Months of Intense Activity Yield Lobby Reform, Other Victories

At crucial points during the debate to strengthen North Carolina’s puny regulations of lobbyists, top state lawmakers received hundreds of emails and calls from Democracy Advocates like you. The public pressure paid off: Some legislative leaders wanted to “let the clock run out” and kill the reform bill, but the drumbeat for change was too loud and persistent.

The victory for lobby reform illustrates what we can achieve with a well-focused goal, a unified coalition and hard work!

Your support as a Democracy Advocate makes the difference!

SUCCESS IN 2005

▪ Enacted lobby reform law.
▪ Signed up 72 legislators as sponsors of public financing for Council of State elections.
▪ Passed “One-Stop Same-Day Registration” bill in a key committee, ready for 2006.
▪ Enacted a law requiring a voter verifiable paper ballot.
▪ Passed Instant Run-off bill in state House, ready for ’06.

For more on legislative wins, go to www.democracy-nc.org

URGENT!

50 days and counting . . .

The News & Observer calls Democracy North Carolina a “splendid watchdog group.”

Bill Friday says we’re a “much-needed advocate for good government.”

Yes, we’ve exposed problems and championed reforms, but our best success comes when hundreds of people take action together, united on a set goal.

In that spirit, we need you to take action NOW in response to a special challenge. Four donors have made this pledge, as an incentive for you to take action as a Democracy Advocate:

If 200 people donate a total of $10,000 before Dec. 31, we’ll get a $10,000 bonus gift.

Please use the form inside to make your gift of $35 to $100 or more, or whatever you can give. Please do it today!

Success depends on many individuals acting together to achieve a common goal.

Thank you for being a Democracy Advocate.

URGENT!

50 days and counting . . .

The News & Observer calls Democracy North Carolina a “splendid watchdog group.”

Bill Friday says we’re a “much-needed advocate for good government.”

Yes, we’ve exposed problems and championed reforms, but our best success comes when hundreds of people take action together, united on a set goal.

In that spirit, we need you to take action NOW in response to a special challenge. Four donors have made this pledge, as an incentive for you to take action as a Democracy Advocate:

If 200 people donate a total of $10,000 before Dec. 31, we’ll get a $10,000 bonus gift.

Please use the form inside to make your gift of $35 to $100 or more, or whatever you can give. Please do it today!

Success depends on many individuals acting together to achieve a common goal.

Thank you for being a Democracy Advocate.
Same-Day Registration & Voting Would Help Youth, All of Us!

Consider these dismal facts about voter participation:
► Year after year, North Carolina is among the worst 15 states for voter turnout.
► One million citizens in NC are not registered to vote.
► Of those, about 350,000 are youth, ages 18 to 25.

Now consider this civic truth: When more people participate in shaping their government, life improves for everyone. In fact, the states with the highest voter turnout, year after year, enjoy the lowest school dropout rates, smallest gaps between rich and poor, least crime, and most equitable tax structures!

Those states also make voting easy. The ones that let citizens register and vote on the same day enjoy a turnout rate that is 8 to 15 percentage points above the national average. The proposal has safeguards against fraud and is approved by top state election officials. A bill that embodies this idea (H-851 by Rep. Deborah Ross) passed a key House committee and will be debated in 2006. For more about the Coalition for Same-Day Registration, call us at 1-888-OUR-VOTE or visit www.democracy-nc.org.

Thank you for supporting Democracy North Carolina with your activism and your donations.

Target: Gamblers’ Illegal Donations

In June 2004, Democracy North Carolina asked the State Board of Elections to investigate an apparent conspiracy by the video-poker industry to make illegal campaign donations. (See our complaint at www.democracy-nc.org.) Because the donations were part of $108,000 the industry gave House Speaker Jim Black, the press and federal agents took notice. Now Black is at the center of controversies involving the lottery, lobbying and video poker. Some wonder if we unfairly “picked on” Black. The truth is we have filed complaints involving Democrats (e.g., Board of Transportation members and road builders) and Republicans (e.g., hog barons and Harold Brubaker), but in this case we said we found no wrongdoing on Black’s part. We did find lots of evidence of corruption by donors which had to be disclosed. Candidates will face even greater pressure from special interests as the money chase intensifies — good reason for public financing, plus ethics and lobbying reforms.

Insider Democracy North Carolina

Beth Messersmith left as codirector of Democracy North Carolina a tad early, with the premature delivery of Aiden in May. Happily, Beth and son (and Papa Jamey) are all doing very well. Beth is the new president of NC Voters for Clean Elections, the public financing coalition, so will continue to be active with us. Elizabeth Waugh-Stewart, former assistant director of The Women’s Center in Chapel Hill, is our new deputy director and is ably leading the organization with Bob Hall and other staff.

Carrie Bolton, longtime organizer and former board chair of Democracy South, suffered a stroke in August, affecting her speech. For a gifted orator and minister, the loss is especially tragic. Thankfully, Carrie is steadily recovering, with therapy & faith. Peter Walz, Democracy Summer coordinator and organizer, will be the new director of organizing for the Conservation Network, a great ally. We’ll miss him dearly, but he’s not going far away!

Inside Democracy North Carolina

Beth and Aiden

YES, I’ll be one of the 200 donors urgently needed before December 31 to secure matching donations of $10,000. Here’s my tax-deductible donation (forward to Democracy North Carolina).

$500 $50 $100 $200 $500 Other $_____

Mail to Democracy-NC, 105 W. Main St., Carrboro, NC 27510. Or complete form online at www.democracy-nc.org

Please sign me up to receive occasional email Action Alerts for election reform. Just send me electronic versions of the newsletter to save postage and paper.

Name: ___________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________State: ____ Zip: __________ Phone: ______________________

Credit Card Donation:

Visa

Mastercard

Card #____________________________________ Exp.__________

Mail to Democracy-NC, 105 W. Main St., Carrboro, NC 27510.

Or complete form online at www.democracy-nc.org

Democracy Advocates

help advance voting rights and electoral reform in NC by responding to action alerts and/or by making a donation. As a Democracy Advocate, you’ll get:

► Regular updates and Action Alerts (if you list an email); notifications of research reports.

RESEARCH & NEWS

AT www.democracy-nc.org

▪ Why Health Care is Sick
▪ Voting Rights Act Renewal
▪ Pollution Lobby Update
▪ Democracy Summer 2006
▪ Judicial Reform in Court

MORE RESEARCH & NEWS AT www.democracy-nc.org

▪ A positive feeling, knowing you’re improving democracy in North Carolina, step by step.