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Davis remains well-positioned to win reelection

To: Interested Parties

From: GQR

Our most recent tracking poll¹ finds Don Davis holding on to his lead even as outside spending has ratcheted up. Davis's name recognition now stands at 80 percent, up from 58 percent in February, and he retains net positive ratings (41 percent favorable and 27 percent unfavorable). Laurie Buckhout is now also more defined with name identification nearly matching Davis (78 percent). But her standing continues to slide; earlier in the cycle, voters were more divided but now they give her net negative ratings (28 percent favorable, 38 percent unfavorable).

Figure 1. Candidate Favorability

% Favorable – Unfavorable (Net)	February 2026	September 2026	October 2026
Don Davis	27 – 19 (+8)	33 – 21 (+12)	41 – 27 (+14)
Laurie Buckhout	23 – 23 (-)	32 – 25 (7)	28 – 38 (-10)

Davis's lead has also grown over the fall, with an 8-point advantage over Buckhout (47 percent to 39 percent). Importantly, Davis also leads when we allocate third party voters by their second choice and undecided voters by their partisanship (50 percent to 45 percent).

Figure 2. Vote Choice

% Davis – Buckhout – Bailey	Initial	Initial Two-Way Allocated
October 2026	47 – 39 – 8	50 – 45
September 2026	42 – 40 – 9	49 – 47
February 2026	42 – 39 – 9	48 – 47

¹ This memo is based on a live telephone survey on landline and cell phones of 500 likely 2026 voters in North Carolina's First Congressional District. Respondents were drawn from the voter file, and the survey was conducted from September 29 – October 4, 2026.