan got in the game in 2013. Parallel to taking control of local schools, the state of Michigan also placed the city of Flint in receivership, with disastrous consequences when citizens were exposed to lead poisoning from the water in Flint River. It should be obvious that opaque administration and lack of local accountability invites abuse and undermines democracy.

A study by the New York-based Center for Popular Democracy found that takeover districts in Louisiana, Tennessee and Michigan failed to improve test scores, while metrics were “altered from year to year, confounding accountability and transparency.”

The authors wrote, “Additionally, lawsuits and student protests demonstrate that when local oversight is stripped away, children may face harmful practices such as discriminatory enrollment, punitive disciplinary measures, and inadequate access to special education resources. Students suffer in the wake of high teacher turnover and personnel instability brought on by the rushed firing of staff. Finally, we find that a consistent lack of oversight can create an environment rife with fraud and mismanagement, where private interests gain financially while taxpayers, students and teachers are left behind. We conclude that takeover districts actually hinder children’s chances of academic success rather than improving them.”

As further warning that the Republican lawmakers intend to take away control and funding from public education, take it from Bryan Holloway, a former Republican lawmaker who now works as a lobbyist for the NC School Board Association.

A remarkable story published by the Elkin Tribune on March 30 quotes Holloway as telling the Elkin City School Board: “There could be numerous education bills go through in this short session you may not like at all.”

Last year, the state Senate approved legislation to shift funding from public schools to charters, including federal child nutrition funds, even though many charter schools don’t provide free lunch, prompting sharp criticism from many Democratic lawmakers. The House could move on the legislation and present it for Gov. McCrory’s signature in the short session.

If that’s not strange enough, the article also quotes Holloway as saying, “A bill to eliminate school boards throughout the state we’ve been told is going to be introduced. I don’t think it has legs to go anywhere, but because they are brazen enough to even be willing to file it means you’ll probably have to deal with it in the future.”

The General Assembly started down this path in 2014 when they passed a law to give every public school in the state a letter grade from A to F. Predictably, the schools that consistently earn Ds and Fs are the ones that serve communities with concentrated poverty.

Fortunately, teachers and principals see very clearly what our lawmakers in Raleigh are trying to do.

“They are putting a big red X on the schools that already have a big red X on them,” Michelle Wolverton, the principal at Hunter Elementary in Greensboro, told a few intrepid souls who braved the blustery cold for a Rally for Public Education at Greensboro’s Governmental Plaza on April 9. “They have a big red X on them because of poverty. They have a big red X on them because a high percentage of the students are immigrants. They have a big red X on them because of poverty and because the economics are not equal.”

**Michael Moore Boycotts North Carolina: You Anti-Gay Bigots Don’t Get to See My Latest Flop**

by DANIEL NUSSBAUM

Breitbart

<http://www.breitbart.com/big-hollywood/2016/04/12/michael-moore-boycotts-north-carolina-you-anti-gay-bigots-dont-get-to-see-my-latest-flop/>

Michael Moore joined rocker Bruce Springsteen and other celebrities in boycotting North Carolina after the state passed a religious freedom law that some have slammed as discriminatory against transgendered persons.

In a message posted to his Twitter account Tuesday, the 61-year-old liberal documentary filmmaker said that he has asked the distributor of his latest film, Where to Invade Next, to withhold the film from theaters in North Carolina due to the state’s “bigoted law against LGBTQ” people.

North Carolina’s HB 2, also known as the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, prohibits cities within the state from passing their own non-discrimination ordinances. The law also mandates that transgender people must use public bathrooms that correspond with their biological sex.

Gov. Pat McCrory signed the bill into law shortly after it passed the state legislature, but figures in the entertainment industry along with several businesses have vowed to boycott the state as a result of the legislation.

Bruce Springsteen canceled a planned concert in Greensboro in protest against the law, writing on his website that the “fight against prejudice and bigotry” is “more important than a rock show.” Filmmaker Rob Reiner also announced that he would no longer shoot projects in the state.

Rocker Bryan Adams followed suit this week, canceling a planned concert in Mississippi over that state’s passage of its own religious liberty law.

Of course, some Twitter users didn’t mind that Moore’s film would no longer be shown in North Carolina.

Where to Invade Next opened to mixed reviews in February and drew the worst opening-weekend box office of Moore’s nearly three decade-long career.

Follow Daniel Nussbaum on Twitter: @dznussbaum

**McCrory signs executive order addressing H.B. 2**

Jones & Blount

<http://jonesandblount.com/2016/04/12/mccrory-signs-executive-order-addressing-h-b-2/>

RALEIGH –  Gov. Pat McCrory Tuesday announced an executive order that addresses North Carolina’s controversial Pubic Facilities Privacy and Security Act, more commonly known as House Bill 2.

The order maintains sex-specific mandates for restrooms and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools, reiterating that private businesses are allowed to adopt their own policies regarding such facilities.

“This is not a government decision. This is your decision in the private sector.” said McCrory.

Substantively, McCrory said the order expands “our state equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that sexual orientation and gender identity are included.”

Previously, sexual orientation and gender identity were not protected classes for employees of state government. It effectively means that state employees cannot be demoted or fired for being gay or because of their gender identity.

Finally, McCrory said he “will immediately seek legislation in the upcoming short session to reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in North Carolina state courts.”

The last point does not yet change the law, it merely makes a commitment to working with the General Assembly to modify the law when they reconvene April 25.

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action,” said the ACLU in a response to the executive order on Tuesday afternoon. “We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.”

The executive order comes after a wave of businesses publicly announced their opposition to the law, in some cases canceling planned expansions in the state.

McCrory ended the message saying, “Simply put, I have listened to the people of North Carolina, and the people of North Carolina are entitled to both privacy and equality. We can and we must achieve both of these goals.”

The announcement is raising speculation that Attorney General Roy Cooper, who had refused to defend the state in a lawsuit over H.B.2, may be forced to reconsider his position.  Previously he said the law was a “direct conflict” with his own office’s anti-discrimination policy that includes, along with other protections, marital status and sexual orientation – at the time saying that they were two classes not protected by the state.

“There is no excuse for Roy Cooper not defending the law now,” said Dallas Woodhouse executive director of the NCGOP. “He is either going to stand on the side of safety for little girls in bathrooms or he’s not. There is no other choice.”

**The Buzz, April 13**

StarNews

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20160412/ARTICLES/160419909?p=all&tc=pgall>

“Letter to editor” on April 5th concerning protection for Mr. Vassey is spot on.

Hey PayPal, Take your jobs and shove it.

Bill Rabon (R-Brunswick) hasn't heard from constituents re:HB2? He heard from me the day after it passed and now blocks my emails! Great rep, eh?

45 mph speed limit is now official on the new River Road. Guess the last 4 months' postings were just suggestions.

Not a felony for having private server. Practice what you preach:do some research before you buzz

Remember Rick Catlin's heart-tugging puppy mill campaign mailer and promise? Never accomplished...too busy legislating bathrooms. Despicable fraud.

I think diversity is great, just not in the bathrooms, locker rooms etc.

Thank you Earl Sheridan and Kevin O'Grady for speaking up for ALL citizens of our county!

To my liberal friends. You don't need your birth certificate to use the bathroom. Perhaps you should learn how to read and fact check before you whine.

Call the police to help your neighbor, pro-lifer, but don't tell me what I can do with my body. The problem is you don't see the difference.

