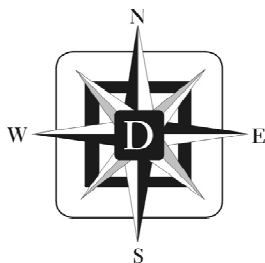


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## NC Senate Democrats Continue Political Dominance

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*John Davis Political Report is a COMPLIMENTARY in-depth summary of the key political trends and events impacting North Carolina politics. You may circulate as you wish. John Davis has followed NC politics for 23 years, serving as President of NCFREE and Editor of the Almanac of North Carolina Politics. He is President of John Davis Consulting, specializing in political research, analysis, forecasting and private briefings.*

*“We Hire the Best People We Can Hire. It’s Not Friendship, It’s Business.”* Democrats continue their dominance of North Carolina Senate politics thanks to a politically seasoned and disciplined team of senate leaders and consultants, along with unprecedented fundraising. They also benefited from the best organized and most successful voter registration and turnout operation in state history, compliments of U.S. President-elect Barack Obama, and an anti-GOP era compliments of President George W. Bush.

Senate Democrats will enjoy a 30-member majority in the 50-member senate, losing only one seat to a Republican: Rep. Debbie Clary (R-Cleveland) who won the senate seat held by Lt. Gov.-elect Walter Dalton by edging out Keith Melton (D-Rutherford).

The average cost of a winning competitive senate race is about \$500,000, with the most challenging wins running closer to \$1 million. The latest reports on file with the State Board of Elections shows Sen. Julia Boseman (D-New Hanover) raising around \$850,000, with about \$550,000 of that total coming from the Democratic Party. Final reports will likely show over \$1 million raised and spent by Boseman. News sources reported that legislative Democrats had a \$7.2 million war chest; Republicans had a \$2.1 million war chest. That amount will increase considerably when the year-end reports are filed next January, and does not account for the additional \$ millions spent by independent groups on behalf of legislative candidates.

This team of Senate Democrats is the best of the best; the national model political war machine. What is the secret to their 14-year reign? During an interview with Senate Majority Leader Tony Rand (D-Cumberland) last fall he told me, “We hire the best people we can hire; we run it like a business. It’s not friendship, it’s business.”

As you will see on the attached table of select state senate campaigns, if it were not for a well-disciplined political war machine and a 5-to-1 financial advantage, many of these senators would have lost.

| <b>NC Senate Results – Competitive Campaigns</b><br>Income rounded from Reports filed with the State Board of Elections (Add 10% to come closer to final \$). |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Results</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Income Estimate</b> | <b>Party \$</b> | <b>Other PAC Committees</b> |
| <b>Julia Boseman (D)</b><br><b>New Hanover County</b>                                                                                                         | 49,980         | 52%      | \$846,000              | \$537,000       | \$78,050                    |
| <b>Michael Lee (R)</b><br><b>New Hanover County</b>                                                                                                           | 46,789         | 48%      | \$255,000              | \$70,600        | \$8,000                     |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>R.C. Soles (D)</b><br><b>Columbus County</b>                                                                                                               | 47,811         | 49%      | \$404,000              | \$90,018        | \$121,171                   |
| <b>Betty Fennell (R)</b><br><b>Pender County</b>                                                                                                              | 44,943         | 46%      | \$144,343              | \$120,061       | \$7,000                     |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>David Hoyle (D)</b><br><b>Gaston County</b>                                                                                                                | 35,677         | 51%      | \$492,327              | \$90,936        | \$199,183                   |
| <b>Kathy Harrington (R)</b><br><b>Gaston County</b>                                                                                                           | 33,623         | 49%      | \$81,000               | \$37,000        | \$6,000                     |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>John Snow (D)</b><br><b>Cherokee County</b>                                                                                                                | 46,262         | 57%      | \$172,766              | \$18,371        | \$47,200                    |
| <b>Susan Pons (R)</b><br><b>Macon County</b>                                                                                                                  | 34,241         | 43%      | \$60,000               | \$13,000        | \$3,000                     |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>Steve Goss (D)</b><br><b>Watauga County</b>                                                                                                                | 45,865         | 54%      | \$160,000              | \$80,000        | \$28,600                    |
| <b>Jerry Butler (R)</b><br><b>Watauga County</b>                                                                                                              | 39,158         | 46%      | \$72,000               |                 | \$3,000                     |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>Tony Foriest (D)</b><br><b>Alamance County</b>                                                                                                             | 38,083         | 52%      | \$600,000              | \$453,194       | \$29,240                    |
| <b>Rick Gunn (R)</b><br><b>Alamance County</b>                                                                                                                | 34,490         | 48%      | \$280,000              | \$110,000       | \$10,000                    |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |

| <b>NC Senate Results – Competitive Campaigns</b><br>Income rounded from Reports filed with the State Board of Elections (Add 10% to come closer to final \$). |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Results</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Income Estimate</b> | <b>Party \$</b> | <b>Other PAC Committees</b> |
| <b>Joe Sam Queen (D)</b><br><b>Haywood County</b>                                                                                                             | 41,599         | 54%      | \$500,000              | \$300,420       | \$28,000                    |
| <b>Keith Presnell (R)</b><br><b>Yancy County</b>                                                                                                              | 35,898         | 46%      | \$75,000               | \$30,000        | \$24,450                    |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>Don Davis (D)</b><br><b>Green County</b>                                                                                                                   | 22,025         | 55%      | \$425,000              | \$316,298       | \$20,000                    |
| <b>Louis Pate (R)</b><br><b>Wayne County</b>                                                                                                                  | 17,940         | 45%      | \$222,220              | \$89,000        | \$43,000                    |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |
| <b>Debbie Clary (R)</b><br><b>Cleveland County</b>                                                                                                            | 35,867         | 50.5%    | \$225,000              | \$38,000        | \$88,000                    |
| <b>Keith Melton (D)</b><br><b>Rutherford County</b>                                                                                                           | 35,137         | 49.5%    | \$383,000              | \$288,000       | \$20,000                    |
|                                                                                                                                                               |                |          |                        |                 |                             |

Conclusion: I have had the pleasure of watching North Carolina politics for over two decades, and can clearly see that there are fundamentals that are adhered to by those, like the Senate Democrats, who consistently win political campaigns.

First, and foremost, the key to the consistent success by the Senate Democrats is a disciplined inner circle of politically savvy leaders who manage the team with an iron-fisted grip. It does not matter how much power you have or what committee you chair, if you don't need money you don't get a penny. Likewise, it does not matter how unknown or powerless you are, if you need resources to win your campaign you are treated like political royalty.

Second, in addition to a well-led team and a disciplined targeting of resources, Senate Democrats always have a strong roster of new recruits. If there is any doubt about the strength of the average senate Democrat, consider that a senate Democrat is now Governor (Perdue), Lt. Governor (Dalton), Attorney General (Cooper), Secretary of State (Marshall), Treasurer (Cowell), and U.S. Senator (Hagan).

They win because they are disciplined, they hire the best people they can hire, they recruit the best candidates they can recruit, they "... run it like a business. It's not friendship, it's business."