**To:** Interested Parties

**From:**

**Date:**

**Re:** North Carolinians Demand a Plan for Addressing Climate Change

From drought and extreme heat to flooding, hurricanes and sea level rise, communities in North Carolina are feeling the impacts of climate change as a result of increased pollution. Republicans in Congress refuse to address this enormous challenge, despite the fact that a growing number of Americans are concerned with how climate change is impacting their health and communities and want the government to take action.

***The following information is provided to demonstrate how North Carolinians are impacted by climate change and how their elected leaders are approaching the crisis. We encourage you to report on how Senator Tillis has refused to address the impact climate change is having in North Carolina and is instead supporting coal lobbyist Andrew Wheeler to lead the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the agency charged with protecting public health and our environment.***

Support for climate action is growing, across all age groups, all religions, and all political persuasions. A [March poll](http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/politics-global-warming-march-2018/2/) from climate change researchers at Yale and George Mason Universities found 87 percent of Democrats and **56 percent of Republicans** support bold climate action. Similarly, a [November AP-University of Chicago poll](http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Documents/EPIC%20fact%20sheet_v4_DTP.pdf?wpisrc=nl_energy202&wpmm=1) found 86 percent of Democrats, 70 percent of independents and **52 percent of Republicans** believe that climate change is happening now; and of those who believe climate change is happening *83 percent say the federal government should take steps to address climate change*. What’s more, a [December 2018 Fox News Poll](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/fox-news-poll-president-trump-ends-year-two-with-46-percent-job-approval) found that 64% of voters are concerned about climate change – up 7 points from January 2018 – **a boost mostly driven by a 13-point jump among Republicans.**

North Carolinians are already seeing the impacts of climate change in their state. Hurricane Florence struck North Carolina’s coastline in September 2018 and caused nearly [$17 billion in damages](https://governor.nc.gov/news/updated-estimates-show-florence-caused-17-billion-damage). In addition, Hurricane Florence dealt [over $1.1 billion in losses](http://www.ncagr.gov/paffairs/release/2018/aglosseswithcrops.htm) to North Carolina’s agricultural industry. Research shows that climate change not only widened the hurricane’s size by 50 miles, but it also made the rainfall which accompanied the storm [more than 50 percent worse](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/09/hurricane-florence-rain-climate-change-science/) than it would have been without global warming. If action isn’t taken, North Carolina can expect to see [an additional 44,000 people](http://reportcard.statesatrisk.org/report-card/north-carolina/coastal_flooding_grade) at risk of coastal flooding by 2050.

North Caroliniansknow that we need to act on climate and are already implementing local clean energy solutions to reduce climate-changing carbon pollution and boost their economies. **[INSERT LOCAL SOLUTIONS DATA FOR NORTH CAROLINA]**

Instead of taking cues from state and local leaders and putting forward a plan to reduce carbon pollution that’s contributing to climate change, Senator Tillis refuses to even acknowledge that climate change is problem. Senator Tillis is supporting the nomination of former coal lobbyist Andrew Wheeler to lead the EPA after he’s spent his tenure as acting administrator attempting to dismantle lifesaving climate and health protections. Considering Senator Tillis has taken $502,650 dollars from the fossil fuel industry over the course of his career as an elected official, it’s not surprising he would support an industry insider to be the country’s chief public health official. Senator Tillis has made it clear he is more interested in making good on promises to polluter industry donors than to the needs of North Carolinians.

By catering to polluters instead of North Carolina families, Senator Tillis is jeopardizing the state’s transition to a clean energy economy. Tackling the global climate crisis will create the 21st century jobs in communities across our country that fuel our economy. We already have created [3.2 million jobs](https://www.e2.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Clean-Jobs-America-2018.pdf) nationally as part of our transition to a clean energy economy and we can continue to build on that success, lifting up urban, suburban, and rural communities. But we need action from Congress to make sure North Carolina isn’t left behind.

It’s the responsibility of elected officials to meet the demands of their constituents, not the demands of their campaign donors. We have the ability to solve the climate crisis if Republicans join the momentum created by state and local leaders in North Carolina who are stepping up to meet the challenge of addressing climate change.

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