2024 Senate Ratings

Toss-Up (2)

Tester (D-Mont.)	Brown (D-Ohio)

Tilt Democratic (4)	**Tilt Republican**
AZ Open (Sinema, I)	
MI Open (Stabenow, D)	
Casey (D-Penn.)	
Rosen (D-Nev.)	

Lean Democratic (1)	**Lean Republican**
Baldwin (D-Wis.)	

Likely Democratic (1)	**Likely Republican (1)**
MD Open (Cardin, D)	Cruz (R-Texas)

Solid Democratic (14)	**Solid Republican (11)**
CA Open (Butler, D)	IN Open (Braun, R)
DE Open (Carper, D)	UT Open (Romney, R)
Cantwell (D-Wash.)	*WV Open (Manchin, I)*
Gillibrand (D-N.Y.)	Barrasso (R-Wyo.)
Heinrich (D-N.M.)	Blackburn (R-Tenn.)
Hirono (D-Hawaii)	Cramer (R-N.D.)
Kaine (D-Va.)	Fischer (R-Neb.)
King (I-Maine)	Hawley (R-Mo.)
Klobuchar (D-Minn.)	Ricketts (R-Neb.)
Menendez (D-N.J.)	Scott (R-Fla.)
Murphy (D-Conn.)	Wicker (R-Miss.)
Sander (I-Vt.)	
Warren (D-Mass.)	
Whitehouse (D-R.I.)	

*Takeovers in Italics,   # moved benefiting Democrats,   * moved benefiting Republicans*

CALENDAR

Aug. 19-22	Democratic National Convention (Chicago)
Aug. 20	Alaska, Florida, Wyoming Primaries
Sept. 10	ABC News Presidential Debate
Sept. 10	New Hampshire, Delaware, Rhode Island Primaries
Oct. 1	CBS News Vice Presidential Debate
Nov. 5	Election Day

After Reset, 2024 Elections are Close Ahead of Stretch Run

By Nathan L. Gonzales & Jacob Rubashkin

A month ago, Democrats were preparing to attend a political funeral for President Joe Biden and the party's 2024 election prospects at the Chicago convention. Now, Democrats are on the ascent with Vice President Kamala Harris at the top of the ticket, a reset presidential race, and newfound optimism in controlling Congress next year.

While Harris is energizing the Democratic base, the reset contest still looks like a close, competitive election where independent voters in a few key states will determine the outcome. But that shift from a Biden tailspin gives Democrats a chance to hold the Senate and win back the House.

Presidential

Former President Donald Trump had the advantage in nearly all of the swing states before Biden dropped out. Now the tide has shifted and Harris has a narrow advantage across the same battlefield. If Harris wins all of the states where she's rated with the advantage, she needs to win three or four of Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin (depending on their size and combination) in order to secure victory.

It's possible that Harris comes back to earth after more scrutiny, but she will continue to benefit from being the younger, newer candidate in the race compared to Trump. This currently looks like a toss-up race with momentum favoring Harris.

Senate

It looks like it's all coming down to Montana in the fight for the Senate. Even if Democratic candidates continue to outpace their GOP opponents in Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, Democrats still need to win the White House and Montana because Republicans are going to win the seat in West Virginia. Currently, Republicans are likely to gain 1-3 seats, with GOP or Democratic control contained within. Republicans might have a slight advantage to control the Senate, but Harris has given Democrats a path.

House

Republicans are still slight favorites to hold the House, but Harris keeps Democrats in the game. She needs to at least come close to Biden's 2020 performance to give Democratic candidates a chance in key districts. But Republicans have a distinct advantage in competitive open seats, targeting a quartet of vulnerable Democratic districts without playing defense in any of their own. Our current likely projection range is a Democratic gain of 5 seats to a Republican gain of 5 seats. Democrats need a net gain of four seats for control.

InsideElections.com

Ohio 9 Poll: Individual Brands Still Matter

By Jacob Rubashkin

Democratic incumbents in the House and Senate still have the potential to run ahead of the national environment, according to exclusive polling of a northwest Ohio district conducted by Noble Predictive Insights for *Inside Elections*.

In Ohio's 9th District, longtime Rep. Marcy Kaptur and Sen. Sherrod Brown enjoyed double-digit leads over their lesser-known opponents, while Vice President Kamala Harris begins the general election tied with former President Donald Trump.

NPI surveyed 435 likely voters in Ohio's 9th District from July 22-24, after President Joe Biden dropped out of the race and endorsed Harris, who quickly consolidated Democratic support as the new presumptive nominee.

While Ohio is no longer a presidential battleground, the 9th District and Senate race are at or close to the core of the congressional battlefield.

The Lay of the Land

The 9th District sits in the northwestern corner of the Buckeye State, bordering Indiana, Michigan, and Lake Erie. Its largest city is Toledo, which makes up about a third of the district's population.

Kaptur has represented the 9th since 1983, making her the longest-serving woman in Congressional history. While her seat has historically been solidly Democratic, Republican legislators redrew it to be significantly more competitive following the 2020 census.

Under the new lines, Trump would have carried the 9th by 3 points, 51-48 percent, an improvement upon his 48-47 percent win over Hillary Clinton in 2016. The district is predominantly white (80 percent) and just 27 percent of residents have a four-year degree.

The House Race

Kaptur faces state Rep. Derek Merrin this fall. The Republican was heavily recruited by national GOP leaders hoping to avoid a repeat nomination of J.R. Majewski, the 2022 candidate who lost to Kaptur in spectacular fashion after exaggerating his biography.

Kaptur led Merrin by 10 points, 47-37 percent, in the NPI/*Inside Elections* poll; 16 percent of voters said they were undecided.

Most voters have an opinion of Kaptur — her image rating was 45 percent favorable, 39 percent unfavorable — but Merrin is still largely unknown. His image was even at 20 percent favorable and 20 percent unfavorable.
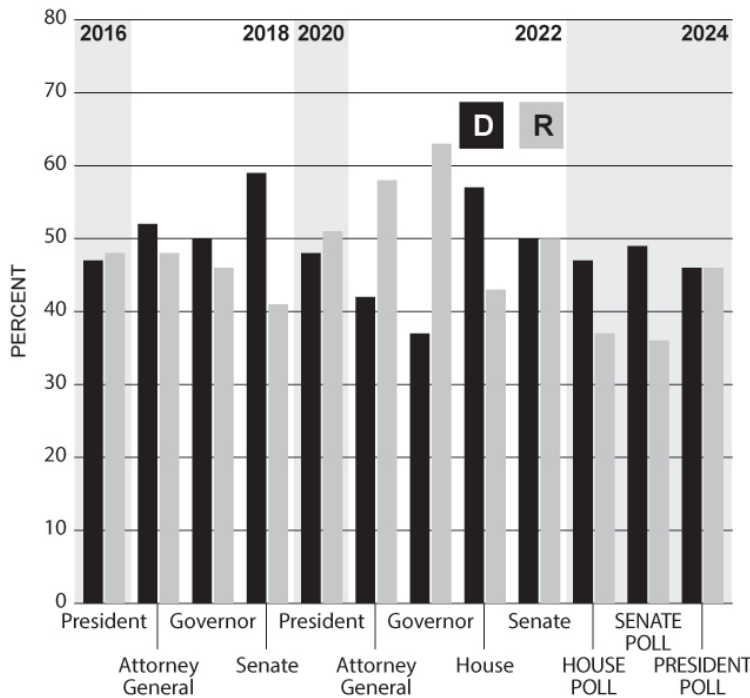
Kaptur has consolidated virtually all of the Democratic vote in the district; she had support from 98 percent of self-identified Democrats while Merrin had just 81 percent support from Republicans (Kaptur polled at 7 percent among Republicans).

