

Democracy North Carolina

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For Release Monday, July 22, 2013

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County-by-County Data Reveal Dramatic Impact of Proposed Election Changes on Voters

A host of data collected from the State Board of Elections shows how legislation to change election rules would significantly affect the voters in each county.

For example, the bill to require that voters show a government photo ID could impact nearly 5% of North Carolina voters, according to the Board's analysis conducted this spring. Statewide, 318,000 registered voters do not appear to have a NC driver's license or state identity card. Counties with a high percent of non-white populations are most affected: 8.6% of voters in Bertie County lack a NC ID, compared to 2.8% in Davie County. Some other counties: Buncombe, 4.4%; Dare, 3.2%; Durham, 9.7%; Halifax, 7.2; Iredell, 2.2%; Johnston, 3.3%; Robeson, 8.6%; Stokes, 3.0%; Wake, 3.8%. *See data for all counties at end of this release or at: <http://bit.ly/18ygwOT>.*

Statewide, the numbers show that the ID requirement will disproportionately impact African Americans (who are 23% of all registered voters, but 34% of those who lack a NC photo ID) and women (who are 54% of registered voters, but 64% of those who lack a NC photo ID). Democrats are also far more likely not to have a state photo ID than Republican or Unaffiliated voters.

Voters Who Don't Have a NC Photo ID, April 2013				
Type of Voter	All Registered Voters 3/23/2013		Registered Voters Without NC Photo ID	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
STATE TOTAL	6,425,625	100%	318,643	100%
White	4,561,375	71%	172,613	54%
Black	1,446,054	23%	107,681	34%
Men	2,897,447	45%	106,713	33%
Women	3,449,315	54%	202,714	64%
Republicans	1,980,606	31%	67,639	21%
Democrats	2,767,134	43%	176,091	55%
Unaffiliated	1,657,469	26%	73,787	23%

Another legislative proposal would cut a week off the Early Voting period, but more than half (56%) of North Carolina's voters are now using this method to cast their ballots. Early Voting accounted for 63% of all the ballots cast in Guilford County in the 2012 general election; 65% in Buncombe; 45% in Duplin; 69% in Durham; 56% in Forsyth; 67% in Lee; 55% in Mecklenburg; 61% in Nash; 60% in Scotland; and 69% in Wayne. *See the chart at end for all 100 counties.*

Cutting Early Voting would not save money, according to the State Board of Elections. It will create long lines on Election Day, which will force lawmakers to reverse their decision, as they did in Florida, or force counties to divide precincts and buy equipment for more Election Day polling places. Early Voting also lets a voter update a registration rather than cast a provisional ballot, which are expensive to process. *The Board's memo is at: <http://bit.ly/18yiRsY>.*

Early Voting is one of the tools, along with Same Day Registration, that pulled North Carolina out of the national cellar for voter turnout. According to the US Election Project, the state ranked **in the bottom 12 states** throughout the 20th century, following the enactment of the poll tax, literacy tests and other devices that pushed away people of color and low-income whites.

Participation increased after Early Voting began in 2000, and North Carolina finally made it into the **top half of the states** for turnout in 2008, after Same Day Registration started. But we still have room for improvement; about **one third of voting-age citizens in NC never vote!**

North Carolina: Turnout Rates for Presidential Elections						
Year	% Voting-Age Citizens Voting for President	Rank Among 50 States 1 = Best	Number of Voting-Age Citizens	Number Who Voted for Pres.	Number of Registered Voters	% Registered Voters Who Voted
2012	64.6%	11	6,970,868	4,505,372	6,639,131	68%
2008	65.5%	22	6,584,302	4,310,789	6,262,566	70%
2004	57.8%	38	6,055,771	3,501,007	5,526,981	64%
2000	50.7%	37	5,744,241	2,911,262	5,122,123	59%
1996	46.3%	43	5,435,970	2,515,807	4,377,000	59%
1992	51.4%	46	5,077,494	2,611,850	3,817,380	68%
1988	44.5%	48	4,794,041	2,134,370	3,432,042	62%
1984	48.2%	46	4,512,013	2,175,361	3,270,933	69%
1980	44.1%	47	4,203,817	1,855,833	2,774,844	67%

In fact, North Carolina has achieved a turnout rate of 55% or better among voting-age citizens in only three elections over the past 100 years – the elections of 2004, 2008 and 2012. Rather than help a single party, Early Voting has helped both parties hit modern turnout records.

Same-Day Registration during Early Voting has also been effective in helping more people vote. It allowed nearly 100,000 citizens who missed the regular registration deadline to participate in the 2012 election, but it's another election practice on the chopping block.

