

Good Trouble protests honor Lewis

Lawmaker was critic of 1st Trump administration

Sarah D. Wire
USA TODAY

Tens of thousands of protesters are expected to gather at more than 1,600 locations nationwide July 17 to rally against many of the Trump administration’s policies.

The name for the Good Trouble Lives On protests comes from a phrase commonly used by the late Rep. John Lewis, a civil rights icon, who insisted it was important to engage in “good trouble, necessary trouble” in order to achieve positive social change.

Lewis, who was often called the “moral compass” of the House, was one of the most vocal critics of President Donald Trump’s first administration. The protests are scheduled for the fifth anniversary of Lewis’ death.

Organizers called on the public to protest the Trump administration’s stance on women’s rights, cuts to safety net programs, treatment of immigrants and use of the National Guard to quell largely peaceful protests in California.

Celina Stewart, chief executive officer of the League of Women Voters, one of the organizing groups, said Trump rules by fear, silencing opposition and dissent. Americans should instead band together and embody Lewis’ ideals of social justice and activism, she said.

“What would he encourage us to do in this moment?” Stewart asked. “That is going to look different for all of us, but I know that all of us can do something, and many of us can do many things.”

The White House said Trump is delivering on what he said he would do.

“Nearly 80 million Americans gave President Trump a historic mandate to Make America Great Again and he is delivering on that promise in record time,” said Liz Huston, a White House spokesperson.

Many of the advocacy groups planning the upcoming protest were also involved in the nationwide No Kings demonstrations on June 14, which drew millions of participants across 2,100 locations, according to the group’s



Protesters gather for a “No Kings since 1776” protest near the Wayne Lyman Morse U.S. Courthouse in Eugene, Oregon, on July 4.
BEN LONERGAN/EUGENE REGISTER-GUARD

estimates.

In communities across the country, there have been monthly protests against the administration’s policies since April.

The flagship event this time will be in Chicago, with additional large peaceful protests planned for Atlanta; St. Louis; Annapolis, Maryland; and Washington, D.C..

Hundreds of smaller events are expected in U.S. cities and towns. Some international protests are also scheduled.

Along with protests and marches, some groups will hold “moral assemblies” at statehouses and federal buildings, food drives, teach-ins, voter registration drives and other community-building events, said Allison Pulliam, co-director of one of the organizing groups, Declaration for American Democracy Coalition.

“People are showing up in their communities in the ways that they feel led to show up, and that’s just exactly what Congressman Lewis meant when he talked about good trouble: finding ways to be of service to your community,” she said.

Rather than holding the nationwide

“I know that all of us can do something, and many of us can do many things.”

Celina Stewart
CEO, League of Women Voters, one of the organizing groups

protests on a Saturday, as advocacy groups have largely done this year, organizers decided to hold the events on the fifth anniversary of Lewis’ death, even though it falls on a Thursday.

Daryl Jones, the co-leader of the Transformative Justice Coalition, said organizers got Lewis’ family’s permission to use his name with the protests. They asked that it not be a somber occasion, but one that would take up his cause.

Many of the protests are scheduled to take place after the workday ends to increase participation. Some are also scheduled for early in the morning.

Organizers said they aren’t worried that a Thursday protest will mean lower turnout.

“This is the largest one-day voting rights (and) civil rights movement ac-

tion in all 50 states and internationally in U.S. history, and the largest weekday action this year,” promised Barbara Arnwine, another co-leader of the Transformative Justice Coalition. “People are happy to gather in a celebratory protest.”

This day of action follows the model advocacy groups have used since the spring, holding events in as many locations as possible, rather than in one or two major cities.

The approach can be harder for the public to ignore and allows people to connect with local resources and perform local advocacy, organizers have said, rather than attend a single large event and not know what to do next.

Palm Beach County, Florida, where Trump’s Mar-a-Lago estate is located, will be the site of five events, for example, including a march, a car parade and speakers talking about Lewis’ legacy.

In Yonkers, New York, the local NAACP and Indivisible chapters teamed up to host an event in Van Der Donck Park, which is near the train station and library. They expect at least 200 people to attend.

“The idea is to make a little noise,” said Eileen O’Connor, who co-founded the NYCD 16/15 Indivisible group.

Holding the event during the week and after work is an effort to make the event easier for families to attend, said Kisha Skipper, president of NAACP-Yonkers Branch No. 2188, as well as an effort to engage younger people. Lewis became an advocate while in college, organizing lunch counter sit-ins in Nashville.

Along with bubbles, sidewalk chalk and sign-making stations, the event will also include voter education and registration information, Skipper said.

In Annapolis, seven local organizations worked together to put together a march over two local bridges.

“We are marching over the bridges to symbolize John Lewis’ march over the Edmund Pettus Bridge,” said Lynda Davis, one of the organizers with Showing Up for Racial Justice Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. “We’re still marching for civil and human rights like he did, and we will continue to march until we get civil and human rights.”

Union says immigration judges fired across U.S.

Eduardo Cuevas
USA TODAY

The Justice Department in recent days fired more than a dozen immigration court judges across the country, according to the union that represents them.

