

# AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY®

To Whom It May Be Concern

From: Dallas Woodhouse, North Carolina State Director, Americans for Prosperity

Re: Brave New Films – “Why do the Koch brothers want to end public education?”

Recently, Brave New Films, founded by Robert Greenwell, released an online video that falsely claims that Americans for Prosperity was involved in the 2009 Wake County School Board elections. The video is more than a gross distortion; it is a series of outright lies. Some select media have repeated and expanded on these false claims, which impugn the good name of Americans for Prosperity. The video is libelous, and responsible journalists should not fall for the lies set forth in this slick attack piece.

At the heart of the video and a coordinated hit piece in the *Huffington Post* is the claim that Americans for Prosperity played a role “bankrolling” candidates in the 2009 Wake County School Board race. Americans for Prosperity did not spend one single dime on those elections nor did AFP spend funds on independent electioneering communication activities during that election cycle. Moreover, Americans for Prosperity was not engaged in any nonpartisan Get-Out-The-Vote activity or in issuing any voter education material. In sum, Americans for Prosperity had no presence during the 2009 Wake County School Board race.

Americans for Prosperity is a nonpartisan, issue-based policy organization and does not support or oppose candidates for public office. AFP does weigh in on policy matters of a fiscal and economic nature. To that end, Americans for Prosperity was critical of the Wake County School Board before the 2009 election for their wasteful busing program that achieved no measurable academic result, for forced mandatory year round assignments, and for a school board bond that raised taxes by 1 billion dollars in 2006.

The legal team at Americans for Prosperity, at the direction and request of North Carolina State Director Dallas Woodhouse, has demanded retractions from Brave New Films and from the *Huffington Post* for the following false claims that were published:

#1

*During the film, Bob Geary of the liberal Independent weekly says "Americans for Prosperity put hundreds of thousands of dollars and a lot of effort into helping the school board candidates first get organized and then nominated and elected."*

This is not only untrue, it is unsubstantiated. Americans for Prosperity never surveyed, interviewed or met with candidates for the Wake School Board races on either side and certainly spent no money on this fictional program. No candidate has ever said this happened because it did not.

#2 *Various comments by Sue Sturgis of the liberal Institute for Southern Studies*

*“follow the money it is real”*

*“Americans for Prosperity played a very important role in the wake county elections”*

What role is that? Did Sue follow the money? If so what did she find? Did she find campaign finance reports with Americans for Prosperity’s name on them?

Again, AFP played no role in the 2009 WCPSS election.

**From the *Huffington Post* article written by Trymaine Lee**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/14/the-battle-for-wake-count\\_n\\_926799.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/14/the-battle-for-wake-count_n_926799.html)

#3 According to the *Huffington Post* article:

*“But Wake County’s plan became a political flash point when five conservative candidates, **bankrolled by Americans for Prosperity**, a political activist group funded in part by the Kochs, were elected to the school board on a “neighborhood schools” platform that would dismantle the existing integration policy.”* (emphasis added)

Not only is this statement false, it accuses AFP of a criminal violation of law. Since corporations are prohibited from providing contributions to candidates, it would be illegal for Americans for Prosperity to “bankroll” candidates. A journalist who quickly looks online to do due diligence would have easily found that corporations are not permitted to “bankroll” candidates in North Carolina. This was nothing more than a hit piece, and the author did not concern himself with the truth.

**One a final note.** While Americans for Prosperity did not engage in any independent electioneering communications or issue advocacy during the 2009 Wake County School Board election cycle, when AFP does engage in those activities, we do so in a legally compliant manner. We support free market issues as well as robust political speech. However when organizations, media members and media outlets engage in outright libelous behavior that in no way can be supported by evidence we will defend the good name of Americans for Prosperity to the full extent of the law.

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