Merrin was a late entrant into the GOP primary and has lagged in fundraising. He reported $408,000 in the bank on June 30 compared to $2.6 million for Kaptur. But both parties have signaled significant

Statewide Election Results & New Poll in Ohio's 9th District

Poll conducted July 22-24 by *Noble Predictive Insights* for *Inside Elections*

investment in the district for the fall: Democrats' DCCC and House Majority PAC have reserved $3.1 million in TV advertising while Republicans' NRCC and Congressional Leadership Fund have reserved $2.9 million, according to AdImpact.

The Presidential Race

While Trump carried the 9th by increasing margins in 2016 and 2020, the poll indicates the district is up for grabs in 2024.

In a head-to-head matchup between Trump and Harris, the district split evenly, 46 percent to 46 percent. When voters were offered minor-party candidates as options, Trump and Harris both received 44 percent while Independent Robert F. Kennedy Jr. took 3 percent, Libertarian Chase Oliver took 2 percent, and Green Party candidate Jill Stein took 1 percent.

Democrats' switch at the top of the ticket means the party is no longer saddled with a deeply unpopular nominee. Just 36 percent of voters had a favorable opinion of Biden, while 60 percent had an unfavorable opinion. But voters are more evenly divided in their view of Harris, whose favorable and unfavorable ratings sat at 47 percent apiece.

That means Trump, at 46 percent favorable and 52 percent unfavorable, is actually the less popular candidate in the race, and in a district he carried in 2020.

His vice presidential pick, Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance, sported a 43 percent favorable, 48 percent unfavorable image.

The Senate Race

In the state's toss-up Senate race, Brown faces car dealer and entrepreneur Bernie Moreno. The contest is a must-win for Democrats if they want to maintain control of the Senate.

In 2018, as he coasted to a 7-point win statewide, Brown carried the 9th District by a whopping 17 points, 58-41 percent.

In the 9th District poll, Brown led Moreno by 13 points, 49-36 percent.

The incumbent has consolidated Democratic voters, winning 94 percent of voters who said they will also vote for Harris, while Moreno has yet to win over Republicans. Just 75 percent of Trump 2024 voters said they will back him, while 8 percent said they will vote for Brown.

Brown is significantly better-known than Moreno: 45 percent of voters viewed him favorably while 36 percent viewed him unfavorably, while just 26 percent of voters had a favorable view of Moreno and 36 percent had an unfavorable view. Another 38 percent had never heard of him or had no opinion.

That is likely to change as the general election swings into full gear. Brown, Moreno, and their outside allies have reserved a combined $180 million in TV advertisements for this fall (evenly split between Democratic and Republican entities).

If Trump and Vance win at the top of the ticket, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine will need to appoint a replacement for Vance in the Senate. Former GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy has made his interest in the seat well known, but he is still a bit of a cypher to Ohio voters, at least in the 9th District: 30 percent of voters had a favorable opinion of him while 32 percent had an unfavorable opinion.

The Bottom Line

Democratic enthusiasm is supercharged following Biden's exit and Harris's ascension to the top of the ticket. After a brutal month — the first presidential debate, the assassination attempt on Trump, and the Republican National Convention — Democrats finally have found

reason to be optimistic, and have rallied around their candidates in Ohio's 9th District.

That puts Republicans in a more tenuous position than they appeared to be in *Inside Elections'* last midwestern swing district poll, in Michigan's 7th District. But there are reasons for GOP optimism in this survey as well.

Both Kaptur and Brown are close to universally known but neither broke 50 percent in their matchups, despite carrying the district handily in their last races. Both will face an onslaught of negative attacks unlike what they have experienced previously. Merrin and Moreno, the GOP candidates, are still largely unknown and have the opportunity to define themselves and consolidate party support before Election Day.

But the close presidential result, in a district that has otherwise trended toward Republicans, makes clear that the GOP cannot take this district for granted — especially with Harris resetting the race at the top of the ticket. IE

2024 House Ratings

Toss-Up (5D, 5R)

CA 13 (Duarte, R)	NC 1 (Davis, D)
CA 27 (Garcia, R)	NY 4 (D'Esposito, R)
CO 8 (Caraveo, D)	NY 17 (Lawler, R)
MI 7 (Open; Slotkin, D)	OR 5 (Chavez-DeRemer, R)
NM 2 (Vasquez, D)	WA 3 (Perez, D)

Tilt Democratic (8D, 1R) / Tilt Republican (9R)

Tilt Democratic (8D, 1R)	Tilt Republican (9R)
AK AL (Peltola, D)	AZ 1 (Schweikert, R)
CA 47 (Open; Porter, D)	AZ 6 (Ciscomani, R)
MI 8 (Open; Kildee, D)	CA 22 (Valadao, R)
NY 22 (Williams, R)	CA 41 (Calvert, R)
OH 13 (Sykes, D)	IA 3 (Nunn, R)
OH 9 (Kaptur, D)	NE 2 (Bacon, R)
PA 7 (Wild, D)	NJ 7 (Kean Jr., R)
PA 8 (Cartwright, D)	NY 19 (Molinaro, R)
VA 7 (Open; Spanberger, D)	VA 2 (Kiggans, R)

Lean Democratic (7D) / Lean Republican (8R)

Lean Democratic (7D)		Lean Republican (8R)	
CT 5 (Hayes, D)	NH 1 (Pappas, D)	CO 3 (Open; Boebert, R)	MT 1 (Zinke, R)
IL 17 (Sorensen, D)	NY 18 (Ryan, D)	CA 45 (Steel, R)	NY 1 (LaLota, R)
ME 2 (Golden, D)	PA 17 (Deluzio, D)	IA 1 (Miller-Meeks, R)	PA 10 (Perry, R)
MN 2 (Craig, DFL)		MI 10 (James, R)	TX 15 (De La Cruz, R)

Likely Democratic (16D, 2R) / Likely Republican (7R, 3D)

