

Congressional candidate Nina Turner joins Civil Rights coalition demanding a name change of CSU's Cle

Written by Kathy
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Pictured is Ohio 11th congressional district candidate Nina Turner, a former state senator, at Cleveland State University protesting the name of the law college on April 14. Protesters say that Cleveland State University's Cleveland Marshall College of Law bears the name of a former slave owner and should be changed.

Photo compliments of Jaden Strambolia.

Clevelandurbannews.com and Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com

By Kathy Wray Coleman, associate publisher, editor

CLEVELAND, Ohio- Ohio 11th Congressional District candidate Nina Turner has joined a coalition of students, activists, elected officials and area Civil Rights organizations such as the Cleveland NAACP and the Cleveland chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to demand a vote by the Cleveland State University Board of Trustees by May 1 on whether to remove the name of slaveholder and former U.S. Supreme Court chief justice John Marshall from CSU's Cleveland-Marshall College of Law.

A former Ohio senator who narrowly lost a special primary election for the congressional seat last year, Turner hopes to win the May 3 Democratic primary over current Congresswoman Shontel Brown, a Warrensville Hts Democrat. (Editor's note: Danielle Sydnor is the signatory president of the Cleveland NAACP and activist Marcia McCoy is president of the SCLC Cleveland chapter, and the local chapter of the National Action Network).

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Also a former Cleveland council woman and surrogate for the presidential campaigns of U.S. Sen Bernie Sanders, who has endorsed her, the former state lawmaker joined the Rev Al Sharpton's National Action Network local chapter and law students in protesting the law school's name at a rally in front of the school on April 14.

"To the students of this law school at the Cleveland State University, I am saying to you that I am in solidarity with you," Turner told the protesters. "And I am proud because you are walking the path of freedom fighters that came before you, you see a wrong and you are trying to rectify that wrong. You are going against the status quo to rectify that wrong, and this name is going to come down."

Led by Ward 9 Councilman Kevin Conwell, Cleveland City Council passed a resolution earlier this year demanding such a name change and Cuyahoga County Council, led by County Council President Pernel Jones Jr., has also signed on to push the initiative with support from other members of the 11-member county council including council persons Sunny Simon, Meredith Turner, and Yvonne Conwell, the wife of Councilman Conwell.

Friday will be the last opportunity for the current nine-member board of trustees to vote on the [issue before board trustee Thomas Alder's](#)

term ends. Law students advocating for the change say they are concerned that CSU administrators and trustees have been attempting to run out the clock to avoid the vote on the name change before May 1 and prior to new trustee members coming aboard who are against

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the name change. The law students previously sent a letter to law school dean Lee Fisher, a former lieutenant governor, seeking support.

Black law students in particular say the trustees have refused to hold a vote on the name changing controversy, even though a great number of faculty, staff, and law students in general have urged them to do so by spring commencement, which is May 15.

Students Against Marshall, a multiracial group, say the list of those supporting the name change is growing and that no other law student graduates should have to graduate with a slave owner's name on a diploma. They also argue that it is nonsensical for any law school or other institution of learning of substance to continue to undermine Black people by carrying Justice Marshall's name, a one time slave owner whose house and field hands raped and beat Black women and killed, maimed and castrated Black male slaves.

As Justice Marshall's legacy continues to come into question, frustration is growing with the slow response from the administration and board of trustees members regarding the controversial name changing matter that comes as discussions around racism in higher education become more prevalent in recent years. For more information contact [Students Against Marshall](#)

or

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By Kathy Wray Coleman, associate publisher, editor. Coleman is a seasoned Black Cleveland journalist who trained at the Call and Post Newspaper for 17 years and an experienced investigative and political reporter. She is the most read independent journalist in Ohio per Alexa.com [Clevelandurbannews.com](#) and [Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com](#), the mos

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