



Williams Mullen Government Relations 2014 General Elections Report

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The midterm elections in North Carolina generated an immense amount of voter interest, media attention, and spending by third party groups. An overwhelming number of voters turned out, with a record 2.9 million votes cast, which was well over the 2.7 million votes cast in 2010.

US Senate

North Carolina's US Senate race was one of the most watched and most competitive in the nation as Republicans tried to gain control of the Senate. The Republicans were successful in winning 7 seats, only needing 6 to gain the majority, including the seat in North Carolina. Incumbent Kay Hagan (D) narrowly lost to North Carolina House Speaker Thom Tillis by 1.68%, which is enough to avoid a recount. The race was also one of the most expensive, with outside spending reaching over \$100 million dollars.

Congress

The only somewhat competitive race on the House side saw former American Idol contestant Clay Aiken (D) unable to win the Republican-friendly 2nd Congressional district despite his name recognition. Incumbent Renee Ellmers (R) won reelection with 58.85% of the vote.

North Carolina voters also chose replacements for three retiring members of Congress. The vacancy in the 6th District created by Howard Coble's retirement will be filled by Mark Walker (R). The 7th District, open due to the retirement of Mike McIntyre (D), went to former State Senator David Rouzer (R), who beat New Hanover County Commissioner Jonathan Barfield. The 12th District seat, which has been open since January when Mel Watt (D) resigned to become director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, was won by State House member Alma Adams (D). Adams beat radio show host Vince Coakley.

Incumbents G.K. Butterfield (D-1), Walter Jones (R-3), David Price (D-4), Virginia Foxx (R-5), Richard Hudson (R-8), Patrick McHenry (R-10), Mark Meadows (R-11), and George Holding (R-13) all easily outpaced their respective challengers. Incumbent Robert Pittenger (R) was the only member of Congress without opposition.

North Carolina Supreme Court

Associate Supreme Court Justice Mark Martin won the Chief Justice seat over NC Superior Court Judge Ola Lewis with 72.28% of the votes. Court of Appeals Judge Sam J. Ervin bested fellow Court of Appeals Judge Robert N. Hunter, Jr. for the vacant Associate Justice seat with 52.57% of the vote. Associate Justices Robin E. Hudson and Cheri Beasley were both able to retain their seats, however Beasley won by less than 1% and a recount is possible.

North Carolina Court of Appeals

Judge John M. Tyson beat out 18 other candidates to win the race for the Court of Appeals, a seat left vacant after the retirement of John Martin. Tyson formerly served as Court of Appeals Judge from 2001 until 2009 and was Chair of the North Carolina State Ethics Commission last year.

State Senate

Republicans gained one seat in the Senate after incumbent Gene McLaurin (D-Richmond) lost to business owner Tom McInnis by 3%. Three races were extremely close: incumbent Bill Cook (R-Beaufort) beat former Senator Stan White with 53.42% of the vote, incumbent Chad Barefoot (R-Wake) beat Democrat Sarah Crawford with 52.88% of the vote, and incumbent Wesley Meredith (R-Cumberland) beat attorney Billy Richardson with 54.45% of the vote. Republican John Alexander won the seat vacated by long-term Senator Neal Hunt (R-Wake) by less than 1%, allowing Democratic challenger Tom Bradshaw to call for a recount.

State House

Half of the House seats had already been decided before Tuesday, either by the primary election or because candidates ran unopposed. The Democrats netted three seats in the House, as four incumbent Republicans lost (Reps. Tom Murry (Wake), Tim Moffitt (Buncombe), Mike Stone (Lee) and Nathan Ramsey (Buncombe), and one open seat flipped to the Republicans (House District 2 was captured by Republican Larry Yarborough).

Takeaways

- Republicans retained veto-proof majorities in both chambers.
- Early voting continues to be vital, as more than 1.1 million votes were cast before election day, a 34.7% increase from 2010.
- Spending by third party groups reached over \$100 million in the US Senate race alone.
- The North Carolina Senate will be comprised of 34 Republicans and 16 Democrats.
- The North Carolina House will be comprised of 74 Republicans and 46 Democrats.
- The North Carolina House will elect new leadership in light of Speaker Tillis' departure.
- There are a total of 15 first term members and 39 second term members in the House.
- There are a total of 6 first term members and 19 second term members in the Senate.

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