

News

Port-a-potties bring attention to House Bill 2 opposition

By:

WCB3 ()

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DURHAM, N.C. (WNCN) - Opponents of House Bill 2 are using port-a-potties on Geer Street in Durham as a visual message to call for the repeal of the controversial law.

State lawmakers passed HB2 last month as a response to a Charlotte non-discrimination ordinance that would have allowed transgender people to use the bathroom that matches how they identify.

Opponents argue that requiring people to use the bathroom based on their biological sex is similar to the Jim Crow laws that led to separate bathrooms based on race. "This bill is a vehicle for limiting people's civil rights," said Peter Skillern of Reinvestment Partners.

Organizers, holding signs that say "White" and "Colored," say HB2 shows how North Carolina is moving backwards.

"It's damaging North Carolina's reputation nationally as a progressive state," said Skillern, who added that it's important to keep the pressure on the state.

"There are enough people who are on the right side of this issue that are making their voices be heard," said Helena Cragg of the LGBTQ Center of Durham. "We have to keep pushing. We have to repeal this. We have to make that change."

Rep. Julia Howard, a Republican from Forsyth County, blamed the Charlotte City Council for the turmoil. "If this had not started there, then it would not have been laid in our lap," Rep. Howard said.

Since it became law, there has been a response from the business community...more than a hundred corporations and business leaders formally opposing it.

Yesterday, a first, PayPal announced it's scrapping plans to expand and bring 400 jobs to Charlotte. Today, PNC Bank joined the list of corporations that oppose HB2.

"Some of the companies that have raised their head, they certainly have their hand out when it comes time for special concessions through the budget process," Rep. Howard said referring to corporate incentives.

The opponents on Geer Street in Durham are calling for state lawmakers and Gov. McCrory to do away with HB2.

"I'm not going to speak for our governor," Rep. Howard said. "I think he signed a piece of legislation that is in the best interest of our children and folks in North Carolina."

Skillern said the law is silly. "It's trying to solve a problem that doesn't really exist," he said.

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