

A year in, Moral Monday movement plans new protests, more organizing



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Today marks one year since 17 North Carolinians were arrested for nonviolent civil disobedience at the General Assembly while protesting Republican plans to restrict voting rights while cutting aid to the jobless, the sick and the poor.

The action was the first in a wave of weekly rallies that drew thousands of people to protest in the state capital and other communities across North Carolina, leading to the arrests of more than 920 people and [focusing national attention](#) on the state's hard-right political turn.

The protests culminated in a mass march in Raleigh in February of this year that drew tens of thousands of people from North Carolina and beyond.

"Make no mistake -- this is no mere hyperventilation or partisan pouting," keynote speaker Rev. Dr. William Barber, president of the NC NAACP and a lead organizer of the Forward Together coalition behind the protests, said that day. "This is a fight for the future and soul of our state."

The trials of the Moral Monday arrestees began last October, with some defendants found guilty, others acquitted, and some cases dismissed for lack of evidence. The uneven dispensation of justice has [led to calls](#) for the charges to be dropped.

Meanwhile, the protests spread to other states with the formation of Moral Monday Georgia and Truthful Tuesdays in South Carolina. The New York Times [called](#) the movements "rare stirrings of impassioned, liberal political action in a region where conservative control of government is as solid as cold grits."

With the North Carolina legislature set to reconvene in May for the short session before the fall election, the state's Moral Monday movement is preparing to return to action as well. The first Moral Monday protest of this year is [planned for May 19](#) at the General Assembly in Raleigh.

"We followed them home when they left Raleigh last year," said the announcement from the NC NAACP, "and we're returning with them for the first Moral Monday of the 2014 Legislative Session ready to fight for policies for the people!"

The NC NAACP is also launching a [Moral Freedom Summer Project](#), which will place 50 paid organizers in pairs in communities across the state to build the Moral Movement. The program is set to run from May 15 through Aug. 2.

To mark the first anniversary of the Moral Monday movement, the NC NAACP invites people to view a video of that first protest in Raleigh. Watch here:



Timothy B. Tyson, a Duke University research scholar and state education chair of the NC NAACP, was arrested at the first Moral Monday protest on April 29, 2013. (Image is a still from the video below.)