

Protests planned for DNC

By Amanda Albright
Staff Writer

As the Democratic National Convention edges closer, many groups are already preparing protest plans for the event.

While the organizations plan to demonstrate for political reasons, some organizations also intend to express frustration with the city of Charlotte for maintaining secrecy on security matters.

The convention will be held at the Time Warner Cable Arena from Sept. 4 to Sept. 6. The DNC committee estimates that the convention will bring \$150 million to the city.

Matthew Hickson, a senior at UNC, said he plans to attend the protests.

Hickson is a member of the UNC chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, which he said is looking to provide UNC students with transportation to the protest and convention.

He said the convention is a chance for students to discuss the interconnected issues that affect them, such as student debt, tuition increases, the financial crisis, climate change and immigrant rights.

"It's important to have discussion unmediated," he said. "Students don't realize how connected their problems are."

The group is among 60 organizations — from the Charlotte area and nationwide — that have formed the Coalition to March

on Wall Street South, a protest group.

Occupy Charlotte member Michael Zytzkow said his reasons for protesting include President Barack Obama's use of drones overseas, wars and the mass deportations of undocumented immigrants.

"These conventions have become cheerleading events for both parties, which don't represent the people," Zytzkow said.

He questioned the city of Charlotte's plan to spend a \$50 million grant it received from the U.S. Department of Justice to cover costs relating to the event.

He said residents have a right to know what the police department is purchasing, since the equipment will stay in the city after the convention.

"It's a classic way of power play that has gone on for ages," Zytzkow said. "You make the public afraid of something to the point where you can go about your activities without any oversight."

The Charlotte City Council decided in Feb. 2011 to give City Manager Curt Walton oversight in all contracts related to the DNC rather than vote on security items purchased.

Security and safety is a major issue at the convention since tens of thousands of people will attend, Charlotte city council member Michael Barnes said.

He said the police would provide for traffic control, overall safety, and appropriate ways for



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A CMPD ranking officer addresses Occupiers, protesters and media the day after a city ordinance was put into effect to force the camps removal.

groups to demonstrate and protest during the convention.

Brian Cunningham, spokesperson for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, said in an email that the city could not disclose how the money was spent.

"The means, methods, specific resources or numbers utilized to carry out protective responsibilities cannot be discussed," he said.

Barnes said he believes the police will act fairly in maintaining peace at the convention.

"I have to have faith and confidence in CMPD (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department)," he said. "They've never indicated before that they want to create a police state or infringe on rights."

Contact the State & National Editor at state@dailytarheel.com.

Colleges gather to battle cuts

By Alex Pyun
Staff Writer

Universities are organizing to fight massive cuts in federal research funding that are scheduled to take effect next year.

UNC-system representatives have joined forces with more than 140 university leaders nationwide to support the repeal of a law that will impose \$1.2 trillion in federal budget cuts.

The Budget Control Act of 2011 stipulated that budget cuts would automatically take effect in January 2013, since Congress could not determine a debt reduction plan by November 2011. If the act is not repealed, the cuts will be split among government entities over a 10-year period.

While the cuts are to be apportioned equally among defense and non-defense spending, many university leaders are concerned the cuts could have unpredictable, but drastic, effects on their budgets.

"No one really knows how this will be implemented," said Bradley Ballou, director of federal government relations for the UNC system. "It's an axe rather than a scalpel."

Melissa Vetterkind, director of federal relations at Duke University, said the cuts could have serious implications for faculty members seeking research funding.

"Clearly we'll be dealing with a smaller pot of money from which our faculty members can compete."

Jennifer Poulakidas, vice president of governmental affairs for the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, said research grants for universities could be cut by 10 percent in 2013.

She said fees associated with student loans would also increase.

Poulakidas said budget cuts are directed towards investing in higher education and not towards entitlement programs — such as Medicaid and Social Security.

"It's a lame way out. You are not being strategic, you are not

"No one really knows how this will be implemented. It's an axe rather than a scalpel."

Bradley Ballou,
UNC-system federal relations director

taking priorities into consideration," said Poulakidas. "You are not even touching on some of the bigger parts of the budget."

In response to the Congress' failure to create a debt reduction plan, a letter organized and signed by university leaders from every state was sent to President Barack Obama and congressional leaders last week.

Among the signatories are five leaders from the UNC system — including UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor Holden Thorp and UNC-system President Thomas Ross.

Vetterkind said previous efforts by universities to prevent the imposition of cuts were ignored.

Barry Toiv, spokesperson for the Association of American Universities, said presidents are increasingly concerned that the deficit and debt must be controlled in a way that preserves investments in university research and education.

He said his association, along with the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, will be actively visiting congressional leaders to encourage a bipartisan solution to the national debt that does not harm universities.

Despite the consensus among universities about the cuts, Toiv said politics would likely prevent the repeal of the cuts for the foreseeable future.

"We would like them to act earlier rather than later, but the reality is that this would not be addressed until after the election," Toiv said.

Contact the State & National Editor at state@dailytarheel.com.

FPG will begin magnet conversion

New dual-language will be added to Frank Porter Graham this year.

By Ariel Smith and Chessa DeCain
Senior Writers

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education will have their first meeting of the 2012-13 school year on Thursday, but the dual-language program is not on the agenda.

Though the transition of Frank Porter Graham Elementary School to a magnet school will not finish until the 2013-14 school year, it will enroll two kindergarten and first grade dual-language classes this year.

The application for students who wish to join the Spanish dual-language program at Frank Porter Graham this year was due July 13.

Frank Porter Graham students will receive preference for the program — but the application was open to all eligible students in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. In June, the school board

voted 5-1 to convert Frank Porter Graham into a magnet school.

Board members said the conversion will help reduce overcrowding in other elementary schools in the district and expand the Spanish dual-language program.

Neighborhood students at Frank Porter Graham will eventually be redistricted.

School officials said they weren't sure how many applications were received for Frank Porter Graham's dual-language program this year, or how many will be accepted. Human resources director for the district Arasi Adkins and dual-language coordinator Jose Nambo were not available Tuesday for comment.

But Assistant Superintendent Todd LoFrese said most, if not all of the available spaces, will be given to current families at Frank Porter Graham.

"The impact on families is going to be minimal this year," he said.

Transportation Director Jim Ellis said if any district students are added to Frank Porter Graham's dual-language program

this year, the effect on the bus system will be minimal.

"If you were at FPG last year, you will be at FPG this year," Ellis said. "There might be a few added, but that number is minute."

Ellis said the bus routes for the district will be finalized in August and will be available online for parents to see when they are released.

LoFrese said the district will also form a team to help with Frank Porter Graham's transition to a magnet school, which will be made up of parents and staff members.

Many parents with children currently at Frank Porter Graham are against the transition.

Andrew Davidson, a parent and member of Frank Porter Graham's school improvement team, said he disagreed with the plan.

"This isn't traditional redistricting," he said. "This is a redistricting being forced on the students for the purposes of the magnet school."

Davidson said his two children would stay at the school this year, but he said his younger child will likely be redistricted for the 2013-14 school year.

Board member Mike Kelley said there were two driving factors in his decision to vote for the transition — the accessibility of the program to the entire district and the necessity to expand it.

"This is likely to change the dynamic of the school," he said. "But that isn't something that doesn't happen naturally."

Despite controversy, Kelley said he stood by the decision.

"I think that it's a change that will be good in the end," he said.

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