

North Carolina Senate Rejects Bid to Repeal 'Bathroom Bill'

North Carolina's controversial HB 2 law that requires people to use the bathroom that matches their biological sex is still on the books.

Gov. Pat McCrory, true to his word, convened a special session of the state legislature to address a possible repeal of HB 2 after the Charlotte City Council rescinded its ordinance that required public facilities, such as bathrooms and locker rooms, be made available based on "gender identity." The deal, which was twice rejected prior to the 2016 gubernatorial election, quickly proceeded after McCrory ended his challenge and conceded defeat to Attorney General Roy Cooper, who is now governor-elect.

Republicans, knowing the entire situation had been staged by Democrats to put the governor's mansion "in play" in the election, refused to capitulate. On a 32-16 party-line vote, the GOP-controlled state senate rejected the measure that would have repealed the law.

The Senate then adjourned from its special session, also on a strict party-line vote. With no business to take up following the measure's defeat, the House of Representatives then adjourned its special session and provided the new governor-elect with his first of what will likely be many stinging legislative defeats.

Ironically, Cooper charged Republicans with engaging in a political stunt to prevent the full repeal of HB 2. Claiming there were enough GOP votes in both chambers to approve the repeal, he said he was deeply disappointed in legislative leaders, whom he said he had negotiated with prior to the special session.

“Today, the legislature had a chance to do the right thing for North Carolina, and they failed,” he said. “I am disappointed that Republican legislative leaders failed to live up to their promise to fully repeal House Bill 2. I’m disappointed for the people of North Carolina, for the jobs that people won’t have. I’m disappointed that we have yet to remove the stain on the reputation of our great state that is around this country and around the world.”

It’s not clear how Charlotte City Council members will react to the legislature’s vote. {eo}