

# 2024 North Carolina Primary Election Update

March 5, 2024

## Introduction

North Carolinians headed to the polls to vote in various local, state, and federal races, as primary elections were held across the state yesterday. Early voting continues to be popular, as roughly 690,000 votes were cast in person or by mail ahead of yesterday's primary. In addition, over 1.1 million residents voted at the polls yesterday. A bit of extra excitement, and perhaps anxiety, may have resulted from the fact that candidates for the US House and state legislature were running in districts redrawn this past fall by the General Assembly.

Candidates securing a minimum of over thirty percent (30%) of the vote moved on to the general election this fall. If no candidate reaches this threshold, the second-place candidate has the option of requesting a runoff (also referred to as a second primary). Runoff primaries will be held on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

While there was nothing unexpected at the top of the ballots, a few incumbents were defeated in legislative races. And in a surprise to many, incumbent Republican Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt was defeated by nurse and homeschooler Michele Morrow.

There were mixed results for current state legislators seeking higher office. While Speaker Tim Moore (14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District), state Senator Rachel Hunt (Democratic primary for Lt. Governor), state Senator Natasha Marcus (Democratic primary for Insurance Commissioner), and Representative Wesley Harris (Democratic primary for State Treasurer) all prevailed, Representative John Bradford (8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District), Representative Grey Mills (10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District), Representative Jeffrey Elmore (Republican primary for Lt. Governor), and Representative Jon Hardister (Republican primary for Commissioner of Labor) were unsuccessful.

## President

Former President Donald Trump received the Republican party nomination by easily defeating a field of candidates which included Nikki Haley, the former Governor of South Carolina and former US Ambassador to the United Nations, 73.9% to 23.2%. President Joe Biden was the only candidate on the Democratic ballot, thus setting up a rematch of the previous general election contest between these two gentlemen this November.

## US House of Representatives

### 1<sup>st</sup> District

Laurie Buckhout, a former Army combat colonel and political newcomer, won 53.5% of the Republican primary vote yesterday in this district in northeastern North Carolina. She bested Sandy Smith, who lost to Congressman Don Davis in the 2022 general election. Buckhout moves on to face Davis in the only competitive district among NC's congressional races. Davis is a former state Senator and has served one term replacing long-serving Congressman G.K. Butterfield.

### **6<sup>th</sup> District**

The new 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is a solid Republican district with a partisan rating of R+9 and a crowded Republican primary field. Lobbyist Addison McDowell was the top vote-getter accumulating 26.1% of the vote. There were a total of six candidates in the race, including Bo Hines, a former congressional candidate in 2022, and former NC Congressman Mark Walker. Walker captured 24.1% of the vote and has the option of asking for a runoff primary.

### **8<sup>th</sup> District**

The newly drawn 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is an open seat due to incumbent Dan Bishop's decision to run for Attorney General. Mark Harris, a Charlotte pastor and former Congressional candidate for NC's 9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, won in a field of six Republicans for this newly drawn district consisting of parts of Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, and Robeson counties, and all of Union, Stanly, Montgomery, Anson, Richmond and Scotland counties. Current NC House member John Bradford finished in third place. In 2018, Harris appeared to win the 9<sup>th</sup> district before a ballot fraud scandal prompted the state Board of Elections to call for a new election, and Harris decided not to run again. Harris, who received 30.4% of the vote, was able to avoid a runoff and will face Democrat Justin Dues in November's general election. However, with this district's partisan rating of R+10, it would appear that Harris will have a decisive advantage this fall.

### **10<sup>th</sup> District**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is also open as a result of the retirement of Congressman Patrick McHenry, who represented the district since 2005. Pat Harrigan, a West Point graduate, former Green Beret, and owner of a manufacturing business in western NC, captured the 10<sup>th</sup> District Republican primary with 41.2% of the votes. State Representative Grey Mills finished a close second with 38.9%. The district consists of Lincoln, Catawba, Iredell, and Yadkin counties, and most of Forsyth County. Harrigan will face Democrat Ralph Scott, Jr. in the November general election, but in this solid Republican district with a R+9 partisan rating, Harrigan has more than likely secured the seat after yesterday's primary win.

### **13<sup>th</sup> District**

The redrawn 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is a solid Republican district with a R+9 partisan rating. Incumbent Democratic Congressman Wiley Nickel decided not to seek reelection and 14 Republicans filed to take Nickel's place. The new district consists of Caswell, Person, Granville, Franklin, Johnston, Harnett, and Lee counties, as well as the northern and southeast portions of Wake County. Johnston County lawyer Kelly Daughtry, the daughter of former NC House member Leo Daughtry, was the top vote-getter with 27.4%. Brad Knot, a lawyer and former prosecutor in the US Attorney's Office for Eastern North Carolina, finished second with 18.7% and has the option of requesting a runoff.

### **14<sup>th</sup> District**

The new 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District carries a R+8 partisan rating. Incumbent Democratic Congressman Jeff Jackson decided not to seek reelection, opting instead to run for Attorney General. Republican NC House Speaker Tim Moore took his party's nomination with over 75% of the vote in this district, which consists of Burke, Rutherford, Cleveland, and Gaston counties as well as the eastern portion of Polk County and northern Mecklenburg County. Moore will face Pam Genant in the general election in November.

