

BACK TO BEING OURSELVES



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## A CALL FOR MORAL CHANGE

Turning out for the vote in Raleigh

Immigration debate close to home



DTH/NICHOLAS BAFIA

People join together to advocate for voter rights Saturday.

By Sam Killenberg and Audrey Wells  
Staff Writers

Thousands joined together to advocate for the expansion of voter rights in North Carolina at the 10th annual Moral March on Saturday.

Many attendees of the rally felt voting rights in North Carolina are at risk, including Jeff Lauer of UNC-Asheville's chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

"We're pissed off about voter ID laws and trying to redraw districts and (making) people's votes not count, so we came out here to voice our opinion," he said. "For so long voting was used to keep power at first in the hands of property-owning white males, and over time we've been able to fight and get that right to every citizen."

Defeating voter ID legislation and expanding early voting and same-day registration are some of the main objectives of the Historic Thousands on Jones Street, known as HKonJ, People's Assembly Coalition,

SEE **VOTER ID**, PAGE 4



DTH/NICHOLAS BAFIA

Activists call the N.C. General Assembly anti-immigrant.

By Marisa Bakker  
Assistant State & National Editor

Protesters at the HKonJ People's Assembly Coalition Saturday criticized the N.C. General Assembly for being anti-immigrant, calling for immigration reform and the repeal of House Bill 318.

The law, passed in October, bars the use of the matricula consular as a valid form of identification, often used by undocumented immigrants for minor traffic violations or hiring processes. A result of the law is that undocumented people can be deported for a minor traffic infraction, undocumented resident Carmen Rodriguez told the crowd in front of the legislature through a translator.

Rodriguez said HB 318 has caused undocumented immigrants to live with an ever-present fear of deportation. She also condemned the law for exploiting migrant laborers and shielding the agricultural sector from fair labor laws.

SEE **IMMIGRATION**, PAGE 4

## Discrimination issues brought to light



DTH/NINA TAN

Activists carry the LGBT pride flag to protest discrimination.

By Eric Schwartz and Kent McDonald  
Staff Writers

Whether it was holding hands with her partner or feeling accepted in her workplace, Sarah Gage has faced discrimination for her sexual identity in her home of Wilmington.

"Not being able to feel comfortable in your own gender or presentation is a pretty difficult place," she said. "It's hard to focus on other things when you can't feel safe."

Saturday's HKonJ People's Assembly Coalition was an opportunity for many local LGBT advocacy groups to demonstrate their support.

"We hope to bring visibility to the queer movement," said James Miller, executive director of the LGBT Center of Raleigh.

Jaloni Martin, a student at N.C. State University and leader of a campus LGBT group, said the march was a chance to illuminate unseen

SEE **LGBT**, PAGE 4

## Minimum wage is maximum issue



DTH/NINA TAN

Activists gather to advocate for a higher minimum wage.

By Olivia Slagle  
Staff Writer

Activists rallied for a higher minimum wage during Saturday's HKonJ People's Assembly Coalition rally, boasting signs calling for change.

Protestors in attendance called for the N.C. General Assembly to raise the state's minimum wage from \$7.25 – the requirement set by the federal government – to \$15 per hour.

An increase in wages was featured as a prominent piece of the HKonJ People's Assembly Coalition's 14 Point People's Agenda for North Carolina. Several speeches preceding the rally referenced this goal for a livable wage and support for low income people.

The agenda calls for the state to adjust the minimum wage in relation to inflation rates and to expand social welfare programs like food stamps for lower-income citizens. It also emphasized the need for employers to offer basic workplace benefits like

SEE **MINIMUM WAGE**, PAGE 4

## Homelessness: not only a chronic issue

Those who couch surf go undetected by the county's homelessness services.

By Benjamin Albano  
Staff Writer

The 2015 Point-In-Time Count for people experiencing homelessness in Orange County amounts to 129 people, according to a report released by the North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness on Jan. 28.

But this data, based on a description from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD, leaves out a broad population without stable, consistent places to live.

Couch surfers, people who move

from place to place, are often invisible in the eyes of those who apportion local and federal aid.

Desmond Frierson, an outreach case worker for Housing for New Hope in Durham, said federal programs run by the agency don't typically consider couch surfers eligible.

"Couch surfing is one of those behind the scenes things," Frierson said.

Frierson added that a system of keeping track of people who are couch surfing could help the agency better understand what the barriers are and how Housing for New Hope could be helpful.

Finding stable housing

Chapel Hill Town Council member

Nancy Oates, a proponent of expanding public transportation in lieu of the light rail, said other factors come into play when offering assistance to those who are unable to find stable housing.

"When you're thinking about affordable apartments that people would move into, they need to be on an affordable transit line," Oates said. "Transitional housing prepares people to live independently, but in Chapel Hill we don't have affordable living for couch surfers, and that's a real issue."

Oates suggested that fixing this problem is complicated because it involves more than just fixing issues with affordable public housing.

According to Jamie Rohe,

SEE **HOMELESSNESS**, PAGE 4

## Consulting firm reports to BOG

The firm outlined preliminary feedback to board members Friday.

By Hayley Fowler  
State & National Editor

UNC-system stakeholders have abandoned their respective swim lanes, instead opting for disorganized cannon balls.

Members of the Board of Governors, the system president, legislators and the general administration, among others, told the Boston Consulting Group — hired

to audit the system after Margaret Spellings was selected — they understood what defined each stakeholder's "swim lanes."

"But you were also clear that those swim lanes have not always been honored over the last couple years," said J. Puckett, senior partner and managing director for the firm. "And that people have gotten out of their swim lanes, and that they've done that because they've been uncomfortable."

Puckett presented preliminary findings Friday at the BOG's retreat.

The Boston Consulting Group

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“There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction.”

WINSTON CHURCHILL