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Pat McCrory

Video Message on Signing North Carolina's Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act

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AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED: Text version below transcribed directly from audio

Hi, I'm North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

In the 50 plus years since I've lived in North Carolina I've learned that the people of North Carolina love each other and they respect their differences; even when those differences conflict with their beliefs and values.

Time and time again I've witnessed the people of North Carolina put aside their disagreements and come together to accommodate and work out solutions, while still respecting each other's beliefs and values.

I've also witnessed politicians who, sadly, have exploited differences and divided our people. Instead of living up to the North Carolina tradition of respecting those with whom they disagree, they demonized our state for political gain. And that is not acceptable.



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Some have called our state an embarrassment. The real embarrassment is politicians not publicly respecting each other's positions on complex issues. Unfortunately, that has occurred when legislation was passed recently to protect men, women, and children when they use a public restroom, shower, or locker-room. That is an expectation of privacy that must be honored and respected.

Instead, North Carolina has been the target of a vicious, nation-wide smear campaign. Disregarding the facts, other politicians, from the White House to mayors to state capitols and city council members, and even our Attorney General, have initiated and promoted conflict to advance their political agenda and tear down our state, even if it means defying the constitution and their oath of office.

You know, obeying the laws of the land, and living up to the duties of the office, and defending the constitution is the foundation of North Carolina's government. I am standing right up now -- up to the President of the United States to prevent federal overreach to take over our North Carolina waters, which I think is in violation of the U.S. Constitution.

I've even stood up to the legislative leaders of my own Republican party when they took powers not delegated to them in the North Carolina constitution, and our State Supreme Court agreed.

And now, I'm standing up to the Attorney General of North Carolina who today refused to fulfill his oath of office to defend the people of North Carolina in a lawsuit filed over the privacy of our restrooms.

As the State Attorney General, he can't select which laws he will defend and which laws are politically expedient to refuse to defend. His excuse that his own internal policies would be affected is wrong. All employment policies for cities and corporations and the Attorney General's own policies remain exactly the same. The Attorney General is inventing conflict that simply doesn't exist.



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When you are the state's lawyer, you are a lawyer first and a politician second. Therefore, I'd like to encourage the Attorney General to reconsider his flawed logic. I am fulfilling my oath of office as Governor of North Carolina and we expect him to do the same as the Attorney General of North Carolina. As elected officials we don't get to choose the perfect circumstances that surround the decisions we have to make under very difficult circumstances.

You know, I did not call for a special session. I expressed concerns over some of the provisions that were in the legislation. But at the end of the day, the General Assembly acted within the provisions of the constitution and presented me with a bill [pdf] that, while it may not be perfect, provided protection for our basic expectation of privacy in public restrooms and locker rooms.

I signed that bill because if I didn't, on April the 1st of this year , the expectation of privacy of North Carolina citizens could be violated.

This is not about demonizing one group of people. In fact, let's put our differences aside. Let's stop the political rhetoric -- and yes, a lot of hypocrisy -- and work on solutions that will make this bill better in the future. I am open to new ideas and solutions.

And to the people and businesses of North Carolina: We are a state of inclusiveness, openness, and diversity. And I'm very, very proud of that.

I believe in North Carolina, its people, and also our democratic process. And I will not shy away from taking the responsibility to do what it takes to make our state better.

These are the values I learned more than 50 years ago when I first came to North Carolina; and I will continue to uphold those values as your governor of our great state.

May God continue to bless you and the people of North Carolina.

Thank you very much.