The firings of 17 immigration judges since July 11 – 15 that day and 2 on July 14 – comes as the Trump administration looks to rapidly detain and deport migrants in the country. The judges were in federal courts in 10 states, including California, Louisiana, New York and Texas, according to the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, which represents immigration judges.

“This is nonsensical,” Matt Biggs, the union president, said in a statement. “The answer is to stop firing, and start hiring.”

A union spokesperson said all 17 were fired without cause. Biggs said there remain around 600 judges, which fall under the Department of Justice’s Executive Office for Immigration Review.

A spokesperson for the Executive Office for Immigration Review declined to comment.

Immigration Courts have a backlog of over 3.6 million cases, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, a nonprofit data research center affiliated with Syracuse University. Cases take years for final determinations on whether people can stay in the country as migrants navigate complex legal systems, often without legal representation.

Through the recent federal spending law signed by President Donald Trump, the Executive Office of Immigration Review will get a lump sum of \$3.3 billion, according to the American Immigration Council. This limits the office to 800 immigration judges, which comes as congressional spending has dramatically increased to detain and deport people, with nearly \$171 billion allocated in the law.

“Rather than speeding up immigration adjudication, the actions of the



Immigration courts have faced increasing scrutiny as migrants looking to attend regular hearings are detained by masked agents.
SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Department of Justice and (Executive Office for Immigration Review) are wasting taxpayer dollars by making the backlog worse and decimating judicial independence,” Biggs said.

Immigration courts have faced increasing scrutiny as migrants looking to attend regular hearings are detained entering or exiting courtrooms by masked agents. They have become the center of protests across the country, including in Los Angeles and New York.

Since May, immigrant rights advocates and observers have noted judges have approved motions to dismiss deportation cases by government lawyers, and agents then detain migrants after proceedings. Migrants, now in detention, are then fast-tracked to removal from the country.

A union spokesperson said most of the 17 judges fell into two classes that were in probationary hiring periods ending in mid- to late-July, though some had been employed for a number of years.

Since Trump took office in January, over 100 judges and management-level judges have either been fired, voluntarily left after receiving “Fork in the Road” notices to resign, or transferred out of immigration courts, the union said.

The union said it takes at least a year to recruit, hire and train a new judge. They hear between 500 and 700 cases annually, and the firings will only add to the backlog, the union said.

Return of Confederate base names barred in House panel’s bill

Hegseth cites ‘morale’ in desire to reverse changes

Cybele Mayes-Osterman
and Davis Winkie
USA TODAY

A House committee attempted to ban Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth from using official funds to change military base names to evoke their original, Confederate-inspired titles in a rebuke of his war on diversity and inclusion policies in the military.

The House Armed Services Committee passed an amendment to its annual defense policy bill barring the Pentagon from using any of the funds from next year’s defense budget to rename Defense Department installations in honor of Confederate figures.

The amendment, which was proposed by Rep. Marilyn Strickland, D-Washington, barely eked its way into the bill, with two Republicans, Reps. Derek Schmidt of Kansas and Don Bacon of Nebraska, voting with Democrats on July 16 to include it.

“This attack on diversity, equity and inclusion is really an attempt to suppress, erase, and make some people invisible, while elevating others,” Strickland said at a July 15 session to mark up the bill.

Hegseth has restored part of the original, Confederate names of Fort Bragg and Fort Benning as part of his pledge to eradicate what he calls “wokeness” in the military.

But in his orders to rename the bases, Hegseth skirted the requirements of a Biden-era commission created to change Confederate-inspired names of military installations by renaming the bases after two decorated veterans with the same last names as the Confederate figures for which they were originally named.

The Pentagon declined to comment on pending legislation, and it is unclear if Hegseth will also be able to avoid the

amendment’s requirements.

The vice chair of the base renaming commission, retired Army Brig. Gen. Ty Seidule, praised the amendment.

Seidule, who led the history department at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, told USA TODAY he was “proud” of the committee for respecting “the will of the American people” as expressed when Congress created the bipartisan naming commission in 2021.

The commission had renamed Fort Benning, in Georgia, to Fort Moore in honor of Vietnam War Gen. Hal Moore and his wife, Julia, and Fort Bragg, in North Carolina, to Fort Liberty in 2023. Both were originally named after Civil War Confederate generals who fought for slavery.

Hegseth signed an order in March restoring the name Benning to Fort Moore by naming it after Cpl. Fred G. Benning, a World War I veteran awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. He renamed Fort Liberty in February after Private First Class Roland Bragg, who was awarded the Silver Star for his service in World War II.

In a June 10 speech to Fort Bragg, President Donald Trump said he would also restore other military base names, including “Fort Pickett, Fort Hood, Fort Gordon, Fort Rucker, Fort Polk, Fort A.P. Hill and Fort Robert E. Lee.”

“We won a lot of battles out of those forts – it’s no time to change,” he added.

At a Senate budget hearing in June, Hegseth said restoring the base names was “important for the morale” of the military.

“Ask people that serve at Fort Bragg or Fort Benning if they like the fact that the names have been returned,” he said.

Hegseth has said changing the Confederate base names breaks a “generational link,” calling it “garbage.”



Hegseth