

TO: Prospective Donors

FROM: Kimberly Reynolds, North Carolina Democratic Party Executive Director

Date: February 26, 2018

Republican Overreach on ACP Fund Puts House Majority into Play

Republicans are facing deep losses this fall. President Trump is historically unpopular, and his scandal-plagued administration dominates voters' attention. The party out of power on average has lost 280 legislative seats during the midterm of a president's first year. And Democrats are turning out in historic numbers across the country, while Independents break left as they watch Republicans mismanage our country and our state, drive up voters' health care premiums, and rig the economy against the middle class.

In North Carolina, Republicans are hoping their nearly-decade long effort to rig the system will help them hold onto power. Now, over the course of the last month, NC GOP has started a desperate election year strategy: throw wild conspiracies at Governor Cooper and hope it lessens their losses. However, these reckless attacks are having the unintended consequence of opening new opportunities for Democratic candidates in rural communities.

Their latest move – raiding a fund established to help bring jobs to eastern NC – is their opening salvo. However, this manufactured political stunt is already backfiring. Our base is coalescing around a popular Democratic governor. Republicans are on the wrong side of their rural voters. And Democratic candidates have a new line of attack on a personal issue – jobs – to campaign on. Voters see Republicans' gambit as another power grab, but this time the consequence is jobs in their counties – something that affects them personally.

Put together, Republicans' overreach is putting new districts into play. With newly competitive seats in once politically difficult areas for Democrats, Republicans may have even put their House majority into play. The North Carolina Democratic Party is launching a new campaign to hold Republicans accountable for threatening jobs in eastern NC. Mail pieces and digital ads will launch in the coming weeks, but we need your support to ensure that Republicans are held accountable and that voters understand how Republicans raided a fund meant to bring new jobs to eastern North Carolina.

Political Climate Points to Deep GOP Losses This Fall

- The party in control of the White House has **lost seats in state legislatures in 27 of the last 29 midterm elections**; on average, the president's political party has **lost 280 legislative seats during the midterms** of his first term.
- In all midterms in modern history, the sitting president has needed a net-positive job approval in the double-digits to stave off losses.
- According to recent polling, **38 percent of North Carolina voters approve** of President Trump and **50 percent disapprove**; nationally, 39 percent approve and 56 percent disapprove.
- Governor Cooper has a **+20 approval rating** (46 percent approve vs. 26 disapprove).

NC GOP Raided a Job Growth Fund for Partisan Politics

- The Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) Fund originated with a group of concerned local leaders who wanted to ensure that the ACP delivered on its promises of new jobs and economic development.
 - This fund would help businesses access the pipeline, bringing new jobs and attracting new industries.
- Republicans attacked Gov. Cooper, raided the fund, and robbed eastern NC of tens of millions of dollars in needed economic development.
- According a WRAL editorial, “The controversy is really about the legislature’s desperation to manufacture an election-year kerfuffle. It’s a ‘Hail Mary’ to try to make the governor look bad.”

Republican Overreach Makes New Districts Competitive – And Threatens Their House Majority

- This short-sighted decision gives Democrats in right-leaning districts an easy to understand, kitchen table issue – **[Rep. X] killed jobs in our county** – to campaign on.
- Republicans are **already playing defense across North Carolina**, especially in new Special Master maps. As we saw in Virginia, Alabama, and in legislative races across the South, suburban voters are breaking Democratic and African-Americans are turning out at higher rates.
- NCDP is already targeting vulnerable members in competitive districts such as Rep. Brisson in HD22 (43% voted for Cooper in 2016) and Sen. Meredith in SD19 (49% voted for Cooper in 2016).
- Republican’s attacks put other, less competitive districts in the eight counties along the proposed pipeline route into play. **Only a few members were on NCDP’s target list** before Republicans launched this attack. New targets include:
 - HD26 – White
 - HD28 – Strickland
 - HD22 – Brisson
 - HD45 – Szoka
 - HD46 – Jones
 - HD53 – Lewis
 - HD10 – Bell
 - HD4 – Dixon
 - SD19 – Meredith
 - SD13 – Britt
 - SD11 – Horner
 - SD10 – Jackson
 - SD8 – Rabon
 - SD6 – Brown

Republicans have overplayed their hand and will now pay a steep political price, one that may end up costing them a chamber. NCDP needs your help to ensure that **Republicans have to answer** to eastern North Carolina about why partisan politics was worth threatening \$58 million in economic development