PayPal does business in 25 countries where Homosexual behavior is illegal, including 3 where penalty is death. Bunch of phony hypocrites!

You the "man"! Brutally beat up your girlfriend, causing traumatic brain injury, get minimal prison time, get away with murder.

Forget the ID, if you can't pass a simple basic civics test you should not be allowed to vote.

If you can only give a child abuse and neglect have an abortion and spare us a rapist, serial killer.

It is not the LBGT population I am worried about under Charlotte's law, but the pervert that would use it to spy on or molest a child.

Hilary said to her knowledge she has never lied. Sounds like her biggest lie yet or lack of knowledge.

4/6 Buzz was spiritually eloquent in defense of the maligned and those deemed “different.” The LGBT bill is a NC disgrace!

A good comprise: A single stall used by all.

Hey, Gov McCrory, If you need to pee in Wilmington, find a tree. You are not welcome in our restrooms. How does that feel?

According to Hillary, an unborn babies dying because the mother was murdered has no rights. Unborn babies can't be murdered.

Southern gentlemen never wear a hat at the dinner table - only classless uncouth clods. Yes, this would include you Yankees.

If you are religious, that belongs only to you. Please don't try to legislate your belief(s) onto me .. or my family!

According to Hillary, an unborn baby dying because the mother was murdered has no rights. Unborn babies can't be murdered.

A man walks into the ladies' restroom and is dressed like a woman.Would I know? Much ado about nothing!

I'm totally shocked that Mayor Saffo allowed the governor to crown our LOCAL festival queen. Then again, maybe not…

Hey WHQR, "Support for WHQR comes from R members". R members? What about the "W", " H" and "Q" members?

​How convenient to sanctimoniously label your hate and intolerance as "religious freedom". God recognizes deceit. Good luck on Judgment Day.

We are in Japan now and are amazed at the lack of trash on sidewalks and along highways. Yet, there are very few trash receptacles. In Japan it is a custom to take personal trash home for disposal.

Since the beginning there has been no bathroom controversy. Typical liberal lawmakers create division out of unity. Thanks!

**After McCrory’s order, little real change**

THE OBSERVER EDITORIAL BOARD

Charlotte Observer

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/opinion/editorials/article71441792.html>

Hammered for weeks over his signing of House Bill 2, Gov. Pat McCrory on Tuesday attempted to undo the damage. He failed.

McCrory’s Executive Order 93 and his trumpeting of it had all the bluster of the Wizard of Oz’s fiery head and imposing voice. But North Carolinians should pay attention to the man behind the curtain. McCrory is frantically pulling levers and pushing buttons, but this is still a state government without a brain, or a heart or courage.

McCrory said that, with his order, he was “taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.” A close reading, though, reveals mostly empty language that leaves every element of House Bill 2 in place.

Gov. Pat McCrory: 'I have listened to the people of North Carolina'

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory posted a video statement on an Executive Order that will maintain the use of female and male-specific bathrooms, but also allow for "special" restrooms when possible. The order will also ask the NC state legislature to allow state discrimination suits. “I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality,” said McCrory.

Courtesy of the Office of North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory

Businesses can still discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Cities are still banned from passing non-discrimination ordinances governing their communities. Employees who are fired because of their race or age or other protected classes still can’t file a state claim. And transgender people still must use the bathroom of the opposite gender from how they look and what they consider themselves to be.

There are only two provisions that even tiptoe toward important policy change. McCrory encourages the legislature to reinstate employees’ ability to file a state claim for employment discrimination. But that’s up to legislators, and in a statement reacting to the order, Senate leader Phil Berger gave no indication of whether he supports such a change.

McCrory does, importantly, add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes for state employees. His office says that applies to all state employees except teachers and the General Assembly. Some scholars, though, believe it would apply only to employees over whom the governor has authority, meaning his cabinet agencies.

Much of the rest of McCrory’s order simply restates what House Bill 2 already says.

The bottom line: LGBT individuals in Charlotte still don’t have the protections against discrimination that HB 2 took away. In the rest of the state, they have no more protection against discrimination today than they did before McCrory’s order, unless they work in state government. And transgender people are still specifically singled out for discriminatory treatment.

Despite that, some folks who should know better cheered. The Charlotte Chamber’s Executive Committee, hopeful that business recruitment will get back on track, said “We applaud the governor’s actions today which demonstrate that North Carolina is an open and welcoming state.”

No, the governor’s actions don’t demonstrate that. They demonstrate the opposite – that North Carolina is not a welcoming state – and that McCrory is flailing in the heat of an election year. The legislature dumped a bad bill on McCrory’s desk. He signed it and is now looking for a way out. State employee protections are worth something, but bold leadership requires more.

The Wizard spoke Tuesday but it was all smoke. Too bad we can’t just click our heels and go back home to the North Carolina we used to know.

Read more here: http://www.charlotteobserver.com/opinion/editorials/article71441792.html#storylink=cpy

**Keith Larson: The sport of Who Can Pee Where**

BY KEITH LARSON

Charlotte Observer

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article71430637.html>

Then, in the soap opera that is Who Can Pee Where in Charlotte versus the infamous House Bill 2, came a report that North Carolinians will be banned from the pornography website, Xhamster.com.

That story was true. “NBA Cancels 2017 All-Star Game in NC over Anti-LGBT Law,” was fake.

Cleveland.com was among outlets falling for the scam, which was near-enough to real that it might have been. The NBA is thinking about moving next year’s game from Charlotte. Such action has been called for by no less an authority on social norms than Charles Barkley, the basketball Hall of Famer convicted of DUI after being stopped for running a stop sign, rushing, as he told police, to receive oral sex from his female passenger.

Elsewhere in the swirl, Bruce Springsteen called off a concert in Greensboro though Jimmy Buffett decided he would play for N.C. Parrot Heads. Network TV talk shows ripped HB2 along with the satirical “The Onion,” and the website “Funny or Die.” Protesters in Raleigh crucified Paul McCartney, singing “Let us pee, Let us pee.” I’d have gone with John Lennon, “All we are saying is Give Pee a Chance.”

And now Oprah is coming to town, to deliver the commencement address at Johnson C. Smith University. Think she might have something to say?

Caught for comment after several days away from cameras, Mayor Jennifer Roberts told WBTV’s Molly Grantham she wants to, “Have a conversation on how to resolve this. Recognize we have common interests and common ground.”

Really, Mayor? If it was conversation you wanted you could have had it before you and your fellow Democrats pushed through the bathroom vote, just as Governor Pat McCrory and Raleigh Republicans could have had a conversation before pushing through HB2. Neither side talked with the other because conversation isn’t what the sides wanted.

They wanted to pander to their political bases. Roberts and Democrats to liberal activists who were not wrong about wanting anti-discrimination protections extended to LGBT persons. McCrory and Republicans to social conservatives who were not wrong about the common sense of men using men’s rooms and women using women’s rooms.

I’ve read in these pages, and heard elsewhere, this assessment: “Charlotte’s law went a little too far. Raleigh’s response went a little too far. Most people are somewhere in the middle. Can’t they work this out?”

Silly Rabbits. Trix are for Kids, and Who Can Pee Where and HB2 are about politics, not the potty. Each side now has an issue to fire up its faithful in a critical election year.

