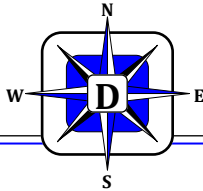


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## **UPDATE - Governor Perdue: from Dumb Luck to Lame Duck; Slim Odds of Winning a Second term as Governor of North Carolina**

**Post: July 28, 2011      Vol. IV, No. 18      **UPDATED JANUARY 26, 2012****

*“What if I decide instead to spend my last two years doing what I think is right. Veto any bill I don’t like. Go out as a principled fighter and leader, not just another politician. Go out on my own terms, unlike most politicians. Then go make a lot of money and enjoy life.”*

**Imaginary musings of Gov. Perdue as envisioned by Democrat consultant Gary Pearce,**  
[Talking About Politics, March 3, 2011](#)

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Today’s news that Gov. Beverly Perdue will not seek reelection comes as no surprise. Throughout her administration, polls have put her 10 points behind in a rematch with her GOP rival Pat McCrory, and her job approval in the mid-30s, [with the number of North Carolinians disapproving of the job she is doing near or above 50%](#). Eventually, her negative ratings raised so much doubt about her re-electability that many of her financial backers switched their support to Republican Pat McCrory.

The erosion of her financial support was the straw that broke the camels back. Last November 2, the **News & Observer** carried a story titled [McCrory nabs Perdue backers](#), in which many of her former supporters talked about why they were jumping ship. Here are two examples:

*“It’s absolutely nothing personal,”* said Democrat George Jones, a former mayor of Jacksonville and Perdue backer and the host of a McCrory fundraiser. *“Bev has swung hard to the left,”* he continued. *“I can’t support her policies and the direction she’s pursuing for this state.”*

Another former supporter, Danny McQueen, a Morehead City furniture store owner, said, *“She had an opportunity to work with Republicans and she chose not to do that. ... That’s the reason that I switched.”*

Last year, the July 28 **John Davis Political Report** titled, ***Governor Perdue: From Dumb Luck to Lame Duck***, concluded, *“I submit that after a dismal year of ineffective leadership, as judged*

*by chronic low job approval and favorability ratings ... as judged by one major legislative failure after another ... retiring after this term is her only choice. She is a lame duck."*

What follows is that report in its entirety, so that you can see that the handwriting has been on the wall for a long time:

## **Governor Perdue: from Dumb Luck to Lame Duck; Slim Odds of Winning a Second term as Governor of North Carolina**

**Post: July 28, 2011      Vol. IV, No. 18**

*"What if I decide instead to spend my last two years doing what I think is right. Veto any bill I don't like. Go out as a principled fighter and leader, not just another politician. Go out on my own terms, unlike most politicians. Then go make a lot of money and enjoy life."*

Imaginary musings of Gov. Perdue as envisioned by Democrat consultant Gary Pearce, [Talking About Politics, March 3, 2011](#)

### **This Week's Veto Overrides Signal the Inevitable Decision for Governor Perdue**

With all due respect, if Governor Beverly Perdue cannot stop the veto overrides of the budget and some the most significant pieces of reform legislation in decades ... including Regulatory Reform, Medical Malpractice Reform, Medicaid/Health Choice Provider Requirement, and today's Abortion reform ... then she needs to seriously reconsider a run for a second term.

Gary Pearce, one of North Carolina's most successful Democratic campaign consultants and author of the biography of Jim Hunt, ruminated in his blog in March that Perdue just may be looking at her situation and thinking that if she didn't run she could do as she pleased, veto any bill she didn't like, and go out on her own terms. "Then go make a lot of money and enjoy life," surmised Pearce. He ended his blog with, "That's not a bad life choice."

I submit that after a dismal year of ineffective leadership, as judged by chronic low job approval and favorability ratings ... as judged by one major legislative failure after another ... retiring after this term is her only choice. She is a lame duck.

### **Should Perdue Run? Numbers Say "No" Despite Record of 10 Wins and "1 Loss"**

Governor Beverly Perdue, a Craven County Democrat, is one of the most successful campaigners in North Carolina history. She has won every race "except one," including two terms in the N.C. House, five terms in the N.C. Senate, two statewide bids for Lt. Governor, and her 2008 race against Treasurer Richard Moore for the Democratic Party nominee for governor.

In 2008, Perdue failed to win the race for governor against GOP nominee Pat McCrory, but was handed the keys to the mansion anyway thanks to historic voter registration and turnout by the Obama campaign for President. Dumb luck. No President Obama; no Governor Perdue.

- Perdue's relatively weak candidacy when compared to McCrory can be seen in the fact that even after outspending him \$14.9 million to his \$6.7 million *during a terrible turnout year for Republicans and an Obama-driven historic turnout year for Democrats*, she barely won in what was the closest governor's race in America. Dumb luck.
- In a mid-July 2011 poll by the Democratic firm **Public Policy Polling**, only 34% of North Carolinians approved of Perdue's performance as governor; 49% disapproved.
- PPP poll: "Independents disapproved by a wide margin." Only 31% of NC's Independent voters approve of Perdue's performance as governor; 57% disapprove.
- PPP poll: "Perdue trails McCrory statewide (39% to 47%)."
- PPP poll: "McCrory's advantage is built on a massive lead among Independents," (57% to only 28% for Perdue).

Further evidence of a weakened candidacy is the campaign fundraising report filed this week with the NC State Board of Elections. Perdue reported raising \$1.3 million, with an outstanding debt to herself and her husband of \$776,500 and cash on hand totaling \$1.3 million. McCrory reporting raising a little over \$1 million, with \$940,000 in the bank.

A strong incumbent Governor seeking a second term would have raised considerably more than \$1.3 million by now ... and certainly should have raised a lot more than the challenger.

### **Forecast: Obama Wins White House in 2012 Without NC; Perdue Loses.**

It's very important to remember that Obama won North Carolina by only 14,177 votes out of 4.3 million. North Carolina was Obama's closest win despite a weak Republican opponent and a year-long commitment of millions of dollars to a ground game second to none in state history ... as measured by new registrations of African Americans, young voters and a record voter turnout.

The Obama campaign opened 47 headquarters in North Carolina and hired over 400 paid staff. These young professionals were responsible for a record *early voting* total of 2.6 million (only 984,000 voted early in 2004), more voters than on Election Day. Seven out of 10 of the early voters were either Democrats (51%) or Unaffiliated (19%). African Americans comprised 28% of early voters, as compared to only 19% in 2004.

Yet despite Obama's investment yielding hundreds of thousands of new registered Democrats and millions of early voters in 2008, Perdue defeated McCrory by only 145,021 votes out of 4.27 million. It was just dumb luck.

Even if the economy begins to recover, Obama's job approval numbers return to a safe 50%, and he wins the White House, he is not likely to carry North Carolina. If Obama can't carry North Carolina, Perdue can't win the governor's race; especially as a lame duck.

- END -

**Thank You for Reading the John Davis Political Report!**

*John N. Davis, Editor*