

MEMORANDUM

TO: Real Facts NC
FROM: Hart Research Associates
DATE: January 2, 2018
RE: Recent North Carolina Survey Results

From December 7 to 10, 2017, Hart Research Associates conducted a survey among a representative statewide sample of 602 likely North Carolina voters (margin of error ±4%).

Our survey results show that the Democratic wave that hit the Virginia governor's race and the Alabama US Senate race is poised to similarly impact North Carolina in the 2018 elections.

1. The Republicans in the North Carolina state legislature elicit their highest NEGATIVE image in at least two years. A 55% majority of North Carolinians disapprove of the performance of the Republicans, compared with 35% who approve. In particular, the North Carolina GOP receives extremely unfavorable ratings from key electoral groups such as independents (22% approve, 63% disapprove) and white college graduates (32% approve, 61% disapprove).

Furthermore, when asked to rate the Republicans on the "feelings thermometer," almost half (47%) express a negative view, compared with just 30% who have positive feelings. The 47% negative is the highest we have measured since October 2015, and in fact, the 31% VERY negative eclipses the GOP's 30% TOTAL positive, which affirms the polarizing image of the Republicans.

2. North Carolinians look to the 2018 state legislative elections with a solid preference to elect Democrats, who hold a 47% to 41% advantage over the GOP in the "generic" vote for state legislature. The Democrats have overwhelming support from base groups—92% to 4% among Democrats and 90% to 3% among African Americans—while making important inroads with swing groups such as white women (41% Democrat, 45% Republican), who overwhelmingly voted for Donald Trump (60% to 37%) in 2016.

3. One of the key factors in Democratic victories in Virginia and Alabama, among other 2017 election successes, was heightened Democratic enthusiasm and turnout, and our survey shows that intensity is high among Democrats in North Carolina (and conversely low with Republicans). We asked the following question among our survey respondents: "On a scale of zero to 10, on

which 10 means extremely motivated and zero means not motivated at all, how motivated would you say you are to vote in the 2018 elections for state legislature?" Sixty percent (60%) of North Carolina voters rate themselves as a "10," and as the following table shows, there is a clear trend between those voter groups that are HIGHLY motivated and those that are not:

Proportion Saying They Are Extremely Motivated ("10")	
	%
All Voters	60
Registered Democrats	67
Registered Republicans	51
Clinton voters	68
Trump voters	53

Perhaps the strongest indicator of success in midterm elections is election interest and motivation, with the party that has the STRONGEST interest usually the victors. A double-digit margin in favor of Democrats in North Carolina is an important signal of the likely outcome of the 2018 legislative elections. In fact, in the vote for state legislature the Democrats have a decisive 53% to 36% advantage among voters who are most enthusiastic about voting, compared with a more modest 47% to 41% advantage for Democrats among the overall sample. While there is almost a year until November 2018, our survey in North Carolina mirrors the enthusiasm among Democrats that has presaged Democratic victories in other states, and signals substantial Democratic gains in North Carolina.