There is real fallout over HB2, like PayPal calling off its Charlotte expansion. That PayPal came here before anti-discrimination measures were passed and is perfectly willing to do business in such LGBT-oppressive countries as Singapore and Malaysia is apparently to be overlooked.

There is also a perverse near-giddiness among Charlotte GuvCo types as each succeeding shoe drops, and a scramble among Charlotte media to break the news. The first I saw of the PayPal decision was a Tweet from Charlotte Observer Sports guy Scott Fowler: “The hits just keep on coming. PayPal withdraws CLT expansion plan due to #HB2.”

Fowler tweeting was appropriate. The serve and return over Who Can Pee Where and HB2 is sport, all right.

Pure political sport.

Keith Larson can be heard weekdays 9 a.m. - Noon on WBT AM/FM.

Read more here: http://www.charlotteobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article71430637.html#storylink=cpy

**Senators: NBA should move All-Star Game out of North Carolina**

By SEUNG MIN KIM and NOLAN D. MCCASKILL

Politico

<http://www.politico.com/story/2016/04/senators-nba-should-move-all-star-game-out-of-north-carolina-221854>

Six senators are calling on the NBA to move the league’s 2017 All-Star game out of North Carolina due to the state’s new law that bars anti-discrimination protections for gay and transgender people – adding to the national firestorm that’s descended on the state since the controversial law was enacted late last month.

In a letter to NBA commissioner Adam Silver, the senators – five Democrats and one Republican – argue that the league should take the forceful stance to rebuke HB2, the controversial law that the senators say gives local governments and businesses a “license to discriminate.”

Story Continued Below

“We hold no ill-will towards the people of Charlotte, who passed an antidiscrimination measure that HB2 overturned, or towards the people of North Carolina,” the senators wrote in the letter. “However, we cannot condone nor stand idly by as North Carolina moves to legalize and institutionalize discrimination against the LGBT community. Nor should the NBA allow its premier annual event to be hosted in such a state.”

Senate Democrats who signed onto the letter are Jeff Merkley of Oregon, Patrick Leahy of Vermont, Cory Booker of New Jersey, Patty Murray of Washington and Tammy Baldwin, the first openly gay lawmaker elected to the Senate. Moderate Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), one of four Senate Republicans who supports gay marriage, also endorsed the letter.

“Put plainly, HB2 provides businesses, government contractors, hotels, and other institutions with a license to discriminate, and no city council or county government can do a thing about it,” the senators wrote Tuesday. “This is just wrong.”

North Carolina has faced a national backlash since officials enacted HB2, which also requires transgender people to use public restrooms that correspond with the gender identified on their birth certificate. The rocker Bruce Springsteen last week called off a concert in Greensboro, and PayPal announced earlier this month that the company is canceling a planned expansion in North Carolina due to the law.

The state’s governor, Pat McCrory, backed off the initial law somewhat on Tuesday by issuing an executive order that he said expands the state’s equal employment opportunity policy to include sexual orientation and gender identity. But he emphasized that the controversial bathroom provisions were kept in place.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” McCrory, a Republican, said. “But based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

The NBA last summer named Charlotte the host city for the 2017 All-Star Weekend. In the announcement, Silver hailed Charlotte as a “thriving city” and “terrific All-Star destination.”

NBA Hall of Famer Michael Jordan, who is a majority owner of the Charlotte Hornets, called it an honor to return All-Star Weekend back to Charlotte.

“I remember the excitement of playing in the 1991 All-Star Game, the first one held in my home state, and I take pride in being able to host NBA All-Star 2017 as the owner of the Hornets,” said Jordan, who played college basketball at the University of North Carolina. “This is a great moment for our fans, our city, and our franchise.”

Read more: http://www.politico.com/story/2016/04/senators-nba-should-move-all-star-game-out-of-north-carolina-221854#ixzz45i2w227D

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**North Carolina governor says he wants bathroom law partially changed after backlash**

By Mark Berman

Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/04/12/deutsche-bank-halts-north-carolina-expansion-due-to-transgender-bathroom-law/>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory explains his executive action on Apr. 12, after public outcry over the state's "bathroom bill." (Youtube/Office of Governor Pat McCrory)

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) responded to a backlash against the state’s new law banning anti-discrimination protections for gay and transgender people by signing an executive order Tuesday aimed at calming the firestorm, even as he left the most controversial provisions intact.

McCrory said he was expanding protections for state employees, which would prevent these workers from being fired for being gay or transgender. He also said he would seek legislation restoring the right to sue for discrimination.

In his order, McCrory stopped short of altering the bill’s most high-profile provision mandating that transgender people use bathrooms that correspond only with the gender on their birth certificate.

McCrory defended the state law as being needed to respond to what he called the “government overreach” of a Charlotte city ordinance that expanded civil rights protections for people based on sexual orientation and gender identity. In a videotaped message announcing the order, he said the issue had sparked what he called “selective outrage and hypocrisy.”

Roy Cooper, the North Carolina attorney general, and multiple LGBT groups criticized McCrory’s order as being a half-measure that left discrimination intact.

“Governor McCrory’s executive order is a day late and a veto short,” Cooper, a Democrat and McCrory’s gubernatorial opponent this fall, said in a statement. “The sweeping discrimination law he signed has already cost North Carolina hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue. I’m glad Governor McCrory has finally acknowledged the great damage his legislation has done, but he needs to do much more.”

This law prompted intense backlash from LGBT groups and big businesses alike, with a host of major companies criticizing the legislation. The state law prohibits transgender people from using public bathrooms in schools and government facilities that don’t match the gender on their birth certificate, and it also barred local governments from extending civil rights protections to gay and transgender people.

Two major companies — PayPal last week and, earlier on Tuesday, Deutsche Bank — announced that they would call off proposed expansions in North Carolina due to the new law, which a tourism agency said could wind up costing the state millions in lost revenue.

The Charlotte Chamber of Commerce offered praise for McCrory’s order on Tuesday, saying it was in favor of anything that promoted the city and state “as places that promote diversity, inclusiveness and equality.”

“We applaud the governor’s actions today which demonstrate that North Carolina is an open and welcoming state,” the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce said in a statement. “We strongly encourage the leadership and members of the General Assembly to take quick action to the governor’s call to ensure citizens have the right to pursue claims of discrimination at the state level.”

State Rep. Tim Moore (R), speaker of the North Carolina House of Representatives, said that the legislation has “been unfairly reported and maligned by political activists” so far.

“Governor McCrory’s executive order affirms the importance of the actions the General Assembly took in passing the Bathroom Bill to protect North Carolina citizens from extremists’ efforts to undermine civility and normalcy in our everyday lives,” Moore said in a statement.

The American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina and other rights groups criticized McCrory’s action for leaving the bathroom provision and other elements of the law intact.

“Gov. McCrory’s actions today are a poor effort to save face after his sweeping attacks on the LGBT community, and they fall far short of correcting the damage done when he signed into law the harmful House Bill 2, which stigmatizes and mandates discrimination against gay and transgender people,” Sarah Preston, acting executive director of the ACLU of North Carolina, said in a statement.

The ACLU and other groups filed against the legislation that called it tantamount to legalized discrimination. On Tuesday, a spokesman for the ACLU said the order changes nothing and that the suit would proceed.

McCrory said in his video announcement that his executive order “maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker facilities in government buildings and in our schools,” but said that private businesses could continue to set their own rules for bathrooms and locker rooms. (In an earlier version of this post, we noted that McCrory’s executive order said businesses could decide their own bathroom policies, which was already the language of the bill and something McCrory was just affirming rather than changing. Incorrect earlier text here.)

