



# North Carolina Spirits Association

Legislative Report  
September 1, 2023

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## **Republicans Poised to Override Vetoed Bills**

North Carolina's Republican supermajority plans to continue exercising its veto override power following Democrat Governor Roy Cooper's rejection of two significant bills. Cooper vetoed Senate Bill 747, criticizing it as an attack on voting rights, and Senate Bill 512, which shifts appointment power from the governor to the legislature. Governor Cooper argued that the elections bill aims to consolidate Republican power, while the appointments bill is an unconstitutional power grab. The Republicans, led by House Speaker Tim Moore, have swiftly responded, aiming to override the vetoes and accusing Cooper of misrepresenting the bills. The Republican legislature intends to hold more override votes, possibly as early as the upcoming week, rather than waiting for the anticipated mid-September budget vote.

## **Army Veteran and Green Beret Returns to Congressional Race, Vowing to Champion Core American Values**

Pat Harrigan, an Army Special Forces veteran and combat Green Beret with two Bronze Stars from Afghanistan, has announced his intention to run for Congress in the Republican primary in 2024. The exact congressional district he would run for is still to be determined, pending the legislative redistricting process. He criticizes President Biden's economic policies and foreign policy decisions, aiming to change the nation's course. Despite a previous loss in the 2022 election for NC's 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District to Democrat state Sen. Jeff Jackson, Harrigan is running again, emphasizing his commitment to core American values.

Harrigan, a West Point graduate, served in the Special Forces until 2018. He and his wife started a business after returning home, specializing in firearms manufacturing and defense products. He is focusing his campaign on fighting inflation, prioritizing energy independence, securing the southern border, supporting the 2nd Amendment, addressing crime, ensuring election integrity, and preserving cultural values.

He plans to invest \$500,000 of his own money into his campaign. The possibility of facing off against Congressman Jeff Jackson remains uncertain due to upcoming redistricting, with Jackson considering a run for the Democratic ticket for attorney general in North Carolina.

## **North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper Endorses Attorney General Josh Stein as Successor**

North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, a Democrat, has officially endorsed Attorney General Josh Stein, also a Democrat, as his successor. Governor Cooper, who is unable to run for a third term in 2024 due to term limits, praised Stein's commitment to continuing the progress made in areas

such as education, healthcare, and the state's economy. This endorsement was anticipated as Stein had previously worked in Cooper's consumer protection division during Cooper's tenure as attorney general. The gubernatorial race in North Carolina for the upcoming year is expected to be highly competitive, with Republicans aiming to regain the Executive Mansion. Stein, who has already raised \$6 million for his campaign, is currently the main Democratic candidate. Cooper's endorsement carries significant weight within the party and could discourage other potential Democratic contenders. The primaries are scheduled for March. Republicans have multiple candidates vying for the nomination.

### **Republican Erin Paré Aims to Challenge Democrats' Hold on Triangle-Area Congressional Race**

Republican state Representative Erin Paré from Holly Springs aims to challenge the Democrats' winning trend in Triangle-area congressional races by running for Congress. She plans to represent North Carolina's 13th Congressional District, currently held by Democrat Wiley Nickel. Paré hopes to garner enough conservative support in this historically conservative but increasingly moderate district. She emphasized her willingness to take on the "woke mob" in her announcement. The district has witnessed shifts due to newcomers settling in the Triangle region. Paré would be contending against other Republican candidates, including physician Josh McConkey and former intelligence officer Matt Shoemaker. The exact district boundaries for the 2024 elections are pending legislative redrawing.

### **Update from the General Assembly**

The House will be back in Raleigh next Tuesday for a couple committee meetings, a Republican caucus to discuss casinos and receive a budget update, and a voting session. The Senate is not slated to be back in Raleigh until the week of September 11<sup>th</sup>, when the General Assembly is expected to pass the budget if the current timeline holds. Although if the budget negotiations are nearing a conclusion, the Senate Republicans could come to Raleigh next week to hold a caucus meeting to discuss the budget and other pending items. The budget seems to be on track as the budget chairs hope to complete their work next week while negotiations continue between Senator Berger and Speaker Moore on the few remaining issues.

### **BILL STATUS**

**Senate Bill 527, ABC Omnibus Bill**, is scheduled to be considered in the House ABC Committee on Tuesday September 5. The Committee is expected to debate and vote on the bill at Tuesday's meeting.

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