

North Carolina Voters Elect Leaders — Uncounted Absentee Ballots Could Impact Results

11.04.2020

After a lengthy and contentious campaign, voters have chosen new leaders for our nation and state. Both Democrats and Republicans won significant offices and the State appears to have voted Republican again in the presidential race.

What happened on November 3?

***Note:** Results are unofficial at this point. Absentee ballots that were postmarked by Nov. 3 can be counted if received by county boards of election by Nov. 12. According to the State Board of Elections, there could be as many as 117,000 absentee ballots outstanding. This number does NOT include voters who requested an absentee ballot but instead cast a ballot on Election Day.*

The State Board of Elections reports that 3,620,532 people voted during the early-vote period and at this point, 977,186 absentee votes have been counted. It appears that about 900,000 people voted on Election Day. Without including the absentee ballots that are yet to be counted, this would be a total turnout of about 74.5% of eligible voters.

Under State law, the final certification of results (also called a canvass) will occur later this month. County boards of elections are scheduled to hold their canvass meetings on Nov. 13 and the State Board of Elections is scheduled to meet on Nov. 24 to certify the election. Court challenges and recounts could impact this timeline.

President

Republican incumbent Donald Trump leads former Vice President Joe Biden by 50% to 49%, a margin of about 77,000 votes. Counting continues in other states that will determine the national outcome.

Congress

U.S. Senate

Incumbent Republican Sen. Thom Tillis was elected to a second term defeating Democrat former State Sen. Cal Cunningham by 49% to 47%, a margin of about 97,000 votes. It appears that the Republicans will retain their majority in the U.S. Senate.

U.S. House

All of North Carolina's incumbent U.S. House members were reelected and three new members won their contests. Democrats gained a net two seats and Republicans now hold an eight to five margin in the State's U.S. House delegation. Democrats appear to have held their majority in the U.S. House.

Incumbents reelected

- GK Butterfield (D-1st)
- Greg Murphy (R-3rd)
- David Price (D-4th)
- Virginia Foxx (R-5th)
- David Rouzer (R-7th)
- Richard Hudson (R-8th)
- Dan Bishop (R-9th)
- Patrick McHenry (R-10th)
- Alma Adams (D-12th)
- Ted Budd (R-13th)

New Members

- Deborah Ross (D-2nd) Former NC House member from Raleigh
- Kathy Manning (D-6th) Lawyer and nonprofit leader from Greensboro

Madison Cawthorn (R-11th) Will become youngest member of Congress at age 25

Voters on Tuesday chose 10 statewide officials for Council of State offices. It appears at this point that seven incumbents were reelected and there will be three newcomers. Republicans appear to retain a six to four advantage among Council offices.

Governor

Democrat Gov. Roy Cooper won reelection with 51.5% to 47% for Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Forest.

Lieutenant Governor—*New member*

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Republican Mark Robinson of Greensboro defeated Democrat N.C. House member Yvonne Lewis Holley by 52% to 48%.

Commissioner of Agriculture

Longtime Republican Commissioner Steve Troxler won reelection against Democrat challenger Jenna Wadsworth by 54% to 46%.

Attorney General

Incumbent Democrat Josh Stein leads Republican Forsyth County District Attorney Jim O'Neill by about 10,000 votes. This race could be impacted by counting of the remaining absentee ballots.

State Auditor

Incumbent Democrat Beth Wood appears to have won reelection against Republican Tony Street by 51% to 49%.

Commissioner of Insurance

Incumbent Republican Mike Causey won reelection in a rematch against former Democrat Commissioner Wayne Goodwin by 52% to 48%.

Commissioner of Labor—*New member*

Republican NC House member Josh Dobson appears to have defeated Democrat Wake County Commissioner Jessica Holmes by 51% to 49%.

Secretary of State

Incumbent Democrat Elaine Marshall, who has served as Secretary of State for 24 years, appears to have won reelection over Republican E.C. Sykes by 51% to 49%.

State Treasurer

Incumbent Republican Dale Folwell defeated Democrat Ronnie Chatterji by 53% to 47%.

Superintendent of Public Instruction—*New member*

Republican Catherine Truitt, a former education advisor to Gov. Pat McCrory and Chancellor of Western Governors University North Carolina, defeated Democrat Jen Mangrum by 51.5% to 48.5%.

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General Assembly

Republicans retained their majorities in both houses. At this point, their Senate majority appears to be 28 to 22 (a gain of one for Democrats) and their House majority appears to have increased by four to 69 to 51. If these numbers hold and members vote by party, Republicans will not have “supermajorities” to override the Governor’s vetoes (60% of those present of voting is necessary to override a veto).

Judiciary

Supreme Court

Republicans are leading in all three Supreme Court contests. Republican Justice Paul Newby leads incumbent Democrat Chief Justice Cheri Beasley by about 3,742 votes (this race could be impacted by the uncounted absentee ballots). Republican Phil Berger, Jr. leads his fellow Court of Appeals Judge Democrat Lucy Inman by about 74,000 votes and Republican former State Sen. Tamara Barringer appears to have defeated incumbent Democrat Justice Mark Davis by 51% to 49%.

Court of Appeals

Republicans appear to have won all five contested Court of Appeals seats with incumbent Chris Dillon being reelected and newcomers Jeff Carpenter, Fred Gore, Jefferson Griffin, and April Wood joining the Court.

For more information, contact a member of the Brooks Pierce Government Affairs Team.

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