McCrory also said he would seek legislation in a coming short legislative session that would reinstate the right to sue for discrimination in state courts.

Sarah Warbelow, legal director for the Human Rights Campaign, said McCrory’s order “really doesn’t do much of anything.”

“I think the governor has misunderstood what the opposition to this bill was all about,” Warbelow said in an interview Tuesday. “He doesn’t seem to understand that businesses…are deeply concerned about the discrimination against transgender people, that they’re deeply concerned that if they are asking their employees to move to this state, that it puts either the employee or the employee’s family in a really tenuous situation.”

McCrory’s announcement comes as the controversial law, which he signed last month, has already caused North Carolina to lose hundreds of jobs as two major companies scrapped planned moves in the state. PayPal announced last week it would abandon plans for a new facility in Charlotte due to the law, and Deutsche Bank said Tuesday it was calling off an expansion in the state for the same reason.

“We take our commitment to building inclusive work environments seriously,” John Cryan, co-chief executive of Deutsche Bank, said in a statement Tuesday.

Deutsche Bank had announced plans to add 250 new jobs through an expansion at a software application development center in Cary, N.C., about 11 miles away from the state capital in Raleigh. The center already employs 900 people, according to the bank.

When this expansion was announced, McCrory released a statement saying that North Carolina’s “IT talent, competitive costs, great quality of life and convenient proximity by air to New York City will continue to help foster the growth and success of pioneering businesses like” Deutsche Bank.

State officials said that the Deutsche Bank expansion would have employed enough people for the combined payroll of these new jobs to be worth more than $21 million before benefits. The company would have been eligible for reimbursements after creating jobs.

“We’re proud of our operations and employees in Cary and regret that as a result of this legislation we are unwilling to include North Carolina in our U.S. expansion plans for now,” Cryan said. “We very much hope that we can re-visit our plans to grow this location in the near future.”

Deutsche Bank’s announcement comes a week after PayPal, an online payments firm based in California, said the new legislation prompted it to cancel its own planned expansion into North Carolina. The proposed facility in Charlotte was expected to employ 400 people and bring millions of dollars to the local economy, according to McCrory’s office.

Last week, Bruce Springsteen also announced that he was canceling a show in Greensboro, N.C., to “show solidarity for those freedom fighters” contesting the new law.

The North Carolina law was hastily introduced by lawmakers and signed by McCrory, who has defended it against criticism by saying it “provided protection of our basic expectation of privacy in public restrooms and locker rooms.” Supporters of the legislation have defended it and similar bills in other states as necessary measures.

The law has come under consistent fire from LGBT rights groups and major companies including Apple, Google and American Airlines. It could also potentially cost the state major events like the next NBA All-Star game, currently scheduled to be held in Charlotte.

Officials in the state are already reporting tourism losses and event cancellations due to the law. As of this week, five groups canceled events planned in the Wake County region, which would have brought the local economy more than $732,000, according to the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Another 16 groups were about to sign contracts to hold events and are considering canceling or changing their minds, according to a spokesman for the visitors bureau. These groups could bring a combined 73,000 people and $24 million to the region.

The visitors bureau did not identify these 16 other groups in a report released by Denny Edwards, president and chief executive of the visitors bureau. But the report did say that one of the biggest hits would come if Raleigh lost its chance to host an unspecified sports tournament, one that the bureau said could bring in $4.5 million to the local economy.

**George Carter: Go home, carpetbaggers**

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article71415892.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory is from Ohio, Senate leader Phil Berger is from New York state and Rep. Skip Stam is a New Jersey native. Welcome to the new carpetbaggers. Once they’re finished wrecking this great state, how ’bout they head back home? We’ll clean up the mess. Bless their hearts.

GEORGE CARTER

RALEIGH

Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article71415892.html#storylink=cpy

**McCrory retreats, a little, on HB 2**

by Doug Clark

New & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/blogs/clark_off_the_record/mccrory-retreats-a-little-on-hb/article_6dc32b2c-00df-11e6-a682-73172cc3ad70.html>

Still blaming misinformation and "selective outrage and hypocrisy," Gov. Pat McCrory nevertheless retreated at least a little from House Bill 2 this afternoon.

The governor issued an executive order that said:

• "I hereby affirm that the State of North Carolina is committed to administering and implementing all State human resources policies, practices and programs fairly and equitably, without unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political affiliation, genetic information, or disability.

"I also affirm that private businesses, nonprofit employers and local governments may establish their own non-discrimination employment policies."

• "I support and encourage the General Assembly to take all necessary steps to restore a State cause of action for wrongful discharge based on unlawful employment discrimination."

• "Under current law, every multiple occupancy restroom, locker room or shower facility located in a cabinet agency must be designated for and only used by persons based on their biological sex. Agencies may make reasonable accommodations upon a person’s request due to special circumstances.

"Therefore, when readily available and when practicable in the best judgment of the agency, all cabinet agencies shall provide a reasonable accommodation of a single occupancy restroom, locker room or shower facility upon request due to special circumstances.

"All council of state agencies, cities, counties, the University of North Carolina System and the North Carolina Community College System are invited and encouraged to make a similar accommodation when practicable."

"I have listened to the people of North Carolina," McCrory said in his video statement.

I'd say he has heard the people of the state, and many businesses. He should have taken time to listen before he hurriedly signed HB 2 on the night of March 23, only 12 hours after it made its first public appearance.

His executive order today is more like an executive suggestion in some respects. Clearly, the governor is in damage control mode, but it's uncertain whether this effort will succeed.

Update: Phil Berger's statement of support totally undermines the governor:

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Contact editorial writer Doug Clark at (336) 373-7039 and dgclark@News-Record.com.

**Our Opinion: McCrory's small step**

News & Record

<http://www.greensboro.com/opinion/n_and_r_editorials/our-opinion-mccrory-s-small-step/article_15fbd2f9-6486-5e48-91c1-49108208eb0a.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory sounded conciliatory — a little — in his latest video message about House Bill 2 Tuesday.

“I have listened to the people of North Carolina,” he said, touting an executive order meant to take some of the heat off the intense negative response to the measure he signed March 23.

Earlier in the day, Deutsche Bank became the latest business to cancel an investment in North Carolina, reversing plans to add 250 jobs in Cary.

McCrory’s order extended anti-discrimination protections to gay, lesbian and transgender state employees. That’s a significant positive step. It also allows local governments to do the same in regard to their internal employment policies.

Otherwise, his “order” amounts to a series of suggestions carrying no weight without legislative action. Rather than follow the strict bathroom policy enacted in HB 2, state agencies, universities, community colleges and local governments may make “reasonable accommodations upon a person’s request due to special circumstances,” the order says.

The state’s Human Relations Commission “shall work with local government officials to study problems and promote understanding, respect and goodwill among all citizens in all communities in North Carolina,” the order says. It “shall receive, investigate and conciliate fair housing, employment discrimination and public accommodations complaints.” That’s nice but includes no enforcement power.

Finally, “I support and encourage the General Assembly to take all necessary steps to restore a State cause of action for wrongful discharge based on unlawful employment discrimination” — referring to a right he took away when he signed HB 2.