Likely Democratic (16D, 2R)		Likely Republican (7R, 3D)	
AL 2 (Open; Moore, R)	OH 1 (Landsman, D)	CA 3 (Kiley, R)	*NC 14 (Open; Jackson, D)*
CA 9 (Harder, D)	OR 4 (Hoyle, D)	CA 40 (Kim, R)	PA 1 (Fitzpatrick, R)
CA 49 (Levin, D)	OR 6 (Salinas, D)	FL 13 (Luna, R)	WI 1 (Steil, R)
IN 1 (Mrvan, D)	TX 34 (Gonzalez, D)	FL 27 (Salazar, R)	WI 3 (Van Orden, R)
KS 3 (Davids, D)	TX 28 (Cuellar, D)	*NC 6 (Open, Manning, D)*	
LA 6 (Open; Graves, R)	WA 8 (Schrier, D)	*NC 13 (Open, Nickel, D)*	
MI 3 (Scholten, D)			
NH 2 (Open; Kuster, D)			
NV 1 (Titus, D)			
NV 3 (Lee, D)			
NV 4 (Horsford, D)			
NY 3 (Suozzi, D)			

	GOP	DEM
Solid	189	175
Likely/Lean/Tilt	27	34
Total	216	209
Toss-up		10
Needed for majority		218

*Takeovers in Italics,   # moved benefiting Democrats,   * moved benefiting Republicans*

Key Primary Results in Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Washington, and Wisconsin

By Jacob Rubashkin and Nathan L. Gonzales

Despite all of the attention on the presidential race, key House and Senate primaries are still taking place around the country, setting the stage for competitive fights for the majorities and electing likely new Members of Congress.

Voters in nine more states – Arizona, Connecticut, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin – cast primary ballots in the last few weeks. That means 40 states have completed their primaries up to this point with nine remaining between now and Sept. 10. (Yes, that adds up to 49. Louisiana has its all-party primary on Nov. 5.)

With less than three months still before Election Day, 39 candidates effectively have their tickets punched for Capitol Hill. They are likely to be new members of Congress next year because they've already won primaries in districts or states that are either solidly Republican or solidly Democratic and the general election is more of a formality. Republicans Abe Hamadeh of Arizona, John McGuire of Virginia, Michael Baumgartner of Washington and Tony Wied of Wisconsin are new additions to the list as well as Democrats Wesley Bell of Missouri, Emily Randall of Washington and Sylvester Turner of Texas.

A third House incumbent, Democrat Cori Bush of Missouri was defeated in the primary recently, joining New York's Jamaal Bowman and Virginia's Bob Good in an exclusive category.

Here's what happened in some key primary contests over the last couple weeks.

Arizona

Senate. Open; Kyrsten Sinema (I) not seeking re-election. Former newscaster Kari Lake's pedestrian performance in the GOP primary, pulling in 55 percent to her underfunded opponent Pinal County Sheriff Mark Lamb's 40 percent, underscores the difficulties she faces in the general election. Lake trails Democratic Rep. Ruben Gallego in fundraising ($2.1 million in cash on hand on July 10 compared to his $8.2 million) and in recent polling. She is unpopular following her 2022 gubernatorial run and refusal to accept defeat in that race. The NRSC has already spent $2.7 million on TV ads to define Gallego negatively while Lake works to scale up her fundraising. Tilt Democratic.

1st District (Northeastern Phoenix and Scottsdale) David Schweikert, R, re-elected 50%. Biden 50%. Emergency room physician/former state Rep. Amish Shah won a crowded primary in which four Democrats finished within five points of each other. Shah (24 percent) beat out former state party chairman Andrei Cherny (21 percent), former anchor Marlene Galán-Woods (21 percent), and investment banker Conor O'Callaghan (19 percent). Shah now faces Schweikert, who secured a typically unimpressive 63 percent in his GOP primary against former FBI officer Kim George. Shah, who was the weakest fundraiser among the Democratic hopefuls, took some body blows in the heated primary and doesn't have much time to consolidate support. But if Harris can outperform Biden's narrow 2020 win, that would boost Shah's chances and Schweikert manages to make his races more difficult than they need to be. Tilt Republican.

2nd District (Northeastern Arizona) Eli Crane, R, elected 54%. Trump 53%. Crane easily dispatched a primary challenge from former Yavapai County Supervisor Jack Smith, 81-19 percent. Crane is the heavy favorite in the general election against former Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez unless things improve significantly for Democrats. Solid Republican.

3rd District (Downtown and western Phoenix) Open; Ruben Gallego, D, running for Senate. Biden 75%. Just 42 votes separate Phoenix City Council member Yassamin Ansari and former state Sen. Raquel Terán in a Democratic primary that quietly attracted $4 million in outside spending, with pro-Israel and moderate groups supporting Ansari while progressive PACs backed Terán. Ansari leads but the race is headed to a recount. Solid Democratic.

6th District (Southeastern Arizona and eastern Tucson area) Juan Ciscomani, R, elected 51%. Biden 49.3%. Ciscomani beat Kathleen

Courtesy Engel Campaign
Kirsten Engel

Winn, a former TV reporter who ran for this seat in 2022, 59-41 percent in the GOP primary, a sign that the freshman member may have some issues on his right flank. The general election is a rematch too, against Democrat Kirsten Engel. The former state senator did not get help from national allies in her 2022 bid, which she lost by 2 points, but that won't be the case this cycle. If Harris can put Arizona in her column this fall, Engel could benefit. Tilt Republican.

8th District (Western suburbs of Phoenix) Open; Debbie Lesko, R, not seeking re-election. Trump 56%. A massive spending advantage and a late co-endorsement from former President Donald Trump wasn't enough to push 2022 Senate nominee Blake Masters ahead of 2022 state attorney general nominee Abe Hamadeh in the GOP primary. Masters lost by 4 points after running ads that implied Hamadeh, whose father is Muslim, is a terrorist sympathizer. State House Speaker Ben Toma finished with 21 percent and former Rep. Trent Franks' comeback effort garnered just 16 percent support. Hamadeh is a new likely member of Congress. Solid Republican.

Connecticut

Senate. Chris Murphy (D) elected 2012 (55%), 2018 (60%). Bar owner Matthew Corey defeated Beacon Falls first selectman Gerry Smith in the GOP primary, setting up a rematch with Murphy of their 2018 race. Solid Democratic.

5th District (Northern Fairfield County and northwestern Connecticut) Jahana Hayes, D, re-elected 50%. Biden 55%. Hayes will face former state Sen. George Logan in a rematch of their very close 2022

race; Hayes has to hope Harris gives her a big cushion at the top of the ticket. Lean Democratic.

Michigan

Senate. Open; Debbie Stabenow (D) not seeking re-election. National Republicans successfully navigated what could have been a messy primary, as former Rep. Mike Rogers romped to a 63-16 percent primary victory over former Rep. Justin Amash. Former Rep. Peter Meijer and financier Sandy Pensler had dropped their bids earlier in the cycle. On the Democratic side, Rep. Elissa Slotkin easily defeated actor Hill Harper, 76-24 percent, but Harper's strong showing in Wayne County, where he won 39 percent, underscores Slotkin's need to shore up support in the Detroit metro area, especially among Black voters. Tilt Democratic.

