



**RALEIGH,
NORTH CAROLINA**

For Immediate Release . . .

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REGISTERED CITIZENS BANISHED FROM N.C. STATE FAIR ***Murderers, thieves, drunk drivers, child abusers...Welcome!***

Raleigh, North Carolina . . . For the first time since 1891, thousands of North Carolina citizens and taxpayers are legally prohibited from attending the annual State Fair. African Americans were officially “uninvited” to attend in 1891 and remained ostracized from fair activities until the creation of so-called “Colored days” in the early Twentieth Century. The State Fair wouldn’t become fully re-integrated until 1965 when black and white 4H clubs were first allowed to compete for awards alongside each other.

Due to the recent passage of a new premises statute by the N.C. General Assembly, registered sex offenders who have served their criminal sentences and fulfilled all their probation or post-release supervision obligations—individuals whose civil rights are otherwise restored—are banned from being “on the State Fairgrounds during the period of time each year that the State Fair is conducted.” (N.C.G.S. § 14-208.18(a)(4)).

Many banished registrants are fathers and mothers with children who wish to visit the State Fair but will likely either forgo the occasion or find some other means of attending and enjoying the event. Still, for children who look forward to participating in livestock and poultry exhibitions with their registered dad or grandpa, the new law only serves as a painful reminder about the deprivations imposed on citizens whose crimes may have been committed many years ago.

One such son (whose name will remain anonymous) explained, “I’ve been involved with my 4H club since I was 7-years-old and my dad has always been able to take an active role. Everyone has been cool about it. Now this. What’s the point? Kids are safer by dividing families? That’s good law? I think it’s pathetic.”

Another registrant who has been serving for twelve years as a chief coordinator for one of the fair’s oldest and best known eateries can no longer participate. His church family is crestfallen about it and has had a difficult time finding a replacement with enough knowledge and experience to fill his shoes.

“This new law simply goes too far. It’s egregious and outrageous. It’s overkill. Sheriff Harrison and Buck Newton know full well that there is not, and never has been, a problem with registered sex offenders attending the State Fair,” said Robin Vanderwall, president of North Carolina RSOL.

“The purest method of measuring sexual danger at the fair requires looking at the actual data. How many sex assaults have there been? How many kidnappings? How many rapes? Can Donnie

even provide a count? I doubt very much there is any substantial evidence pointing to a predatory problem at the State Fair. And I am quite certain that such a problem, even if it were to exist, would not be on account of any crimes being committed by registered sex offenders. Zero.” Vanderwall concluded.

North Carolina RSOL was organized and incorporated in early 2016 when several registrants and their supporters formed to create a more visible presence throughout the state after being urged on by reports of resurgent legislative efforts to enact tougher laws against North Carolina's more than 17,000 registered sex offenders and their families.