



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

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A Statement on 2014 Midterm Election Results from the North Carolina NAACP and Forward Together Moral Movement

DURHAM, NC: Now that the 2014 Midterm election results are in for North Carolina, the North Carolina NAACP and Forward Together Moral Movement have released the following statement:

The diverse coalition that makes up the Forward Together Moral Monday movement came out in record numbers on Tuesday to express one sentiment in particular : We will never go back and we'll never sound retreat. The turnout was a record for a midterm election, and was made up African Americans, whites, latinos, people of all different classes, faiths, sexualities, and ages. And we believe these are people who not only voted but who will stay vigilant and grow their ranks in the fight for a fair and just state.

We are deeply encouraged by this large movement of diverse friends who joined in a protest vote against the suppressionist tactics aimed primarily at people of color. Many stood in lines for hours or were directed from precinct to precinct but refused to be denied their right to vote. We thank all of those who are working day and night to build the new fusion movement of voters. We do not know how many people were discouraged from voting by the elimination of Sunday voting, same-day-registration, and out-of-precinct voting, but we will analyze the results in the days to come.

Last night saw a major moral victory. This massive turnout, in the face of every voter suppression trick they could throw at us, is a tribute to the hundreds of thousands of people who ordinarily would pass up the off-election year vote. We add this to a growing list of moral victories out of the state of North Carolina and in struggles all across this nation. In message after message this morning, our allies have said that they are emboldened to continue our moral fight. It should be noted that this participation, despite intimidation, voter suppression efforts, and lewd amounts of extremist-focus money, shows that when the people are united, inseparable in our struggle for putting people first -- putting people over greed and corporate

interest -- and when activism is guided by a common agenda, not any one person or any one party, the people can defeat the callous cynicism of the divide-and-conquer strategies. Regardless of the powers stacked against us.

Let me remind our friends and those who would try to push us backward: the Moral Movement does not live and die by elections. It is unfortunate that we, as a state, have promoted an employee who has repeatedly failed his constituents by undermining public education, health care, labor rights, women's rights, LGBT rights, immigrants' rights, voting rights, and the environment. But our movement does not hinge -- and never has hinged -- on one election, one candidate, or one Party. We will continue the struggle, in the courts, in the streets, in the legislature, and in building new friendships and alliances. We will continue to teach and build new coalitions of the excluded and oppressed. There is much needless suffering that can be addressed, if we all work together.

We always knew that, regardless of the result in this U.S. Senate race, Pat McCrory would still be the Governor of North Carolina and would still have the power along with the North Carolina legislature to provide access to health care and quality education, and the power to lift working people if they were to govern for the good of the whole. We must continue to fight for this principle. Additionally, we still have to win our battle to protect voting rights and against redistricting in the courts. So our moral mandate is as clear as it has ever been. This narrow victory by Speaker Tillis is not a validation of what he, the legislature, and the Governor done. Actually it's a kind of repudiation. Especially when you have the power of state government, engage in voter suppression, and have deep money pockets, but can only eke out a narrow victory in a statewide election. Furthermore, you win a narrow victory and the electorate that elects you has almost no ideological and racial diversity. This, also, is a sign of growing repudiation. Speaker Tillis should not see his victory as a mandate but as a message that he should govern as a senator for all the people and not be a tool of extremists, because what may seem to be victories now may turn into real losses in 2016 and beyond.

While we hope that Senator-elect Tillis will keep his word and govern as a moderate, it seemed to us last night, watching his victory speech, that he would carry over his legacy of denying unemployment benefits, cutting education spending, denying Medicaid Expansion, and suppressing voting rights, among other attacks on the good of the people, into his new role as U.S. Senator. We pray that this will not be the case and he could begin to signal a new direction by seriously considering Medicaid Expansion for 500,000 North Carolinians before he goes to Washington -- this would prove that his statement last week was not a cynical ploy to win last-minute votes. We hope he will represent all of his constituents.

There is still much work to be done. We, the people, will not bow out of any fight that would take us backward. We will continue to move Forward Together!