Here is a complete chart of the results from the congressional primaries:

District	Republican	Democrat	Libertarian	Green
1	Laurie Buckhout	Don Davis*	Tom Bailey	
2	Alan Swain	Deborah Ross*		Michael Dublin
3	Greg Murphy*	(No Candidate)	Gheorghe Cormos	
4	Eric Blankenburg	Valerie Foushee*	Guy Meilleur	
5	Virginia Foxx*	Chuck Hubbard		
6	Addison McDowell	(No Candidate)		
7	David Rouzer*	Marlando Pridgen		
8	Mark Harris	Justin Dues		
9	Richard Hudson*	Nigel Bristow		
10	Pat Harrigan	Ralph Scott, Jr.	Steven Feldman	
11	Chuck Edwards*	Caleb Rudow		
12	Addul Ali	Alma Adams*		
13	Kelly Daughtry	Frank Pierce		
14	Tim Moore	Pam Genant		

\*Incumbent

### Governor

Due to term limits, current Democratic Governor Roy Cooper was ineligible to run for an additional term thus creating an open seat. Democratic Attorney General Josh Stein received the Democratic party nomination by beating several candidates including Mike Morgan, a former NC Supreme Court Justice. Stein garnered 69.6% of the vote and moves on for a contest with Republican Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson in the November general election. Robinson defeated State Treasurer Dale Folwell and Salisbury trial attorney Bill Graham in the Republican primary by garnering 64.9% of the Republican primary vote. Robinson, a former factory worker who gained media attention in 2018 for the video of a speech he made to the Greensboro City Council in support of gun rights, was elected Lieutenant Governor in 2020.

### Lieutenant Governor

Democratic state Senator Rachel Hunt locked in her party's nomination for Lt. Governor with 70.4% of the vote to defeat former state Senator Ben Clark. Hunt is an attorney, a former state House Representative, and the daughter of former NC Governor Jim Hunt.

Eleven Republican candidates were vying in that party's primary. Hal Weathermen, the former Chief of Staff to former Lt. Gov. Dan Forest and US Rep. Sue Myrick, secured 19.6% of the votes cast. Jim O'Neil, the District Attorney for Forsyth County, finished second with 15.9%. We await word on whether O'Neil will ask for a runoff.

As background, the Lieutenant Governor presides over the state Senate, chairs several state commissions, and is generally seen as a presumptive candidate for higher office in the future.

### Attorney General

Current congressman and former state Senator Jeff Jackson secured the Democratic nomination for Attorney General. Jackson, who garnered 54.9% of the votes cast, defeated Durham District Attorney Satana Deberry and retired Marine Tim Dunn. Jackson, who is currently representing NC's 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, will face Republican Congressman Dan Bishop, a former state Representative and state Senator who currently represents NC's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. Bishop was unopposed in the Republican primary.

### Council of State

The Council of State is comprised of the ten statewide elected officials, including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Attorney General, Commissioner of Agriculture, Commissioner of Labor, and Commissioner of Insurance. Going into primary election day, it was known that there would be six open seats (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Attorney General, and Commissioner of Labor) on the Council this fall as a result of retirements and incumbents pursuing other offices. After yesterday's results, we now know that there will be at least one more new face on the Council as incumbent State Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt was defeated in the Republican primary by Michele Morrow. Morrow, whose only previous political experience is an unsuccessful run for a seat on the Wake County School Board in 2022, secured 52.1% of the vote.

The primaries for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General are discussed above. Election results for all of North Carolina's Council of State primary races are below.

Contest	Republican	Democrat
Governor	Mark Robinson	Josh Stein
Lieutenant Governor	Hal Weatherman (may be a runoff with Jim O'Neill)	Rachel Hunt
Secretary of State	Chad Brown	Elaine Marshall*
State Auditor	Jack Clark (may be a runoff with Dave Boliek)	Jessica Holmes
State Treasurer	Brad Briner	Wesley Harris
Superintendent of Public Instruction	Michele Morrow	Maurice (Mo) Green
Attorney General	Dan Bishop	Jeff Jackson
Commissioner of Agriculture	Steve Troxler*	Sarah Taber
Commissioner of Labor	Luke Farley	Braxton Winston II
Commissioner of Insurance	Mike Causey*	Natasha Marcus

\*Incumbent

### NC Senate

Yesterday's state Senate primaries saw a handful of incumbents face challengers and several hopefuls squaring off in races for open seats. Senator Mike Woodard (D – Durham) was the only incumbent to lose. He was defeated by Sophia Chitlik, a former Obama White House staffer and US Department of Labor employee, who gained 57.6% of the vote in Senate District 22. Former NC Representative Mark Hollo won the Republican primary for Senate District 45 (Caldwell and Catawba) and moves on to the general election.

