

House Bill 1446

Testimony in Opposition, John Trandem NDGOP 1st Vice Chair, Rules Committee Chair, Legislative Committee Chair

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Government and Veterans Affairs Committee,

Over the past 30 years NDGOP has endorsed 93 candidates who went on to win the general election. Over that time there has been one candidate (Doug Burgum) who competed for the endorsement, lost, and went on to win the primary and general election. There has also been one candidate (Julie Fedorchak) who competed, withdrew, and went on to win the primary and general election. In each of those cases, the eventual winner outspent their opponents by a range of 7-500 to 1, racking up millions of dollars spent in the primary alone. The narrative that the delegates 'don't get it right' is specious at best as all factors are not equal. Endorsing conventions are the great equalizer where every candidate, regardless of financial wherewithal or name recognition, has an opportunity to compete in the arena of ideas. Delegates are not impressed or swayed by big spending, they want to hear the vision of the candidate and vote based on that vision paired with the ideological proclivities of the person asking for their vote. In the two examples above, the candidates used magnificent marketing campaigns to woo the voters while spending millions of dollars attacking other members of their own party, which not only hurts the party, but helps the opposing party who needn't do their own opposition research. It is also of note that no Republican incumbent has failed to receive the endorsement of the NDGOP at the Endorsing Convention, and that includes Governor Burgum.

We saw two primary battles in the most recent election cycle (Governor and Congress) and watched about \$10,000,000 vanish into the ether during the primary campaign. Was there a better use of that money than to spend it on an inter-party fight? That \$10,000,000 could likely fund down-ticket races for a decade or more, but instead it's been absorbed by the political industrial complex. Additionally, we saw a candidate vie for the Republican nomination who, just two years earlier saw the Democrat party literally abandon their endorsed candidate to support. Cara Mund, the literal darling of the Democrats in 2022 drew nearly 20% of the vote in the 2024 primary election under the Republican banner. You may say, 20% is inconsequential, but when you consider that it was a 5-way race, we could have been a few votes away from making a member of the opposing party the standard-bearer for our own. This is what we get when we abandon our party process in favor of a model direct-democracy with absolutely no qualifying criteria to participate in the opposing party's nomination.

Back to the numbers, which don't lie; NDGOP endorsed winning candidates in 98% of Statewide races and didn't endorse the winning candidate 2% of the time. I don't know a world, particularly politics, where a 98% margin of 'getting it right' is insufficient; in fact, it's astounding! Before we throw the baby out with the bathwater and default to a process in which everyone is a Republican, and likewise, nobody is a Republican, let's look at the history of success within our party and build on that model by restoring it to one which honors and values its processes, its platform, and its members!

Statewide candidates Endorsed by the NDGOP who sought but did not receive the Republican Endorsement and went on to defeat the endorsed candidate in the primary and win the general election:

Doug Burgum
Julie Fedorchak

Candidates Endorsed by the NDGOP who won endorsement and went on to win in primary and general election:

1992: Ed Schafer, Rosemarie Myrdal, Al Jaeger, Leo Reinbold, Bob Peterson,

1994: Susan Wefald,

1996: Ed Schafer, Rosemarie Myrdal, Rick Clayburgh, Al Jaeger, Bob Peterson, Susan Wefald

1998: Leo Reinbold

2000: John Hoeven, Jack Dalrymple, Bob Peterson, Al Jaeger, Jim Poolman, Wayne Stenehjem, Tony Clark, Rick Clayburgh

2002: Susan Wefald

2004: John Hoeven, Jack Dalrymple, Al Jaeger, Wayne Stenehjem, Rick Clayburgh, Bob Peterson, Jim Poolman, Kevin Cramer, Kelly Schmidt,

2006: Wayne Stenehjem, Cory Fong, Tony Clark, Al Jaeger

2008: John Hoeven, Jack Dalrymple, Adam Hamm, Brian Kalk, Kelly Schmidt, Bob Peterson,

2010: John Hoeven, Rick Berg, Wayne Stenehjem, Doug Goehring, Al Jaeger, Kevin Cramer, Cory Fong