3rd District (Grand Rapids and Muskegon areas) Hillary Scholten, D, elected 55%. Biden 53%. Attorney Paul Hudson won the GOP primary, 55-45 percent, over financial planner Michael Markey. He'll be an underdog against Scholten, who has benefitted from a rapid political shift away from Republicans in Western Michigan. Likely Democratic.

7th District (Lansing area and northwestern Detroit exurbs) Open; Elissa Slotkin, D, running for U.S. Senate. Biden 50%. Former state Sen. Tom Barrett led former state Sen. Curtis Hertel by a healthy margin in a mid-July *Inside Elections*/Noble Predictive Insights poll, but that may have been a high water mark for Republicans following Biden's weak debate performance. Neither had primary opponents; Hertel had a significant financial advantage in mid-July. Toss-up.

8th District (Flint and Tri-Cities areas) Open; Dan Kildee, D, retiring. Biden 50%. State Sen. Kristen McDonald Rivet won the Democratic primary with 53 percent of the vote, well ahead of former Flint Mayor Matthew Collier (26 percent) and state Board of Education member Pamela Pugh (20 percent). On the GOP side, 2022 nominee Paul Junge easily outpaced former Dow Chemical executive Mary Draves, 75-15 percent. This race starts out tied but national GOP strategists preferred Draves as they are less than confident in Junge's ability to win after back-to-back congressional losses in 2020 and 2022. Tilt Democratic.

10th District (Macomb County) John James, R, elected 49%. Trump 49.8%. Democrats once again nominated former Macomb County judge Carl Marlinga against Republican John James. Marlinga, who narrowly lost in 2022, won a crowded primary with 49 percent of the vote. He didn't receive any outside support in his bid last cycle, but that may change this time around as both parties see the race starting out competitive. Lean Republican.

13th District (Detroit and southwestern suburbs) Shri Thanedar, D, elected 71%. Biden 74%. Thanedar's bare majority — 54 percent — speaks to his weaknesses as a candidate. But Detroit City Councilor Mary Waters was unable to rapidly scale her campaign against Thanedar after the more formidable Adam Hollier, a former state senator, was disqualified. Waters finished with 34 percent after Thanedar spent $2.2 million in campaign funds and more out of his official House office account to boost his prospects. Solid Democratic.

Minnesota

Senate. Amy Klobuchar (DFL) elected 2006 (58%), 2012 (65%), 2018 (60%). Former NBA player Royce White won the GOP primary over Wells Fargo IT desk executive director Joe Fraser, 39-29 percent. White has a criminal record, espouses conspiracy theories about Jews and the

Likely New Members of the Next Congress

Candidates Who Won Primaries in Solid or Likely Takeover Races

STATE	DISTRICT	NAME	PARTY
AZ	8th	Abe Hamadeh	R
CA	29th	Luz Rivas	D
CA	30th	Laura Friedman	D
CA	31st	Gil Cisneros	D
CO	5th	Jeff Crank	R
DE	AL	Sarah McBride	D
GA	3rd	Brian Jack	R
IN	3rd	Marlin Stutzman	R
IN	6th	Jefferson Shreve	R
IN	8th	Mark Messmer	R
MD	2nd	Johnny Olszewski	D
MD	3rd	Sarah Elfreth	D
MD	6th	April McClain-Delaney	D
MN	3rd	Kelly Morrison	DFL
MO	1st	Wesley Bell	D
MT	2nd	Troy Downing	R
NC	6th	Addison McDowell	R
NC	8th	Mark Harris	R
NC	10th	Pat Harrigan	R
NC	13th	Brad Knott	R
NC	14th	Tim Moore	R
ND	At-Large	Julie Fedorchak	R
NJ	3rd	Herb Conaway	D
NY	16th	George Latimer	D
OH	2nd	David Taylor	R
OR	3rd	Maxine Dexter	D
SC	3rd	Sheri Biggs	R
TX	12th	Craig Goldman	R
TX	18th	Sylvester Turner	D
TX	26th	Brandon Gill	R
TX	32nd	Julie Johnson	D
UT	3rd	Mike Kennedy	R
VA	5th	John McGuire	R
VA	10th	Suhas Subramanyam	D
WA	5th	Michael Baumgartner	R
WA	6th	Emily Randall	D
WI	8th	Tony Wied	R
WV	2nd	Riley Moore	R
CA	Senate	Adam Schiff	D
DE	Senate	Lisa Blunt Rochester	D
IN	Senate	Jim Banks	R
NJ	Senate	Andy Kim	D
UT	Senate	John Curtis	R

Federal Reserve, is a public supporter of Kanye West and Alex Jones, and his extensive campaign expenditures at strip clubs and unspecified charges have come under scrutiny from reporters and the Federal

Election Commission. This race started to get some attention a month or so ago as Biden was struggling at the top of the ticket and there was a possibility for Republicans to nominate someone other than White. But that scenario looks like ancient history. Solid Democratic.

2nd District (Southern Minneapolis-St. Paul suburbs) Angie Craig, DFL, re-elected 51%. Biden 52%. National GOP strategists got their preferred candidate, former federal prosecutor and Marine veteran Joe Teirab, through the primary. Teirab finished the race ostensibly unopposed after opponent Tayler Rahm dropped out a few weeks earlier, but Rahm still pulled in

Joe Teirab

Courtesy Teirab Campaign

a quarter of the vote. Craig had a $4.1 million to $535,000 cash-on-hand advantage on July 24. Republican national groups have not invested for the fall here. Lean Democratic.

5th District (Minneapolis area) Ilhan Omar, DFL, re-elected 75%. Biden 81%. Omar took her primary more seriously this year, spending seven figures to boost her effort against former Minneapolis City Councilman Don Samuels. In 2022, Samuels came within 4 points of beating her after she did not spend money on paid media. This time, she won by a wider 56-43 percent — still a relatively weak showing for an incumbent and a sign that she may face future primary challenges. Solid Democratic.

Missouri

Governor. Open; Mike Parson (R) term-limited. Lt. Gov. Mike Kehoe won a come-from-behind victory in the GOP primary with a 39 percent win over state Sen. Bill Eigel (33 percent) and Missouri State Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft (23 percent), son of the former senator, governor and U.S. attorney general. Kehoe, who is personally wealthy, is the heavy favorite in the general election against state House Minority Leader Crystal Quade, who won the Democratic primary with 50 percent over Mike Hamra (32 percent), who owns 200 Wendy's, Panera and Noodles & Company franchises. It's only been eight years since Missouri had a Democrat as governor (Jay Nixon), but that seems like a much longer time ago and understates Quade's challenge in November. Solid Republican.