Here are the results from the contested state Senate primaries:

#### NC Senate Republican Primaries

NC-3	Bob Brinson	Michael Speciale
NC-13	Scott Lassiter	Vicki Harry
NC-42	Stacie McGinn	Jamie Daniell
NC-45	Mark Hollo	Nancy R. Meek

#### NC Senate Democratic Primaries

NC-14	Dan Blue*	Terry Passione
NC-22	Sophia Chitlik	Mike Woodard*
NC-31	Ronda Mays	Laurelyn Dossett
NC-32	Paul Lowe*	Gardenia Henley
NC-41	Caleb Theodros	Robert E. Bruns, Kendrick Cunningham, Lucille Puckett

\*Incumbent

#### NC House

There were numerous primaries for NC House seats and ultimately it appears that three incumbents were defeated. Ten-term Representative Michael Wray (D – Northampton) seems to have lost to middle school teacher Rodney Pierce. Pierce won 50.2% of the vote to Wray's 49.8%. Because the margin is less than 1%, Wray has the option of asking for a recount.

In House District 82 (Cabarrus), Representative Kevin Crutchfield was defeated by small businessowner Brian Echevarria who captured 50.9% of the Republican primary vote. And in the Republican primary for House District 14, East Carolina University student Wyatt Gable upset ten-term legislator George Cleveland by obtaining just under 51% of the vote.

Lastly, former Representative John Blust (R – Guilford) was the top vote-getter in the Republican primary for House seat 62.

A complete list of House primary results can be found below:

#### NC House Republican Primaries

NC-9	Timothy Reeder, MD*	Tony Moore
NC-14	Waytt Gable	George Cleveland
NC-25	Allen Chesser*	Yvonne McLeod
NC-28	Larry C. Strickland*	Elizabeth Anne Temple
NC-35	Mike Schietzelt	James Norman
NC-48	Ralph Carter	Melissa Swarbrick, James Diaz
NC-55	Mark Brody*	Richard T. Miller, Arthur L. McDonald
NC-59	Alan Branson	Allen Chappell
NC-62	John M. Blust	Jaxon Barber, Michelle C. Bardsley, Britt W. Moore, Ann Schneider
NC-65	Reece Pyrtle, Jr.*	Joseph A. Gibson III
NC-67	Cody Huneycutt	Brandon King
NC-69	Dean Arp*	Clint Cannaday
NC-73	Jonathan Almond	Holly Edwards
NC-80	Sam Watford*	Eddie Gallimore
NC-82	Brian Echevarria	Kevin Crutchfield*
NC-83	Grant Cambell	Brad Jenkins
NC-84	Jeffrey C. McNeely*	John (Doug) Gallina
NC-94	Blair Eddins	Larry Yoder, Stoney S. Greene, Dwight Shook
NC-110	Kelly E. Hastings*	Esther Scott
NC-111	Paul Scott	Paul Brintley, Scott Neisler, David Allen

\*Incumbent

#### NC House Democratic Primaries

NC-3	Linda G. Moore	Cynthia M. Evans-Robinson, Dorothea Downing White
NC-9	Claire Kempner	Lenton Brown
NC-23	Shelly Willingham*	Abbie Lane
NC-27	Rodney D. Pierce	Michael H. Wray*
NC-33	Monika Johnson-Hostler	Debra Dunston, Antoine G. Marshall
NC-42	Mike Colvin	Naveed Aziz, Courtney Banks-McLaughlin, Elmer Floyd
NC-60	Cecil Brockman*	James Adams
NC-72	Amber M. Baker*	Marcus D. Pearson
NC-74	Amy Taylor North	Mack Wilder
NC-98	Beth Gardner Helfrich	Lisa Jewel
NC-105	Nicole Sidman	Yolanda (Yo) Holmes, Terry Lansdell
NC-106	Carla D. Cunningham*	Vermanno Bowman

\*Incumbent

## Judicial Races

Yesterday, state Supreme Court Judge Allison Riggs of Chapel Hill defeated Superior Court Judge Lora Christine Cabbage of Greensboro in the Democratic primary for NC Supreme Court Associate Justice Seat 6. In September 2023, Governor Cooper appointed Riggs to fill the seat of Supreme Court Associate Justice Mike Morgan, who is running for Governor. Riggs is now running for a full term on the court. Prior to being appointed to the court, she spent 14 years as a civil rights attorney at the Southern Coalition for Social Justice in Durham. Before serving as a Superior Court Judge, Cabbage served as an Assistant District Attorney, Assistant Attorney General, and District Court Judge. Riggs received over 69% of the vote and will face Republican Court of Appeals Judge Jefferson Griffin of Raleigh in the November general election. Griffin is from Red Oak and began his legal career as an Assistant District Attorney in Wake County. He ran unopposed for the Republican nomination for the Supreme Court seat.

District Court Judge Chris Freeman of Rockingham County defeated Court of Appeals Judge Hunter Murphy of Waynesville in yesterday's Republican primary for NC Court of Appeals Judge Seat 15. After receiving over 62% of the vote, Freeman will face Democratic candidate Martin E. Moore, a Buncombe County Commissioner and Asheville attorney, in the November general election.