McCrory repeated his opposition to Charlotte’s “bathroom ordinance,” and he again criticized the “selective outrage and hypocrisy” behind the firestorm of protest — which seems to include companies such as PayPal that he’s faulted for doing business in Cuba and other countries that abuse human rights while pulling out of North Carolina.

The governor’s attempt at re-establishing goodwill also was undermined by Senate leader Phil Berger’s endorsement in an incredibly acrimonious statement attacking Democratic Attorney General Roy Cooper “and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women’s bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

That blatant falsehood can’t disguise ill-considered legislation that, as it stands, still excludes gays and lesbians from state protection against discrimination in public accommodations and bars cities from doing any better. The governor didn’t even suggest repealing that provision, which lies at the heart of HB 2 and has triggered most of the backlash.

McCrory probably wishes he hadn’t signed HB 2. His action Tuesday may help a little, but not nearly enough.

**Our View: Overdose prevention and Zika hit the governor's list**

Fayetteville Observer

<http://www.fayobserver.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-overdose-prevention-and-zika-hit-the-governor-s/article_26b9d820-5e2b-55ef-a7a5-874445a88d71.html>

Gov. Pat McCrory unveiled some potentially lifesaving budget initiatives for the Department of Health and Human Services on Monday. We welcome both.

One would allow pharmacists to dispense the opioid overdose-reversing drug Naloxone to anyone who asks for it. Many of the state's police and other first responders are already using it - with considerable success. Making it more broadly available makes sense.

McCrory also wants to spend $750,000 to combat the Zika virus, a mosquito-transmitted disease that can produce devastating birth defects. Basically, controlling Zika means controlling mosquitoes. In this mosquito-infested town, we'd love to have some state help with control. The county stopped its mosquito-control efforts a decade or more ago. We'd love a hand from the state.

**How Obama Powers the Transgender Movement**

By JASON L. RILEY

Wall Street Journal

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-obama-powers-the-transgender-movement-1460502253?tesla=y&mod=vocus>

In 2013, President Obama’s second inaugural address thrilled his progressive base with a line that subtly equated the historic struggles of black Americans with those of gay Americans. “We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths—that all of us are created equal—is that star that guides us still,” said Mr. Obama, “just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls and Selma and Stonewall.”

Seneca Falls and Selma are of course shorthand for the women’s rights and black civil-rights movements. The Stonewall citation is less well-known but alludes to the gay bar in New York City that was raided by police in 1969, an event that many consider the start of the gay-rights movement.

Some of the president’s black supporters find the black/gay parallels too facile. The black author Ellis Cose has written that, “Both movements share the goals of ending discrimination and fostering decency. But in many respects, they are more different than they are alike.” He added: “With gays, we are not looking at roped-off communities or at intergenerational transmission of disadvantage.”

Sharon Lettman-Hicks of the National Black Justice Coalition, a group that fights discrimination in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities, has noted that gay history in the U.S. didn’t involve getting “hosed down and dogs sicced on us” and that “you can’t compare the plight of the movement, the centuries of oppression that black people in this country had to face.”

Mr. Obama doesn’t seem to mind such criticisms. In fact, he has used his second term to push a rather radical agenda on behalf of LGBT activists who regularly invoke the black civil-rights movement. A new law in North Carolina, which protects privacy and safety in public bathrooms, locker rooms and showers, is currently grabbing the headlines. The state law overturns a local ordinance passed by the city of Charlotte that allowed men to have access to women’s facilities. Critics of the legislation say it discriminates against people who “identify” with a sex other than the one on their birth certificate, and the critics dismiss safety concerns as overblown.

What has received less attention is how the Obama administration has been quietly reinterpreting long-standing antidiscrimination statutes to advance LGBT causes. Last year, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled that unlawful sex discrimination has occurred when a man who identifies as a woman is prevented by his employer from using the ladies room. The ruling was 3-2, and all three members of the majority were Obama appointees.

In 2014 the Education Department’s Office of Civil Rights issued guidelines updating the 1972 Title IX civil-rights law, which bans discrimination “on the basis of sex.” Under the new guidelines, the nondiscrimination clause “extends to claims of discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity.” This new interpretation of Title IX has created panic among administrators and parents in school districts nationwide.

The “Obama administration is aggressively imposing its claim that existing laws prohibiting sex discrimination require that public school districts, as a condition of federal funding, allow boys who think they’re girls to use the public-school bathrooms, locker rooms and showers designated for girls,” Ed Whelan of the Ethics and Public Policy Center wrote in a blog post last fall.

Attempts to accommodate transgender people with separate facilities or private stalls have been rejected by the Obama administration and LGBT activists, who deride such compromises as akin to the return of Jim Crow. Advocates insist that supporting separate bathrooms and showers for men and women is the equivalent of supporting separate drinking fountains for blacks and whites. A year ago this month, the White House opened the first gender-neutral bathroom, but its use is optional. According to the administration, transgender people should be able to use any bathroom they choose, an option not open to the nontransgender community.

It is clear that the ultimate goal here isn’t accommodation but special protection for “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” under the law. The argument, which amounts to a denial of human nature, is that gender is fluid and that biological realities don’t matter. But historically, laws targeting sex discrimination have never granted members of the opposite sex regular access to single-sex facilities. And courts have rejected the novel interpretation of Title IX that the administration is using to pressure public school districts.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory, who signed the new law, has come under pressure to reverse himself. The Republican announced Tuesday that he is open to tweaking some aspects of the measure but is standing by the “common sense” provisions regarding the use of bathrooms. One can bear no ill-will toward the LBGT community and still think: Good for the governor.

Mr. Riley, a Manhattan Institute senior fellow and Journal contributor, is the author of “Please Stop Helping Us: How Liberals Make It Harder for Blacks to Succeed” (Encounter Books, 2014).

**McCrory tries to walk back parts of HB2, LGBT advocates call Executive Order insufficient, “weak”**

By Clayton Henkel

Progressive Pulse

<http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/mccrory-tries-to-walk-back-parts-of-hb2-lgbt-advocates-call-executive-order-insufficient-weak/>

Just hours after another major employer announced it would end a planned expansion in North Carolina because of House Bill 2, Governor Pat McCrory issued an executive order to address concerns over the law he signed three weeks earlier.

In a You Tube video, the governor explained his order:

\*   Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

\*   Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

\*    Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

\*    Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

\*    Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

Advocates for the LGBT community said while the nondiscrimination protections for state employees (Bullet point #4) are important, the order overall did very little to change the most controversial provision of HB2.

Transgender individuals would still be prohibited from using restrooms consistent with their gender identity in public facilities.

It is also unclear whether state House and Senate leaders will go along with McCrory’s desire (Bullet point #5) to change the law allowing those with claims of discrimination to sue in state court.

Here’s what others are saying about Gov. McCrory’s Executive Order:

“While Governor McCrory’s Executive Order creates vital protections in public employment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, it does not address the deep concerns we share with members of the business community and citizens across the state about the damaging impact of HB 2. In fact, the order doubles down on the Governor’s support for some of the most problematic provisions of HB 2.” – Equality NC Executive Director Chris Sgro

“The governor’s action is an insufficient response to a terrible, misguided law that continues to harm LGBT people on a daily basis. It’s absurd that he’ll protect people from being fired but will prohibit them from using the employee restroom consistent with their gender identity. The North Carolina Legislature must act to right this wrong as swiftly as possible. They created this horrendous law, and they need to repeal it.” – HRC Legal Director Sarah Warbelow

“Efforts to divide the LGBT community by extending limited protections but leaving in place the rules mandating discrimination against the transgender community will only strengthen our resolve to fight back against this discriminatory and misguided legislative action. We call on Gov. McCrory and the North Carolina legislature to repeal House Bill 2 and replace it with full non-discrimination protections for all LGBT people.” – ACLU of North Carolina Acting Executive Director Sarah Preston

“Today’s action by Governor Pat McCrory sends a positive message to businesses across North Carolina and to our economic development clients throughout the country and world that North Carolina and Charlotte understand the need to attract and retain diverse talent in our workforce.”