Senate. Josh Hawley (R) elected 2018 (51%). Marine veteran Lucas Kunce won an uncompetitive Democratic primary with 68 percent, setting up the general election against Hawley. While Kunce has remained relatively competitive in fundraising (he had $4.2 million in the bank on July 17 compared to $5.7 million for the senator), the political lean of the state is working against him. There's no indication Trump will fall far from his 15-point victory in 2020, even in the reset race with Harris, and Missouri is still firmly behind Texas and Florida on Democrats' short list of longshot takeover opportunities. Solid Republican.

1st District (St. Louis and northern suburbs) Cori Bush, D, re-elected 73%. Biden 78%. St. Louis County prosecutor Wesley Bell defeated the congresswoman 51-46 percent in one of the highest profile House primaries this cycle. AIPAC's affiliated super PAC, United Democracy Project, spent heavily against Bush, but she also received criticism for voting against Biden's big instructure bill and was under federal investigation for misuse of campaign funds. To hang her loss simply on the Israel-Gaza issues would be a mistake. In such a heavily Democratic seat, Bell will be a new member of Congress next year.

Texas

18th District (Parts of central and northern Houston) Vacant. Biden 74%. Former Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner will replace the late Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee on the general election ballot following the longtime Democrat's death earlier this year. Turner won an election among the party precinct leaders over former Houston City Councilwoman Amanda Edwards, who ran unsuccessfully against Jackson Lee earlier this year. Turner won't run in the separate special election to fill out the remainder of Jackson Lee's term. Solid Democratic.

Vermont

Senate. Bernie Sanders (I) elected 2006 (65%), 2012 (71%), 2018 (67%). Sanders, 82, and his Republican opponent Gerald Malloy won the Democratic and Republican primaries unopposed. Sanders will decline the Democratic nomination and run as an independent, as he does every election..Solid Democratic/Independent.

Governor. Phil Scott (R) elected 2016 (53%), re-elected 2018 (55%), 2020 (73%) and 2022 (71%). Esther Charlestin, a co-chair of the Vermont Commission on Women (a nonpartisan government agency) and former Middlebury selectman, won the Democratic primary with 72 percent. She will be the heavy underdog against Scott, who remains wildly popular in the Democratic state. Solid Republican.

Washington

Senate. Maria Cantwell (D) elected 2000 (49%), 2006 (57%), 2012 (60%), 2018 (58%). The Evergreen State is not a Republican priority this year. Cantwell received 58 percent of the vote in the all-party primary and shouldn't have too much trouble against Republican physician Raul Garcia (22 percent) in the general election. In 2018, Cantwell received 55 percent in the all-party primary and 58 percent in the general election. Solid Democratic.

Governor. Open; Jay Inslee (D) not seeking re-election. The general election matchup is set between state Attorney General Bob Ferguson, a Democrat, and former GOP Rep. Dave Reichert. Reichert, who rose to fame as the sheriff of King County when he nabbed the notorious Green River Killer, is a credible candidate for Republicans but has his work cut out for him after receiving just 27 percent of the vote in the primary. Ferguson won 45 percent. Another Republican, former Richland County School Board member Semi Bird, won 11 percent, while Democratic state Sen. Mark Mullet won 6 percent. Overall, Democrats combined for 55 percent of the vote. Likely Democratic.

3rd District (Southwestern Washington) Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, D, elected 50.4%. Trump 51%. The rematch is set between Gluesenkamp Perez and 2022 GOP nominee Joe Kent. The Democrat won a narrow race last cycle that was defined by Kent's insurgent campaign and his past ties to white nationalists. This year, national Republicans believe that Kent's more professional effort and the presence of Trump at the top of the ticket will be enough to push him ahead. In the recent all-party primary, Gluesenkamp Perez finished with 46 percent and Kent with 39

percent — the balance went to Camas City Councilor Leslie Lewallen, also a Republican. Toss-up.

4th District (Central Washington) Dan Newhouse, R, re-elected 66%. Trump 57%. Newhouse is one of the last remaining House Republicans who voted to impeach Trump. In 2022, six Republican challengers combined for 49 percent of the vote, but Newhouse moved on to the general election with just 25 percent and defeated a Democrat in November. This cycle, Newhouse received just 23 percent, but will still move on to the general election. This time he'll face fellow Republican Jerrod Sessler (33 percent in the primary), but should receive support from Democratic voters who don't have a candidate and don't want the Trump-endorsed Sessler. 2022 GOP Senate nominee Tiffany Smiley was a late entry into the race and finished third in the primary with 19 percent. No matter what happens in November, this seat will stay in Republican hands. Solid Republican.

5th District (Spokane, Eastern Washington) Open; Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R, not seeking re-election. Trump 53%. Former state senator/Spokane County Treasurer Michael Baumgartner, a Republican, will face former Spokane County Democratic chairwoman Carmela Conroy in the general election. Baumgartner, who outpaced Conroy, 28-19 percent, should win easily unless things worsen significantly for Republicans in the national environment. He would likely be a serious legislator in the mold of McMorris Rodgers. Solid Republican.

6th District (Olympic Peninsula and Tacoma) Open; Derek Kilmer, D, not seeking re-election. Biden 57%. Democratic state Sen. Emily Randall placed first in the all-party primary with 35 percent, followed by GOP state Sen. Drew MacEwen (30 percent). Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz finished third with 25 percent and won't make the general election. Randall is the favorite against MacEwen. Solid Democratic.

8th District (Eastern Seattle suburbs and part of Central Washington) Kim Schrier, D, re-elected 53%. Biden 52%. Schrier had $3.3 million in the bank on July 17, and Democrats combined for 55 percent of the total vote in the all-party primary. Her GOP opponent, banker Carmen Goers, had just $5,000 at the same point. This district may be entirely uncompetitive this fall. Likely Democratic.

Wisconsin

Senate. Tammy Baldwin (D) elected 2012 (51%), 2018 (55%). There wasn't much drama on Tuesday as businessman Eric Hovde won the GOP primary with 83 percent and the incumbent was unopposed. Even though the general election matchup is only now official, the race has been engaged for months with millions of dollars in spending from both sides. Republicans are confident in Hovde's outsider profile and commitment to spending millions of dollars of his own money while Democrats believe Baldwin's personal brand will help her prevail once again. Baldwin's positioning looked more precarious when Biden looked like he was in a tailspin and threatened to drag down the entire Democratic ticket. But the switch to Harris looks like it will keep Wisconsin in the competitive presidential category and decrease the number of ticket splitters Baldwin might need in order to win. Lean Democratic.

1st District (Southeastern Wisconsin) Bryan Steil, R, re-elected 54%. Trump 50%. Both Steil and former Democratic Rep. Peter Barca ran unopposed in their respective primaries, but this continues to be a race to watch on the outskirts of the congressional battlefield. Barca is a throwback politician who served in Congress in the mid-1990s (he was

Report Shorts

Arizona Senate. A bipartisan poll for the Cook Political Report with Amy Walter conducted July 26 - Aug. 2 showed Democratic Rep. Ruben Gallego leading Republican Kari Lake 51-42 percent and Vice President Kamala Harris leading former President Donald Trump 46-42 percent. Tilt Democratic.