2012: Jack Dalrymple, Drew Wrigley, Kevin Cramer, Bob Peterson, Kelly Schmidt, Adam Hamm, Randy Christmann

2014: Kevin Cramer, Al Jaeger, Brian Kalk, Julie Fedorchak, Wayne Stenehjem, Ryan Rauschenberger, Doug Goehring,

2016: John Hoeven, Josh Gallion, Jon Godfread, Julie Fedorchak, Kelly Schmidt, Kevin Cramer,

2018: Brian Kroshus, Ryan Rauschenberger, Jon Godfread, Doug Goehring, John Hoeven, Wayne Stenehjem, Kelly Armstrong, Kevin Cramer, Randy Christmann

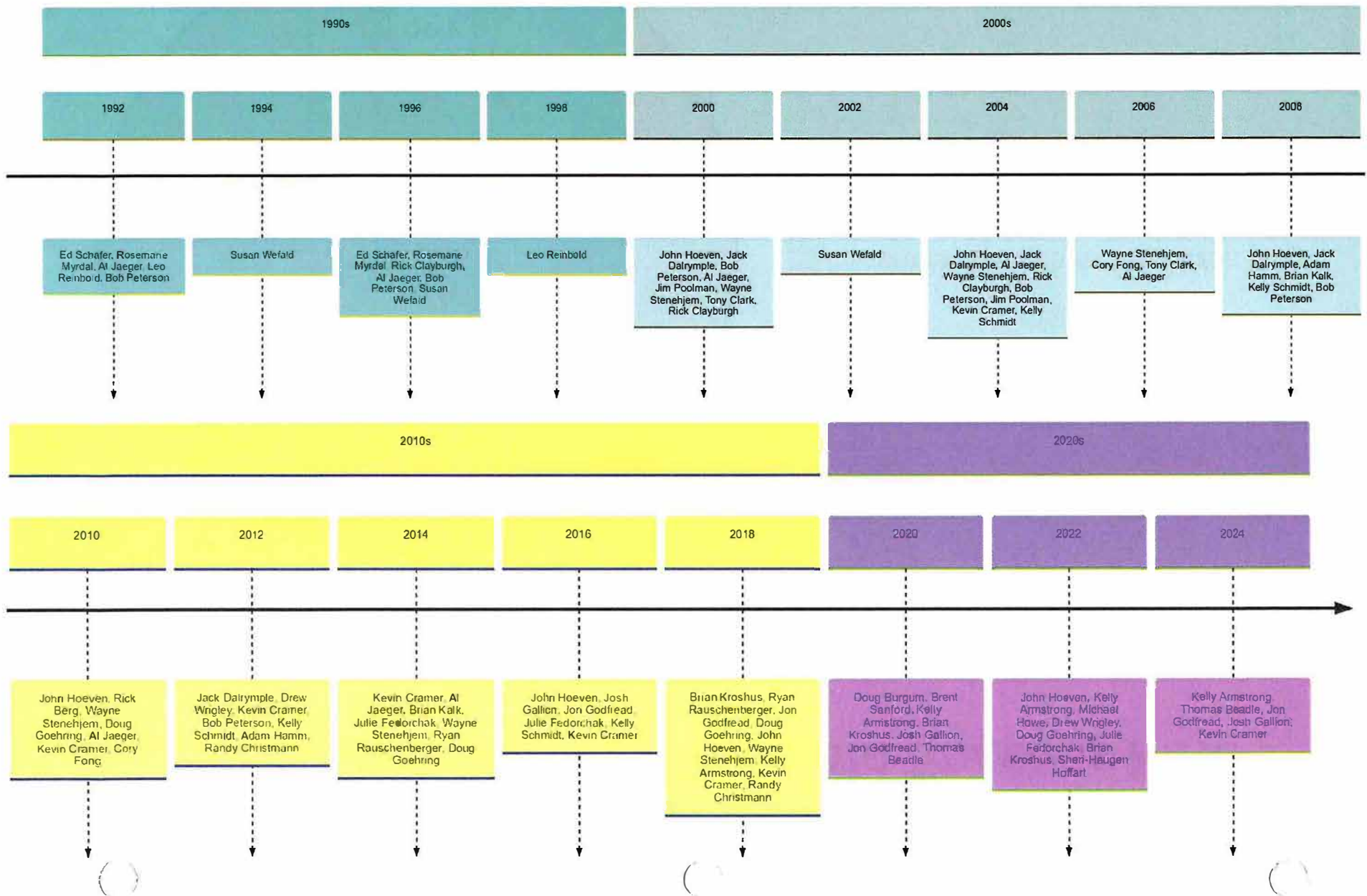
2020: Doug Burgum, Brent Sanford, Kelly Armstrong, Brian Kroshus, Josh Gallion, Jon Godfread, Thomas Beadle

