

## Roy Moore Scandal Could Help NC Land Toyota-Mazda Plant: Site Selection Expert

Jessica Mensch, WFMY 5:39 PM. EST December 11, 2017



(Photo: Scott Olson/Getty Images, 2017 Getty Images)

GREENSBORO, N.C. -- North Carolina voters don't have a say in the Alabama Senate race. However, the election could impact the Triad.

Bloomberg reports North Carolina and Alabama are the final states in the running for a \$1.6 billion Toyota-Mazda electric car plant.

Commercial site selection experts say political scandal in Alabama could tip the scales in North Carolina's favor.

"North Carolina economic development officials are intimately aware of the backlash associated with anti-business, hardcore social legislation. The state recently emerged from the clouds of HB2. So I think they are uniquely positioned in North Carolina to make the case to Toyota and Mazda about the ramifications of electing such a polarizing figure to the Senate," said John Boyd, a commercial site selection expert with the Boyd Group.

He's referring to Republican Senate Candidate Roy Moore. At least nine women accuse Moore of sexual misconduct. Most of the cases allegedly occurred when the women were teenagers and Moore was in his thirties.

Roy Moore's opponent, Democrat Doug Jones, has also referenced the Toyota-Mazda factory while arguing Moore's election could hurt business in the state.

"Does the idea of Senator Roy Moore make it more or less likely that Toyota or anyone else would see Alabama's image in such a negative way that they would cross Alabama off their list, and move on to another state," Jones said.

According to Boyd, the car manufacturers could also pick North Carolina for political clout. He points out that Toyota already has a plant in Huntsville, Alabama that gives the company friends in the legislature.

"Doing this new facility in North Carolina would add 13 additional members of Congress looking out for the company's interests," Boyd said. "Toyota and Mazda want as many friends on Capitol Hill as possible. This is a company that will be involved in a lot of lobbying for trade policy, immigration policy and of course different legislation affecting electronic vehicle production."

Boyd believes the Greensboro-Randolph Megasite would be the location selected if our state is chosen.

A location for the Toyota-Mazda factory is expected to be announced in early 2018.