Michigan Senate. Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin led former GOP Rep. Mike Rogers by 3 points, 46-43 percent, in an Aug. 6-9 survey from the New York Times/Siena College. The poll of 639 likely voters found Harris ahead of Trump, 50-46 percent. A poll conducted by Fabrizio Ward (R)/Impact Research (D) for the AARP found Slotkin leading, 47-44 percent, with Harris trailing Trump, 45-43 percent. And a bipartisan poll for the Cook Political Report conducted July 26 - Aug. 2 showed Slotkin leading 50-42 percent and Harris ahead 46-44 percent. Tilt Democratic.

Nebraska Senate. A July 8-11 poll from independent Dan Osborn's campaign, conducted by Democratic firm Impact Research and Republican firm Red Wave, found the former union leader tied with GOP Sen. Deb Fischer at 42 percent. A Torchlight Strategies poll from the same time commissioned by the Fischer campaign found her leading Osborn, 50-24 percent, with Legal Marijuana Now party nominee Kerry Eddy taking 9 percent. But Eddy has since dropped out and endorsed Osborn. There is no Democrat in the race and if the LMN party does not replace Eddy with a new nominee, the general election will be a two-person race. A super PAC with ties to deep-pocketed Democratic donors has already started spending on Osborn's behalf. Solid Republican.

swept out in the 1994 GOP wave) and then served in the state legislature for years. But he's a credible candidate if Steil stumbles or Harris does dramatically better than Biden in this district compared to 2020. The main Republican and Democratic super PACs have not yet invested heavily for the fall despite Wisconsin being a crowded state to advertise in. Likely Republican.

3rd District (Southwestern Wisconsin) Derrick Van Orden, R, elected 52%. Trump 51%.

Boutique owner Rebecca Cooke defeated state Rep. Katrina Shankland 49-42 percent to secure the Democratic nomination against the GOP congressman. Van Orden is a bit of a lightning rod (he made news earlier this cycle for yelling at Senate pages, and he was present at the Capitol on Jan. 6), but Republicans believe he fits a district that Trump carried in 2020 over Biden. The general election will be quite a contrast in styles between Van Orden and Cooke, who tweeted about waiting tables some evenings. Likely Republican.

8th District (Northeastern Wisconsin) Vacant; Mike Gallagher, R, resigned. Trump 57%. Tony Wied, who once owned a chain of dinosaur-themed gas stations, won the GOP primaries for the special and regular elections. Boosted by an endorsement from Trump, Wied outpaced former state Senate President Roger Roth, 41-34 percent, in the regular primary and 43-33 percent in the special election primary. The special election will take place concurrently with the Nov. 5 general election, and Wied will be heavily favored against Democratic OB/GYN Kristin Lyerly in both. Solid Republican.

2024 Presidential Battlegrounds: North Carolina

By Bradley Wascher

North Carolina is a perennial battleground state with a noticeable Republican tinge. In 2020, President Joe Biden came closer to carrying the state than Hillary Clinton four years earlier, but he still lost by nearly 75,000 votes. And although Democrats have historically seen success in downballot and non-federal races, Republicans now hold most statewide offices, not to mention supermajorities in both chambers of the General Assembly.

The Tar Heel State is once again an important electoral prize this November, hosting a number of competitive statewide contests alongside the presidential race. Vice President Kamala Harris will look to Democratic gains in the highly educated metropolitan areas of Charlotte and the Research Triangle, while Republicans will bank on former President Donald Trump's lasting appeal with rural voters.

North Carolina in Recent Elections

North Carolina has voted for a Democratic presidential nominee only once since 1980. In 2008, Barack Obama carried the state by one-third of a point, before Mitt Romney narrowly flipped it back four years later. In 2016, Trump won the Tar Heel State by 4 points, while elsewhere on the ballot, Republican Sen. Richard Burr was re-elected by 6 points and Democratic Attorney General Roy Cooper narrowly captured the governorship from Republican incumbent Pat McCrory. In 2020, Trump carried the state by 1.3 points, GOP Sen. Thom Tillis earned a second term by about the same margin, and Cooper was re-elected by 4.5 points.

2018 was a "blue moon" election, which happens once every 12 years in North Carolina, meaning no statewide races were on the ballot except judicial contests. Democrats performed well, mirroring national trends, as they picked up seats in both chambers of the state legislature and won two spots on the state Court of Appeals. But Republicans fared better in 2022. Then-Rep. Ted Budd defeated Democrat Cheri Beasley by 3 points in the Senate race to replace Burr, and Republicans also won back control of the state Supreme Court — eventually paving the way for North Carolina's current congressional map, which is gerrymandered to cement a GOP majority. Overall, Republicans have won 31 of North Carolina's 41 statewide elections since 2016. Nearly half of those races — 19 of 41 — were decided within 3 points.