2022: John Hoeven, Kelly Armstrong, Michael Howe, Drew Wrigley, Doug Goehring, Julie Fedorchak, Brian Kroshus, Sheri-Haugen Hoffart,

2024: Kelly Armstrong, Michelle Strinden, Thomas Beadle, Jon Godfread, Josh Gallion, Kevin Cramer

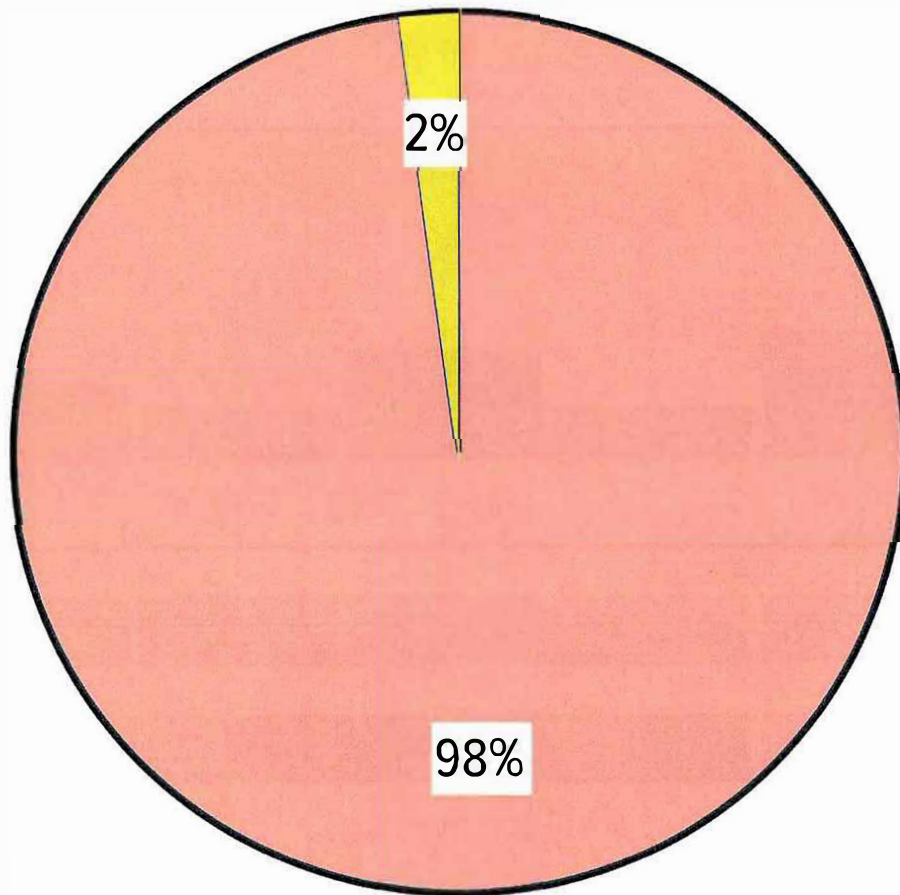
North Dakota Republican Party Candidates Who Won

1992-2004



NDGOP Endorsed Candidate Success Rate

1992-2024



- Endorsed Candidates Who Won [92]
- Non-Endorsed Candidates Who Won [2]