



GEORGIA CONSERVATION VOTERS

NEWS from Georgia Conservation Voters

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**GEORGIA CONSERVATION VOTERS
AND WWW.STOPWAYNEHILL.COM VICTORIOUS**

Atlanta, Georgia. Georgia Conservation Voters (GCV), the nonpartisan political arm of Georgia's environmental community, claimed victory on election night. In a primary contest that generated much attention and speculation, GCV PAC-endorsed incumbent Bobby Reese soundly defeated challenger and 12-year Chairman of Gwinnett County, Wayne Hill.

GCV endorsed 10 candidates in the House, three candidates in the Senate, and one in the PSC race. Five candidates receiving GCV's endorsement were Republicans and nine were Democrats. These endorsements mean GCV, through its Political Action Committee, GCV Action Fund, provided significant field, media, and/or financial support. For the Reese-Hill race, however, GCVAF upped the anti with an unprecedented \$25,000 independent campaign.

A survey of 500 voters conducted by Sand Mountain Communications, LLC, the political consulting firm retained by GCVAF for the Stop Wayne Hill effort, showed a narrow lead for Hill just twelve days before the primary election.

"This was a tight race, with a slight lead by Hill when GCVAF started dropping our direct mail and running our TV ads," says Executive Director Jason Rooks. "We believe that our independent campaign helped frame the debate going into the final days of the race and contributed to Reese's ultimate victory."

"This independent campaign and Bobby Reese's victory show that Republican voters care about conservation issues, and that these issues can be part of a winning election strategy," says Rooks. "This also provides a model for informing Republican voters of the impact that environmental issues have on their quality of life and motivating Republicans to vote on environmental issues."

"Our efforts in this race were encouraged by top Republican leaders and elected officials," said Rooks. "We were trying to help them solve the issues they care about and show that conservation voters and sportsmen are an important Republican constituency, not just some Atlanta Special Interest group coming in trying to tell voters in Gwinnett County how to live their lives."

In the space between those initial polls GCV ran a television ad criticizing traffic in what was once Hill's domain. The ad on cable television in Gwinnett County, heavily targeting Republican Primary voters and was accompanied by three mail pieces to GOP voters citing Hill's records on overdevelopment. The centerpiece of the campaign was www.stopwaynehill.com, a website used to generate a message not recognized as conventional wisdom. "The Environment isn't just for Democrats." With Reese's solid victory, well over ten percentage points ahead of Hill, that statement is resounding more than ever.

GCV's involvement in the Primary between Bobby Reese and Wayne Hill was their largest and most significant effort to date. GCVAF pulled out all the stops on an independent expenditure campaign to smite Wayne Hill and recognize a Republican leader who is good on conservation issues and bring that home to his constituents. "This race was as much about seeing how effective conservation messaging is in a Republican primary as it was about keeping Wayne Hill out of the legislature," said Rooks. Wayne Hill, aptly nicknamed the "Sultan of Sprawl," left what some would call a legacy of traffic, clearcutting, and overdevelopment in Gwinnett.

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