– Bob Morgan, Charlotte Chamber President and CEO

- See more at: http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/12/mccrory-tries-to-walk-back-parts-of-hb2-lgbt-advocates-call-executive-order-insufficient-weak/#sthash.R1ENTI1C.dpuf

**North Carolina Governor Issues Executive Order In Attempt To “Clarify” Anti-LGBT Law**

by Dominic Holden

BuzzFeed

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/dominicholden/north-carolina-gov-issues-executive-order-in-attempt-to-clar#.ixAxDwbpd5>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory issued an executive order on Tuesday that attempts to quell the backlash to an anti-LGBT law he enacted last month, saying the order “clarifies existing state law” while increasing privacy and equality.

The order, however, does not change elements of the statute that have been criticized by LGBT advocates and other opponents of the law. The order maintains a ban on transgender people using restrooms that match their gender in government buildings and schools. It also does not withdraw a ban on cities enacting nondiscrimination ordinances that protect LGBT people.

Rather, the order reaffirms that private businesses can establish their own rules for restrooms and locker rooms.

It also purports to expand the state’s employment policy by saying state agencies may not engage in “unlawful discrimination” in employment practices on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

However, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, a federal agency, already holds that employers may not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Furthermore, the EEOC’s gender-identity interpretation — which the Obama administration has backed up — would maintain that the restroom restrictions that remain in place for transgender employees under the North Carolina law are a type of unlawful discrimination.

“I know these actions will not totally satisfy everyone, but the vast majority of our citizens want commonsense solutions to complex issues,” McCrory said in a video statement.

McCrory has repeatedly suggested that transgender women must be banned from women’s restrooms because they would prey on women and girls — a scenario never documented in the 17 states and 225 cities that currently ban transgender discrimination.

Chase Strangio, a lawyer for the ACLU, told BuzzFeed News in a statement, “This order in no way changes the many and serious harms of House Bill 2.”

“Perhaps most concerning,” Strangio said, “it reiterates the anti-trans components of the law. It is nothing short of a political ploy to manage the backlash while still harming the most vulnerable members of the community and leaving the entire LGBT community without comprehensive legal protections.”

Numerous businesses have protested the North Carolina law, and the state was sued in federal court.

In his order Tuesday, Gov. McCrory also encouraged state legislators to amend the law so that discrimination lawsuits could be filed in state court if someone believes they are wrongly fired.

Gov. McCrory issued a video statement saying the debate around the law had created “a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion, and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy.”

Here’s McCrory’s video statement on the order.

“It’s obvious that Gov. McCrory is trying to save his reputation with this desperate move,” said Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality. “The order does nothing to change the government-mandated discrimination against all trans people in public buildings across the state.”

“If Gov. McCrory thinks anyone is going to fall for this, he has completely underestimated North Carolinians – and the rest of the nation,” said Keisling.

Here is the full executive order.

**North Carolina Gov. McCrory Signs Executive Order Clarifying ‘Bathroom’ Privacy Law**

by DR. SUSAN BERRY

Breitbart

<http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2016/04/13/north-carolina-gov-mccrory-signs-executive-order-clarifying-bathroom-privacy-law/>

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory has signed an executive order that he says serves to “affirm and improve” his state’s “commitment to privacy and equality” in the wake of a new “bathroom” privacy law.

McCrory issued the executive order on Tuesday after signing into law the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act (HB2) last month – a measure that prohibits individuals from using public bathrooms that do not correspond to their biological sex. The law also blocks cities in the state from passing non-discrimination laws, allowing state laws to preempt local ordinances.

“After listening to people’s feedback for the past several weeks on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of misinformation, misinterpretation, confusion, a lot of passion and frankly, selective outrage and hypocrisy, especially against the great state of North Carolina,” said McCrory in a video message about his executive order. “Based upon this feedback, I am taking action to affirm and improve the state’s commitment to privacy and equality.”

According to McCrory’s website, the executive order provides the following:

Maintains common sense gender-specific restroom and locker room facilities in government buildings and schools

Affirms the private sector’s right to establish its own restroom and locker room policies

Affirms the private sector and local governments’ right to establish non-discrimination employment policies for its own employees

Expands the state’s employment policy for state employees to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

Seeks legislation to reinstate the right to sue in state court for discrimination

The governor’s office says “the State of North Carolina is now one of 24 states that have protections for sexual orientation and gender identity for its employees.”

Family Research Council president Tony Perkins urged McCrory to stand firm and continue to defend HB2.

He said in a statement:

The Left’s response to Governor McCrory’s executive order shows it has no interest in a ‘live and let live’ policy, and could care less about the commonsense privacy concerns of parents and families throughout North Carolina, even when it comes to the question of letting grown men use women’s bathrooms and locker rooms.

While we don’t think Governor McCrory needed to provide additional clarity, his executive order does not change the law he just signed to prevent local governments from forcing people to violate their beliefs about sexuality and expectations of privacy.

Instead of supporting a common sense approach to bathroom policies, the ACLU and their allies’ objections show they will stop at nothing short of forcing people to accept their radical agenda. All people deserve human dignity and respect, but that doesn’t mean the government should force people to violate their deeply-held views on sexuality or their expectation of privacy in shared restrooms.

“We join our allies in North Carolina, and all people of good faith, in calling on Gov. McCrory to continue to defend H.B. 2,” Perkins concluded.

As CNN reports, the new law stirred opposition from LGBT agenda sympathizers. Bruce Springsteen cancelled a concert in North Carolina, and PayPal halted plans to open a new facility in Charlotte in the wake of the law’s passage. The NBA also threatened to move the 2017 All-Star Game from North Carolina – home of the Charlotte Hornets – to another venue.

North Carolina House Speaker Tim Moore, however, defended the new law’s protections for privacy.

“The way the ordinance was written by City Council in Charlotte, it would have allowed a man to go into a bathroom, locker or any changing facility, where women are — even if he was a man,” he explained. “We were concerned. Obviously there is the security risk of a sexual predator, but there is the issue of privacy.”

**McCrory HB2 executive order fails to live up to the hype**

By Allan Freyer

Progressive Pulse

<http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/13/mccrory-hb2-executive-order-fails-to-live-up-to-the-hype/>

Governor McCrory announced an Executive Order yesterday that claims to fix some of the problems with HB2 but in reality fails to live up to the hype.

Despite vociferous criticism of HB2 from businesses owners and citizens across the state, the Governor’s new Executive Order essentially reinforces many of the bill’s most objectionable provisions, while offering up insufficient opportunities to improve it. In short the executive order maintains HB2’s provisions restricting transgender access to bathrooms in public accommodations, allowing local businesses to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, and prohibiting local governments from enacting anti-discrimination or living wage ordinances that cover private businesses, including public contractors.