According to Baseline, the typical Democrat in North Carolina is expected to earn 48.1 percent of the vote, while a typical Republican is expected to earn 51.1 percent. The GOP has held a slight advantage in Baseline since 2016, with the margin growing by 1.7 points over the last three cycles.
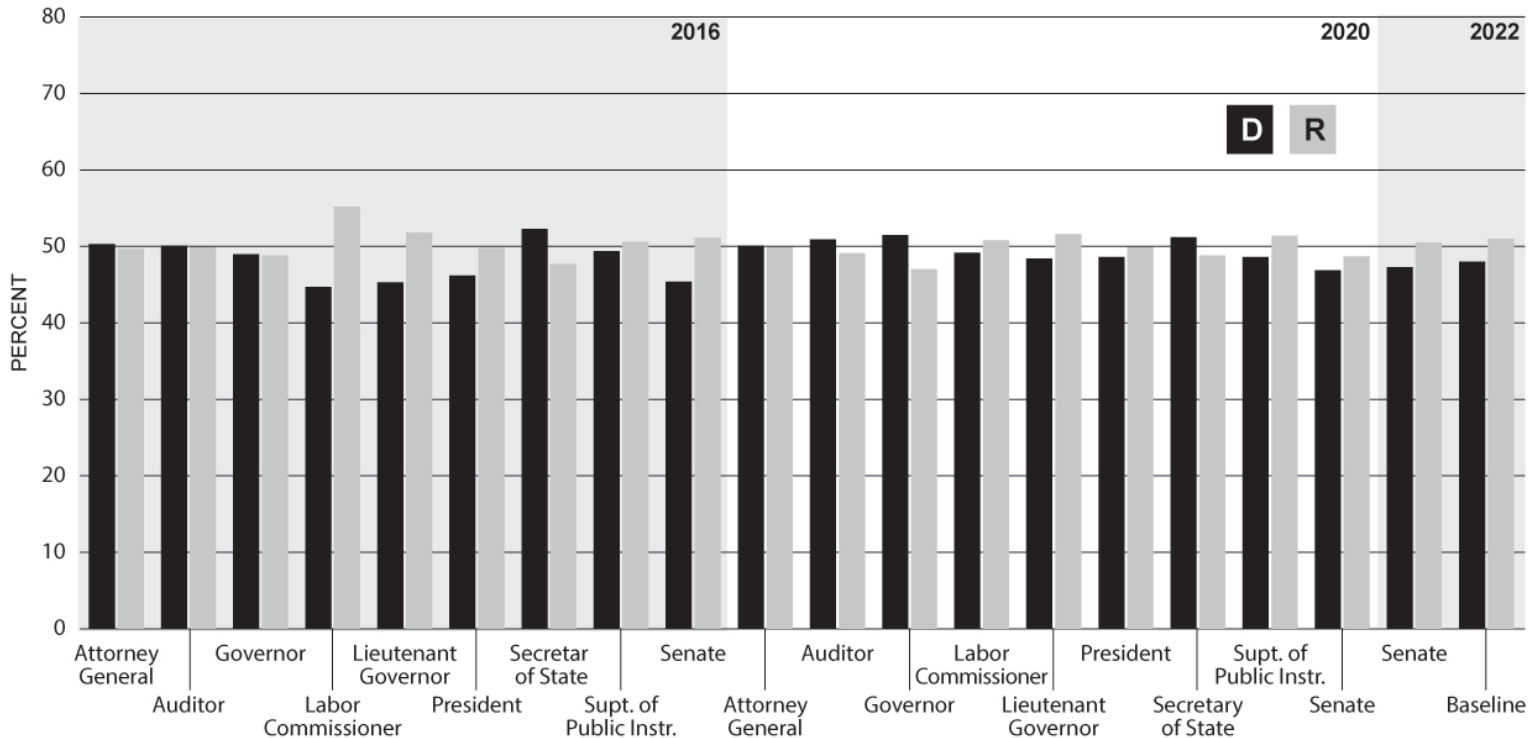
Demographics

North Carolina is racially diverse: 61 percent white, 20 percent Black, 10 percent Hispanic or Latino, and 3 percent Asian. Like other Southern states, its politics are racially polarized, with Trump winning white voters, 66-33 percent, and Biden winning Black voters, 92-7 percent, according to 2020 exit polls. Trump did exceptionally well with white voters without a college degree, winning this group by more than 50 points (compared to approximately 35 points nationwide).

According to Census estimates, 36 percent of adults in North Carolina have a bachelor's degree or higher, roughly the same as the country overall. Median household income in the state is $67,500, lower than the nationwide figure of $75,000.

Statewide Election Results for North Carolina

Democratic Strength in Metropolitan Areas

Democrats' political strength in North Carolina comes from three major metropolitan areas (Charlotte; Raleigh-Durham; Winston-Salem - Greensboro - High Point) as well as several heavily Black counties in the rural northeast.

The Raleigh-Durham metro spans three counties to form the Research Triangle, a hub of major universities, tech companies, and a highly educated workforce — all of which have contributed to massive growth. This has been good for Democrats.

Wake County, which includes the capital of Raleigh and some surrounding suburbs such as Cary, is among the fastest-growing counties in the country, and it is the largest county in North Carolina by population. It is also wealthy and highly educated, with 57 percent of adults having a bachelor's degree. Wake County voted for Biden by nearly 27 points, a continued improvement over Clinton's 20-point margin in 2016 and Obama's 11-point win four years earlier. According to Baseline, the typical Democrat has an advantage of 19 points.

Neighboring Durham County, home to Duke University, voted for both Clinton and Biden by around 60 points. Fifty-five percent of adults have a college degree, and 32 percent of the population is Black. In Orange County, which includes UNC-Chapel Hill, 63 percent of adults have a bachelor's degree, and almost 9 percent have a doctorate — among the highest share of any county in the country. Democrats boast a 49-point edge in Baseline.

Mecklenburg County, containing the city of Charlotte and its suburbs, is the second largest county in the state. It voted for Biden by 35 points, an improvement over Clinton's 29-point and Obama's 22-point wins. Similar to the counties in the Triangle, Mecklenburg is fairly well-educated: 50 percent of its adults have a bachelor's degree or higher. The affluent neighborhoods south of downtown Charlotte have supplied Democrats with a base of college-educated white voters. But Republicans still manage to post double-digit margins throughout neighboring Cabarrus (Republican+14.5 Baseline), Gaston (Republican+28.5 Baseline), and Union (Republican+29.7 Baseline) counties.

Heading west, Democrats have also done better in Buncombe County, home to the city of Asheville. The county's Democratic Baseline is 59.6 percent and the norm for Republicans is 39.4 percent, nearly identical to Biden's result against Trump. Watauga County, which contains Appalachian State University, has likewise lurched left. It preferred Romney by 3 points in 2012, but voted for Clinton by 2 points in 2016 (the only county in North Carolina she flipped) and backed Biden by 8 points in 2020. Approximately 45 percent of adults in both Buncombe and Watauga counties have a college degree.

Republican Strongholds and Opportunities

Republicans tend to perform better in the state's heavily rural counties — and during the Trump era they have even made gradual gains in places which have traditionally voted Democratic.

Take the seven majority-Black counties in the state's rural northeast: Bertie, Edgecombe, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton, Vance, and Warren. The typical Democrat has a 27-point advantage on average, according to Baseline, but Republicans have chipped away at that lead. Between 2016 and 2020, Trump earned an additional 4,739 votes across all seven counties, while Biden improved over Clinton by just 124 votes.

Presidential Battleground Series	
Michigan	April 11 issue
Georgia	April 26 issue
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Pennsylvania	May 23 issue
More to Come	

Nearby Gates, Granville, and Martin counties have also been friendlier toward Republicans. After collectively voting for Obama by 5 points in 2012, this trio flipped to Trump by 3 points in 2016, then Trump by 7 points in 2020. Nine percent of adults in Gates County have a college degree, the lowest of any county in North Carolina. Also in the area is Nash County, which has narrowly flipped in each of the last three presidential elections: favoring McCain by 629 votes in 2008, Obama by 471 votes in 2012, Trump by 84 votes in 2016, and Biden by 120 votes in 2020.

Some of this pro-Trump swing throughout North Carolina can be attributed to turnout. In 2016, turnout increased by 5 percent in the median Trump county while dropping 1 percent in the median Clinton county. Southernmost Brunswick County, which is 82 percent white, cast 19 percent more votes in 2016 than it did four years earlier, plus an additional 32 percent in 2020, making it one of North Carolina's fastest-growing counties. Next door is New Hanover County, which contains the city of Wilmington. According to Baseline, Republicans have a 1-point advantage, 50-49 percent, but Biden flipped this county in 2020, shifting toward Democrats by 6 points. Forty-five percent of adults have a college degree, making New Hanover County an increasingly harder GOP reach.

