



Republican Party of Virginia

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To: Southside Units
From: Dave Rexrode, Executive Director
CC: Staff
Date: June 2, 2011
Re: HD 9 Opportunity

Memo

As I'm sure you all know by now, Minority Leader Ward Armstrong has announced his intention to move the 3.5 miles from his current home in new HD 16 to new HD 9, where he will challenge Del. Charlie Poindexter. None of us should be surprised by this move, as it represents Ward's best chance at remaining in the House of Delegates.

While this will make our efforts to retain HD 9 more difficult, *there is little doubt that we will hold the seat*. In fact, our analysis shows that **Ward's move could actually boost our chances at increasing our majority by as many as three seats, independent of any other changes in the environment.**

While Ward can raise money, the funds net little change in the results in November. In 2009, Ward spent nearly \$630,000 in his district — a relatively inexpensive media market. Our challenger, Edward Creed, spent \$11,000. Ward did hold the seat, but with only 56% of the vote. For the investment — about \$69 per vote — and name recognition Ward brought to the table, he should have walked away with at least 65% or more. Much of his spending did go to donations, but with a contested race in an unfavorable environment, Ward's large checks to DPVA headquarters and his fellow candidates won't be as large or as frequent — **essentially deducting \$500,000 to \$750,000 from the Democrat war chest.**

Finances aside, the new HD 9 is an extremely unfavorable environment for any Democratic candidate. As you can see on the attached spreadsheet, George Allen won the district in 2006 by nearly 20 points. In 2008, John McCain won the district by more than 22 points. Governor McDonnell carried the district by 35 points, and our Republican nominees in 2009 walked to victory by more than 22 points.

Even the areas of new HD 9 that were contained in old HD 10 are markedly unfavorable to Democrats. The margins speak for themselves — **Allen by 15.6, McCain by 23.9, McDonnell by 34, and GOP nominees by 21.**

The numbers, however, will make little difference in the media coverage of this race. Ward is known for his ability to cast himself as a scrappy underdog, fighting the good fight against powerful interests. For most media outlets, that's an irresistible story line. Coupled with his position as Minority Leader, the race will draw headlines — and dollars — from all over the Commonwealth.

In the end, we expect this to make little difference. The voters of new HD 9 have demonstrated a clear preference for Republican candidates in recent years. Not only will Ward's decision to run come to an unpleasant end for him, **it could be the impetus that pushes us over 70 in the House.**

Dave

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