And unfortunately, the few steps away from discrimination taken by the order—notably, stating a policy against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity for state government employees and calling on the General Assembly to restore state employment non-discrimination protections for private sector workers—are practically nonexistent.

This what the executive order means in practice for North Carolina’s residents:

Private businesses are still permitted to turn away customers because they are LGBTQ. Local governments still may not adopt policies that go beyond state anti-discrimination law to provide protection to LGBTQ individuals or other classes of people, either in public accommodations, private employment, or local government contracting. Local governments may enact anti-discrimination policies that go beyond state policy, but only for their own public employees.

State government agencies, public schools, and state universities are still required to discriminate against transgender individuals in bathrooms and changing facilities. While the Executive Order does invite these agencies to make reasonable accommodations if requested , there is no way to ensure that agencies will follow through on these invitations, or make the actual accommodations requested, and it is unclear that HB2 would allow them to do so.

It is still unclear whether State employees receive any meaningful additional protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. While the order updated the State Employee non-discrimination policy to include these protections, the Governor did not answer the question of whether state employees can sue the State when they feel they have been unfairly discriminated against based on sexual orientation and gender identity. So in effect, it’s possible that the executive order may have promised workers something that they can’t actually use. And even if the new protections work as advertised, this still does nothing for the majority of the state’s workforce employed in private sector businesses.

Private employers can still fire their workers for reasons of race, color, national origin, religion, biological sex, and age without being subject to a lawsuit in state court. In the final provision, the order officially urges the legislature to repeal the sections of HB2 that eliminated state protections for employees who are fired based on their race, religion, color, national origin, age, or biological sex. Unfortunately, the Executive Order does only that—beg the legislature to act. And it is still unclear whether the legislature will agree.

So while the Governor’s change of heart on permitting workplace discrimination is good news, it would have been better for North Carolina’s workers if he had raised these objections before he signed the bill last month. Instead, workers are now living in a world where their bosses can fire them for being black, white, male, female, , or even an evangelical Christian without protections under state law.

While we should all welcome Governor McCrory’s promise to improve worker anti-discrimination laws, the problem with his executive order is it just doesn’t deliver on its promise.

- See more at: http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/04/13/mccrory-hb2-executive-order-fails-to-live-up-to-the-hype/#sthash.5daHIZF5.dpuf

**Gov. McCrory Retweeted GOP Senate Majority Leader's Vile Response Supporting His Executive Order**

New Civil Rights Movement

<http://www.thenewcivilrightsmovement.com/davidbadash/gov_mccrory_retweeted_gop_senate_majority_leader_s_vile_response_to_his_executive_order>

Governor Pat McCrory within one hour or two hours of announcing his executive order that does little to actually fix or repeal HB2 took time to retweet several people and groups who embraced his actions.

The first was the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce's attempt to whitewash the news:

The second was that of NC GOP Senate Majority Leader Phil Berger (photo) – a vile, caustic, hate-filled and ugly statement supporting the Governor's executive order:

Here's the text of the first paragraph:

“Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

Really heartwarming, isn't it? I'm sure North Carolina's LGBT community, equality supporters, and rational citizens felt much better knowing the most powerful lawmaker in the state is a radical extremist who clearly hates anyone who isn't a Republican, anyone who has common sense, or anyone who believes elected officials should treat the people who pay their salaries with a modicum of respect.

**The Morning Roundup: The Day the Left-Wing Political Correctness Mob Got a Small Concession from Pat McCrory**

by David Hudnall

Indy Week

<http://www.indyweek.com/news/archives/2016/04/13/the-morning-roundup-the-day-the-left-wing-political-correctness-mob-got-a-small-concession-from-pat-mccrory>

Today is Wednesday, April 13. You are still alive. Here are some things going on in the world around you.

1. McCrory issues executive order on HB 2. It sounds good at first. But in reality it's nowhere close to a repeal of the terrible law. The good part: It expands nondiscrimination protections for state employees to include sexual orientation and gender identity. The bad part: It does nothing else.

That means transgender individuals are still prohibited from using the correct bathrooms. It also means cities and counties are still prohibited from creating their own jurisdiction-wide nondiscrimination protections. Reactions from LGBT groups were mostly of the not-nearly-good-enough variety.

GLSEN: "The Governor is attempting to distract the public by offering minor protections for the state’s lesbian, gay and bisexual employees and completely hollow ‘protections’ for the state’s transgender employees, who will still not be able to access restrooms in their workplaces."

Rea Carey, executive director, National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund: “Governor McCrory’s executive order today is too little too late. It is like trying to solve a massive life threatening injury with a small band-aid that doesn’t come close to covering the wound. Complete repeal of HB2 and the passage of comprehensive statewide non-discrimination legislation are the only actions that will provide real, strong protections for all the LGBTQ people of North Carolina."

Senate president Phil Berger has a different take: “Gov. McCrory just put to rest the left's lies about HB 2 and proved it allows private and public employers, non-profits and churches the ability to adopt nondiscrimination policies that are stronger than state and federal law. But that fact is irrelevant to Roy Cooper and his left-wing political correctness mob with their agenda-driven allies in the liberal media, who will never stop trashing North Carolina until they achieve their goal of allowing any man into any women's bathroom or locker room at any time simply by claiming to feel like a woman.”

OK, Phil.

Meanwhile, Michael Moore's not going to show his new film in N.C., and Deutsche Bank is saying it's holding off on adding 250 planned-for jobs in the state.

2. Duke women's basketball program being investigated. The university announced Tuesday that it is conducting an internal investigation of the program:

“The welfare and success of our student-athletes are among Duke’s highest priorities. To that end, we are in the process of conducting an evaluation of the Duke women’s basketball program. This effort is led by a Duke human resources professional outside the Athletics Department. Coach (Joanne P.) McCallie is aware of the evaluation and eager to assist. We look forward to hearing the insights of those involved in the program and any recommendations that may result from this evaluation.”

A few weeks ago, two of Duke's best players abruptly announced they would not be returning next year. Hmm.

3. Duke seeks dismissal of Trask lawsuit. The sit-in may be over, but Duke students continue to protest the alleged racial slur Duke executive vice president Tallman Trask called a university parking attendant. The situation is the subject of a lawsuit filed by the attendant against Trask and Duke, and on Tuesday, attorneys for Duke sought to have their part of the suit tossed. WRAL reports:

Attorney Dan Hartzog said the university should not be a part of the suit.

"I'm not here to talk about whether or not Tallman Trask bumped into (Underwood) with his car, or whether or not he used a racial slur," Hartzog said. "That's between (Underwood) and Tallman Trask."

The judge's decision is expected today.

4. Feds continue to investigate racism at Wake County Public Schools. The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights held a meeting Tuesday to look into whether disciplinary practices at Wake County schools are biased against black students. From the N&O:

Black students accounted for 63 percent of Wake’s suspensions during the 2014-15 school year while making up 24 percent of the enrollment.

African-American students also accounted for 69 percent of the referrals that school resource officers made to the court system last school year. In addition, black students are 1.7 times more likely to be arrested for fighting and theft than other groups.

The feds have been investigating the situation at the school district since the NAACP filed a suit back in 2010.

Have a wonderful day.

**Gaspo on HB2: Durham chooses embrace over disgrace**

BY TOM GASPAROLI

N&O

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/dn-opinion/article70917742.html>

This is likely the only time Guglhupf, the Durham Public Schools, and “Dirty Dancing” have ever appeared in the same sentence.

