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To: Interested Parties

Subject: Berger Vulnerable to Primary Challenge Due to Casino Project Support

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A new Public Policy Polling survey of Republican primary voters in North Carolina's 26th Senate District finds Senate President Phil Berger is vulnerable to a Republican primary challenge in 2024 due to his support of a project to bring Las Vegas style casinos to Rockingham County. The survey finds that voters in his district are overwhelmingly opposed to legalizing additional casinos in North Carolina and in Rockingham County – they oppose the effort by a 32% margin, with just 28% supporting it and 60% opposed.

Berger starts out underwater in terms of his job performance rating among Republican primary voters: just 26% approve of the job he's doing while 41% disapprove. When asked if they would vote to re-elect Senator Berger or if someone new should be given a chance, just 30% said they would vote to re-elect him while 45% said it was time for someone else.

Other key findings from the survey include:

- Voters were given a series of messages from supporters and opponents of the casino project. When told that supporters say a new casino would bring jobs to the local community and strengthen the economy, just 26% of respondents said that made them more likely to support the project. When voters heard that gaming interests funneled more than \$1 million to North Carolina politicians, 65% of respondents said that would make them less likely to support the casino project.
- 59% of respondents indicated that Berger's leadership in support of the casino project made them feel less favorably towards him while just 13% said it made them feel more favorably towards him.
- After hearing more information about the casino proposal, Republican primary voters were even more likely to oppose Berger in a primary - just 21% said they would vote for him while 55% of the electorate said they would vote for someone new, a net -19% shift from the beginning of the survey.

Public Policy Polling surveyed 403 likely Republican primary voters on September 19, 2023. The margin of error is +/- 4.9%. 60% of interviews for the survey were conducted by text message and 40% by telephone.

