

North Carolina on Offense

The Path Forward to Strengthen Our Elections

North Carolina’s elections follow a rigorous system of checks and balances that ensures every election is free, fair, and secure. In recent years, however, we’ve seen bad actors exploit weaknesses in state law, fueling misinformation, legal battles, and spurious attempts to overturn the will of the voters.

This fact sheet outlines three commonsense policy solutions that North Carolina lawmakers and election administrators can consider to close those gaps — before and after Election Day. For a deeper dive into the national context and proven solutions, see our full report, [“States on Offense: The Path Forward to Strengthen Our Elections.”](#) For more information, please [contact us](#).

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North Carolina Elections By the Numbers

Registered Voters: 7,572,738¹

Voter Turnout (Registered Voters %): 2022 [58 %] 2024 [82 %]²

Voting Methods (Election Day/Early In-Person/Mail %): 2022: 42%/51%/5%;
2024: 20%/73%/5%³

Recent Attempts to Exploit Election Vulnerabilities:

- [Challenge in State Supreme Court Race Resolved in Favor of Leading Vote-Getter After Six-Month Fight](#)
- [Lawsuits Seek to Disqualify Overseas Voters Prior to 2024 Election](#)

¹ “Voter Registration Statistics” (Reporting Period Aug. 30, 2025), N.C. State Bd. of Elections website. Accessed at <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegStat/Results/?date=08%2F30%2F2025> on Sept. 3, 2025.

² 2022 EAVS Report, p. 6, Appendix A: Descriptive Tables, Overview Table 1: 2022 EAVS at a Glance; 2024 EAVS Report, p. 6, Appendix A: Descriptive Tables, Executive Summary Table 1: 2024 EAVS at a Glance.

³ *Id.*

Three Fixes for Stronger North Carolina Elections

1	Protect voters and ensure timely results by clarifying standards and deadlines for post-election judicial challenges.
2	Build confidence in election results by ensuring a bipartisan team oversees the canvassing and certification of election results.
3	Protect military and overseas voters by removing barriers to registration and voting abroad.

Fix #1: Protect Voters and Ensure Timely Results

Lawmakers can limit post-election challenges to explicit grounds and set firm deadlines for courts to resolve them.

The recent prolonged legal battle over the state Supreme Court race exposed gaps in North Carolina's post-election challenge process. Current law does not specify whether challenges that could have been resolved before the election can be raised after an election. The state also lacks clear deadlines for resolving these challenges.

Fix #2: Build Confidence Through Bipartisan Canvassing and Certification Process

Lawmakers can require bipartisan votes to initiate disputes during canvassing and make it clear that boards have a clear, non-discretionary duty to certify county election results and submit them to the state board once canvassing is complete.

County election boards are responsible for canvassing and certifying elections. While recent legislation has targeted the composition of the board, it was designed to be bipartisan to maintain voters' trust. While current law grants county boards some authority to investigate disputed ballots during the canvassing phase, boards are prohibited from engaging in unfounded investigations once canvassing is complete.

Fix #3: Protect Military and Overseas Voters

Lawmakers can strengthen protections to ensure military and overseas voters can register and cast their ballots with the same confidence as those voting at home.

Before and after the 2024 elections, North Carolina faced litigation aimed at making it harder for military and overseas voters to cast ballots. This is a troubling national trend that

has emerged over the last few years. Federal law guarantees these voters the freedom to vote in their home state, but state law can do more to remove unnecessary barriers to registration and voting from abroad.

Secure Democracy Foundation is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization building stronger elections, state by state. Our work is state-focused, informed by election policy insights from a national perspective, and realized by seizing common ground.