

Bill Offered to Repeal North Carolina's HB 2

Monday evening, the North Carolina legislature convened for a "short session" aimed at resolving some budget issues, but Democrats want to put the state's bathroom privacy protection law back on the table.

Just hours before the session began, four Democrats offered House Bill 946, which would repeal "HB 2," and add \$545,407 to the annual budget of the state's Human Relations Commission. The measure, sponsored by state Reps. Darren Jackson (D-Raleigh), Graig Meyer (D-Hillsborough), Susi Hamilton (D-Willmington) and Grier Martin (D-Raleigh), is unlikely to pass.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the North Carolina NAACP held protests at the state capitol in Raleigh on Monday, at which they blasted the law, which has resulted in the loss of jobs and millions of dollars in economic development for the state so far. Outside groups and major corporations have attempted to use a boycott to strong-arm legislators into repealing the law.

Gov. Pat McCrory, a Republican who is seeking re-election in November, issued an executive order shortly after signing HB 2 into law that softened its impact somewhat. He hasn't responded to the introduction of HB 946, but Speaker of the House Tim Moore (R-Kings Mountain) did, during a rally in support of HB 2 also held Monday.

"What I can tell you that I'm hearing and what my colleagues are hearing has been overwhelming support," he said. "You're hearing some criticism, mainly from out-of-state companies and large corporations, but if you talk to folks on Main Street, they're in support."

"We're not going to do a repeal of House Bill 2. It makes common sense. There may be some minor tweaks."

McCrory, instead, has focused his attention on the outside interests he says are "distorting the truth." In particular, he singled out HRC, which held a press conference outside the statehouse Monday in which it presented more than two dozen boxes it said were filled with petitions calling on the legislature to repeal HB 2.

"The anonymously-funded, national smear campaign led by the Human Rights Campaign is grossly misrepresenting information about the petitions delivered to State Capitol today," the Governor's Office said. "Contrary to the media reports, the activists only delivered enough petitions to fill two boxes and the overwhelming majority of signatures were from out-of-state."