The bakery, school board, and movie re-make have each been featured in recent news stories tied to North Carolina’s biased, backwards, “bathroom bill” HB2.

It’s formally titled The Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, so as not to be called the “Dumbest Bill Ever Act.”

The discriminatory bill pushed by some Stone Age dwellers in the statehouse has triggered an embarrassment of rich criticism, and lost jobs, too. Hundreds already, probably thousands before long. First PayPal, then maybe a world of economic hurt.

Kudos to Gov. Pat McGrory, who’s gone from job-loving freedom and free enterprise aficionado to naive, newly nasty, and just plain bad news bear for the Old North State.

The bill he signed into law faster than the time it takes to walk from his office to the bathroom is confounding businesses with bathrooms, for one. Right here in this city.

Near the front of the line, Claudia Cooper, long-time owner of Guglhupf, Durham’s go-to gem of a restaurant. Cooper was hamstrung by whether her bakery had to block certain bathrooms from certain people when they needed to go, gender identity be damned.

Some of her employees felt they had to quit based on how Cooper thought she was supposed to handle bathroom policy, instead of pastry quality. The classy Cooper was anguished, respectful of her staff and those who objected, and outraged, all at once.

She said HB2 was a “horrible” law and “opens the door to discrimination against LGBTQ individuals and denies them legal protection from prejudice.”

Sadly, Guglhupf didn’t make it into last week’s New York Times and Washington Post front section pieces on this imbroglio, though. Nor did our school board, which gets high marks for its timely, attention-getting expansion of student and staff rights, rather than cuffing them as HB2 does.

“Gender identity is included in our list of categories that we will not discriminate against,” chairperson Heidi Carter said.

THE STATUTE IS FOOLISH, FEAR-MONGERING AND FUTILE. ITS FOCUS ON DIVISION WILL ONLY UNITE THOSE IN FAVOR OF FAIRNESS.

Board member Natalie Beyer referenced high rates of depression and suicide among transgender youth. Thankfully, young people in Durham classrooms are seeing in real time how things should be done when it comes to civil rights and equality under the law, circa 2016.

Call it embracing differences, instead of disgracing them.

Then, less than a week ago, the Durham City Council stepped up and spoke out.

After a work session briefing by City Attorney Patrick Baker, council members suspended rules and more or less denounced HB2. That’s the Durham I dig.

Something tells me transgender people are going to feel generally OK about using the bathroom of their choice in city government buildings, and they should. Council basically said, “HB2 may be the law, but good conscience lives in the halls of City Hall.”

The statute is foolish, fear-mongering and futile. Its focus on division will only unite those in favor of fairness.

Hundreds of big businesses don’t really want to do business here now. Major sporting events will abandon us for higher ground. Many other states won’t send officials to visit because HB2 defies common sense and scrapes against decency.

Eventually, the courts will get their say, and HB2 may become moot or unrecognizable. Until then, we deserve to look like a state that’s lost its lustre.

I wouldn’t be surprised if the state’s chief executive, along with HB2’s leading legislative proponents, choose to constrict their travel plans in the coming months.

They wouldn’t feel welcome in the Bull City, or most communities where diversity and dignity prevail. No Guglhupf treats for them.

You can reach Tom Gasparoli at tgaspo@gmail.com or 919-219-0042.

Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/dn-opinion/article70917742.html#storylink=cpy

**Roy Cooper’s Hawks**

by Mike Adams

Town Hall

<http://townhall.com/columnists/mikeadams/2016/04/12/roy-coopers-hawks-n2146679/page/full>

There is a Cooper’s hawk living in a tree in my back yard near the Intracoastal Waterway in Wilmington, North Carolina. He is extremely aggressive when defending his territory. In fact, just a few months ago he was annoyed by the presence of some Blue Jays nesting in a tree within his territory. So he grabbed one by the wing, flew him down to the ground, pinned him on his back, and slowly ripped his heart out of his chest right in front of the other Blue Jays – all just to send a message to them. That Cooper’s hawk is aptly named. Tactically speaking, he reminds me a lot of the North Carolina Attorney General.

Roy Cooper’s job as AG is to serve and defend the people of North Carolina. But he has long since abdicated his professional responsibility in order to pursue a larger social vision. That vision is to take over the State of North Carolina and transform it into California – even if it means turning cities like Charlotte into San Francisco.

So it really is no surprise that that Roy Cooper has decided not to defend HB2, which seeks to protect women from having to share public and “public accommodation” (read: private business) restrooms with men posing as women. Cooper would never dream of opposing the ACLU lawyers bringing the lawsuit. That is because he shares their worldview as well as their vision for the Tar Heel state.

When the national controversy began to break out over HB2 Cooper should have simply called a press conference for the purpose of explaining the state legislature’s actions. In that press conference he should have covered these two issues:

1. Cooper should have addressed the patently unconstitutional actions of the Charlotte City council, which attempted to unlawfully exert authority over private businesses in Charlotte.

2. Cooper should have addressed the absolute necessity of the North Carolina legislature’s actions, which helped restore order and confidence in our system of checks and balances. In the process, he could have explained that HB2 was not designed to hurt anyone - and indeed that it poses no possible threat of ever hurting anyone. (He could have added that it would probably save the hearing of those who might otherwise go deaf from exposure to the plaintiff wailing of Bruce Springsteen posing as a legitimate musician).

Instead of doing those two things he took a very different approach in his press conference. First, he announced that he would not defend the actions of the state legislature claiming they were “unconstitutional.” Next, he went even further and characterized HB2 as a national embarrassment.

In short, Cooper could have explained the bill and stopped the full frontal assault that is now being directed at his state. In fact, he could have ridiculed PalPay for boycotting us given the fact that the company does business with five nations currently imposing the death penalty for homosexuality. In contrast, North Carolina does not execute homosexuals unless they actually kill someone.

So PayPal could safely move its headquarters from Singapore to Charlotte any day now. And Roy Cooper could honestly guarantee that they would be safer than a busload of lesbians on their way to an Indigo Girls concert. Instead, he poured gasoline on the firestorm of controversy. And he did it for the simple reason that he seeks the present conflagration for his own political gain.

Of course, this is not the first time Cooper has used his office to wage ideological warfare. I know that all too well as I battled Cooper for seven long years in federal court. I never met him personally but I had to deal with a flock of Cooper’s hawks sent to wage cultural war on his behalf.

All the way from the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals to the settlement negotiation table to the jury trial I had to endure an ideological onslaught from politically motivated and politically appointed attorneys working in Roy Cooper’s office. Their behavior was often characterized by brazen unprofessionalism. Fortunately, a bald American eagle named David French saved me from the Cooper’s hawks. But the North Carolina taxpayers were not so lucky. They had to foot the bill when Cooper lost.

Roy Cooper says he is embarrassed by HB2. But he should be embarrassed about losing a seven-year federal lawsuit against a public educator he should have been defending. The attorney general spent millions trying to protect North Carolina from conservative professors in public classrooms. Now he won’t spend a dime to protect North Carolina from convicted pedophiles in public restrooms. I think that really says it all.

In a few short months, we will be faced with a decision as to whether Roy Cooper will be the next governor of the state of North Carolina. The question we are facing is whether we wish to retain our identity as North Carolinians or be transformed into Californians.

I know where I stand. No state identity disorder here.