Socially conservative Robeson County, by contrast, has vaulted toward Republicans. The county had reliably backed Democrats for decades, and it voted for Obama by 17 points in 2012 — but four years later Trump won by 4 points, then improved to 19 points in 2020. Republican voter registrations in the county increased 94 percent between 2004 and 2024, according to WRAL, while Democratic registrations dropped 40 percent. Robeson County's population is 39 percent Native American (including much of the Lumbee Tribe), 24 percent white, 23 percent Black, and 10 percent Hispanic. Only 16 percent of adults have a college degree. Overall the GOP has a 4.5-point edge according to Baseline (51.9 percent Republican vs. 47.5 percent Democrat).

Most of North Carolina's remaining counties, scattered throughout the Piedmont, Coastal Plain, and Tidewater regions, are deeply Republican. Generally speaking, Clinton underperformed Obama in these whiter, more rural areas, while Biden gained back some support. Even popular statewide Democrats like Gov. Cooper struggle here, particularly in the east.

Early Polls

Trump is leading in most early North Carolina polls, although high-quality surveys of the state have been scant since Harris became the nominee. Since early August, Cygnal (R) and Redfield & Wilton Strategies both found Trump +3, YouGov Blue / Carolina Forward (D) reported an even race, and Cook Political Report / GS Strategy Group / BSG had Harris+2. The 538 average shows Trump+0.7.

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The Bottom Line

North Carolina consistently votes to the right of the nation, especially at the federal level: Republicans have won every electoral college vote and Senate seat since 2008. But Democrats have had better luck downballot dating back to the 1970s, and more recently they have been boosted by population growth in Charlotte and Raleigh, as well as continued gains with college-educated white voters.

The state is also notable for its long list of row offices. And because North Carolina elects these statewide positions during presidential cycles, nearly a dozen contests — from governor (currently rated as a Toss-up) to insurance commissioner, alongside one state Supreme Court seat and three spots on the state Court of Appeals — will be on the ballot this November. These are North Carolina's first major statewide elections since May 2023, when a GOP supermajority in the state Legislature overrode Cooper's gubernatorial veto and enacted a 12-week abortion ban.

The term-limited Cooper was briefly floated as a potential vice presidential pick when Harris became the Democratic nominee in July, and although he probably won't be leaving the state to stump for her, the popular outgoing governor can still provide some electoral lessons. For an idea of how a Democrat like Harris might carry North Carolina, consider Cooper's victory in the 2020 governor race. He ran ahead of Biden's margin on the same ballot by nearly 6 points statewide — winning by 4.5 points while Biden lost by 1.3 points. Not only that, Cooper earned more votes than Biden in all 100 counties and 95 percent of precincts. (Democrats also won the races for attorney general, auditor, and secretary of state, but not in such dominant fashion.)

Cooper's strongest overperformance was in distinctive Robeson County, where his margin was 15 points higher than Biden's; even Cooper lost the county by 3 points. While Democrats probably won't recapture their ancestral strength there, they might find more success in Cooper's second-best county relative to Biden. Alleghany County, in the northwest, gave 32 percent of the vote to Cooper and 25 percent to Biden. With a population that is 86 percent white and 21 percent college-educated, it resembles the type of place Harris would need to minimize her losses. In general, the precincts where Cooper tended to most overperform Biden in 2020 were located in the Mountain and Piedmont regions, not the Coastal Plain and Tidewater.

Turnout will be crucial for both parties. Democrats don't yet appear to have maxed out their gains in Charlotte and the Research Triangle, but naturally the pool of persuadable voters is smaller in these already heavily Democratic areas. Of the 121 precincts statewide where Cooper received fewer votes than Biden, 43 were located in Mecklenburg County. Republicans, meanwhile, will rely on rural and working-class voters: Trump carried 64 of North Carolina's 78 rural counties in 2020, on top of modest improvements in "countrypolitan" areas and several heavily Black, Democrat-favored counties in the northeast.

In terms of electoral college math, Republicans have much more on the line. They've lost North Carolina at the presidential level only one time in the past 40 years — Trump won it twice — making it a vital piece of the party's path to 270 electoral votes. So if Trump fails to nab the Tar Heel State's 16 electoral votes this November, he would have to mix and match beyond the obvious trios of remaining battlegrounds.

Given these stakes, both campaigns are investing heavily in the state. Trump's first rally after Biden withdrew was held in Charlotte, and Harris has already visited North Carolina eight times this year. The two parties have even taken to scheduling dueling events in the same cities: always on the other's heels, ready to beat the tar out of them (rhetorically). ∎

Report Shorts

Nevada Senate. A poll conducted by a Nevada GOP consultant and a researcher at Columbia University gave Democrats their best results yet, with Sen. Jacky Rosen posting a 12 point lead over retired Capt. Sam Brown and Harris leading Trump by 6 points. But the firm, Decipher Ai, has a limited track record. A bipartisan poll for the Cook Political Report conducted July 26 - Aug. 2 showed Rosen leading Brown 54-36 percent and Trump leading Harris 47-42 percent. Tilt Democratic.

New Jersey Senate. Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy is set to appoint his former chief of staff, George Helmy, to the remainder of the term of Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez, who resigned after being found guilty on federal corruption charges. Democratic Rep. Andy Kim is running for the full term, will be elected in November, and will take office in January. Solid Democratic.

North Dakota Senate. A Lake Research Partners poll conducted July 28-Aug. 1 for the Katrina Christiansen campaign found the Democrat trailing Sen. Kevin Cramer by 13 points, 51-38 percent. Christiansen has assembled a credible campaign team and launched a statewide media buy that has boosted her name ID, but Cramer had a $2.4 million cash-on-hand advantage over her on June 30. Solid Republican.

Pennsylvania Senate. Democratic Sen. Bob Casey led GOP opponent Dave McCormick, 51-37 percent, in an Aug. 6-9 New York Times/Siena College poll of 639 likely voters. Harris led Trump, 50-46 percent, in the same survey. A Quinnipiac University poll taken Aug. 8-12 found Casey ahead of McCormick by 8 points, 52-44 percent, and Harris ahead of Trump by 3 points, 48-45 percent. And a bipartisan poll for the Cook Political Report conducted July 26 - Aug. 2 showed Casey leading McCormick 53-40 percent and Harris leading Trump 48-43 percent. Tilt Democratic.

Wisconsin Senate. Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin led Republican bank owner Eric Hovde, 51-44 percent, in an Aug. 6-9 New York Times/Siena College poll of 639 likely voters. Harris led Trump, 50-46 percent, in the same survey. A bipartisan poll for the Cook Political Report conducted July 26 - Aug. 2 showed Baldwin leading Hovde 50-43 percent and Harris leading Trump 48-43 percent. Lean Democratic. ∎