

# Trump is defeated. Our work in North Carolina is just beginning.

On Saturday, November 7th Durham For All members joined with thousands of movement leaders from across the state to celebrate our victories in the fight for racial, economic, gender, and climate justice. As we danced together in the sun, I reflected on our shared commitment to building a world where all of us can survive and thrive. **Our work to fulfill that commitment begins with a clear analysis of all that we have built together, and all that we have yet to win for our people.**

**This year in Durham, we turned out in record numbers and voted for President-Elect Biden at a rate of 80.5%, the highest percentage we've delivered for a Democratic President in recent history.** I'm deeply proud of the 717 Durham For All volunteers who helped make that possible by completing over 2,000 phonebank and canvassing shifts, and of the thousands more volunteers with our statewide affiliates. Together we held over 80,000 conversations with voters across our state, making the Carolina Federation the largest volunteer-based GOTV effort in North Carolina outside of The Democratic Party.

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## **Across the state, our model of place-based, multiracial organizing saw significant wins this year.**

In the Triad, our allies with **Guilford For All** flipped their local Country Commission from a 5-4 Republican to a 7-2 Democrat majority. In Wilmington, our compas with **New Hanover For All** turned out to reject Trump and flipped their red county blue. And In Alamance County, our friends at **Down Home NC** helped elect Ricky Hurtado as the first Latinx member of the North Carolina State House.

**Meanwhile across the country, grassroots political organizations continued to invest in cross-class, multiracial organizing** to defeat white nationalism and win a government and economy that works for all of us. From Pennsylvania Stands Up to Virginia New Majority to the seminal canvassing work of UNITE HERE, our movement organizations secured critical victories in states that were pivotal to defeating Donald Trump. Let us be clear: it was deep organizing, connected to a clear vision of racial,

social and economic justice, that was responsible for securing progressive wins this year.

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**Nevertheless, we must also be clear that this election did not produce the decisive rejection of Trumpism that many of us hoped for.**

While we turned out our base in record numbers, the right-wing mobilized in record numbers as well. While we pushed Trump out of office, we held onto only a narrow majority in the US House of Representatives, and our chances of retaking the Senate now depend on tight runoff races in Georgia.

**On a state level, meanwhile, we failed to break Republican majorities in the North Carolina House and Senate.** Thankfully, we defended Governor Roy Cooper's seat, which will help stave off the worst of right-wing attacks on our people, but legislatively we remain on the defensive. This is especially unfortunate because 2020 is a redistricting year, when the government redraws state legislative and congressional district boundaries, and the party that controls the General Assembly draws the maps. We have spent the last decade fighting against racial gerrymandering and rigged rule, and unfortunately it looks like that fight will continue.

In the past, the federal courts have ruled against the most extreme partisan gerrymandering, but now Trump and his allies in the US Senate have stacked the courts themselves with right-wing extremists. **That's why our state Supreme Court is all the more crucial as a bulwark to defend our democracy. As I write, North Carolina Chief Justice Cheri Beasley is behind by a mere 818 votes in her fight to retain her seat.** As many of you know, this was one of the core races that Durham For All and the Carolina Federation threw down around this year, and it is no exaggeration to say that our efforts added thousands and thousands of votes to the total. Our county boards of election will be counting the last absentee and provisional ballots today and certifying the results tomorrow; when all the votes are in, we still think we have a real shot at winning this race.

The anti-colonial revolutionary Amílcar Cabral reminds us to "tell no lies, claim no easy victories." **I won't lie: the results of this election were a mixed bag for us, at best. I will, however, claim our victories.** Because the victories that we won in this election were *not* easy—they were the product of long, sustained, place-based, grassroots organizing that invests deeply in our communities and our people.

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**Here is what I know. The key—not just to winning elections, but to securing a livable future—lies in cross-class, multiracial organizing, led by people of color and working-class people.**

The counties where we are making gains in North Carolina are the ones where organizations like ours are making a deep investment in this kind of organizing. This work is urgent, deeply necessary and it takes time. Across the border, organizations like Virginia New Majority have built the infrastructure to uplift the leadership of the multiracial working class and secure consistent progressive wins in a state that was once controlled by Republicans. It took them ten years.

That's why it's so important that we continue to organize, within and across election cycles, to build up our power in Durham and to build out our movement across the state. We're growing a cross-class, multiracial movement that takes action together at the ballot box and in the streets to win back our government and put it to work for all of us. **We are deeply committed to winning—and we need you to make a deep commitment to this work in order for us to win.**

Trump is defeated. Our work in North Carolina is just beginning. I'm honored to be doing it alongside you.

In solidarity,  
Bennett Carpenter  
Lead Organizer  
Durham For All