Same Day Registration particularly helps younger voters and people who recently moved. In Pitt County, 2,675 voters used SDR in 2012; Alamance: 1,199; Catawba: 1,337; Granville: 704; Nash: 1,161; Onslow: 1,395; Union: 1,876; Wilson: 775. *See the chart at end for all 100 counties.*

Voters must show an ID document, and their ballot is not counted if the verification process fails. Allegations of fraud involving Same Day Registration are overblown, according to a review of the evidence. Similarly, the Board of Elections has found only two cases in the past 10 years involving voter impersonation, i.e., cases where a photo ID law would have stopped fraud. **See “Voter Impersonation” in this Board memo:** <http://bit.ly/1aDMCWP>.

Legislative sponsors say a photo ID law will enhance voter confidence because 75% of voters support it. But the NC bills do not include a safety provision supported by 70% of NC voters. The provision, used by most states with a photo ID law, allows a voter who lacks or forgets the ID to sign an affidavit at the poll, under penalty of perjury, provide an ID number such as a birth date that can be verified, and then vote. Instead of including this provision favored by NC voters, the NC bills make voters return with a photo ID. **See the poll at:** <http://bit.ly/13SIEo6>.

Finally, Sunday voting is also under attack. In 2012, just over 60,000 voters in 21 counties used it. African Americans were 23% of all voters in 2012 but 39% of those who voted on Sunday, which is why the effort to ban Sunday voting is seen as being aimed at the black church.

Number and Percent of Voters in 2012 Using Early Voting or Same Day Registration

	Total # Ballots Cast	Turnout: % Regis. Voters Who Voted	# Ballots Cast by In-Person Early Voting	% Ballots Cast By Early Voting	New Voters Using SDR	% Ballots Cast Using SDR	# Regis. Voters Without NC ID	% Regis. Voters Without NC ID
Totals	4,542,488	68.3%	2,556,228	56%	97,312	2.1%	318,643	5.0%
ALAMANCE	68,295	70.5%	35,260	52%	1,199	1.8%	4,420	4.7%
ALEXANDER	17,409	71.3%	8,970	52%	260	1.5%	638	2.7%
ALLEGHANY	5,166	69.9%	3,047	59%	57	1.1%	313	4.4%
ANSON	11,385	65.6%	6,320	56%	275	2.4%	1,059	6.2%
ASHE	12,900	67.6%	5,416	42%	141	1.1%	895	4.9%
AVERY	7,829	65.2%	2,188	28%	110	1.4%	803	6.7%
BEAUFORT	23,756	71.8%	13,177	55%	509	2.1%	1,224	3.8%
BERTIE	10,193	68.7%	5,908	58%	278	2.7%	1,244	8.6%
BLADEN	16,076	69.8%	9,817	61%	415	2.6%	1,072	4.8%
BRUNSWICK	57,977	69.7%	38,488	66%	1,235	2.1%	2,862	3.5%
BUNCOMBE	128,582	68.7%	83,496	65%	2,500	1.9%	7,899	4.4%
BURKE	37,110	63.1%	21,727	59%	563	1.5%	1,793	3.1%
CABARRUS	84,116	70.5%	36,655	44%	1,493	1.8%	3,493	3.0%
CALDWELL	35,270	64.8%	22,231	63%	790	2.2%	1,774	3.4%
CAMDEN	4,782	63.6%	2,362	49%	??	??	294	4.1%
CARTERET	35,765	70.2%	20,008	56%	668	1.9%	1,500	3.0%
CASWELL	11,183	69.8%	5,409	48%	189	1.7%	755	4.9%
CATAWBA	70,199	67.1%	39,106	56%	1,337	1.9%	4,326	4.3%
CHATHAM	35,662	76.4%	23,355	65%	842	2.4%	1,956	4.3%
CHEROKEE	13,065	59.0%	5,802	44%	136	1.0%	1,279	6.0%
CHOWAN	7,557	69.9%	4,810	64%	143	1.9%	405	3.9%
CLAY	5,679	62.5%	3,390	60%	57	1.0%	505	5.9%
CLEVELAND	43,534	68.5%	20,982	48%	714	1.6%	2,166	3.5%
COLUMBUS	24,495	64.4%	12,252	50%	556	2.3%	2,155	5.8%
CRAVEN	46,380	64.5%	28,328	61%	1,072	2.3%	3,741	5.4%
CUMBERLAND	128,744	59.7%	78,036	61%	4,817	3.7%	17,062	8.6%
CURRITUCK	11,350	63.9%	3,333	29%	105	0.9%	575	3.4%
DARE	18,153	64.2%	7,185	40%	213	1.2%	854	3.2%
DAVIDSON	71,890	68.2%	34,366	48%	1,199	1.7%	2,527	2.5%
DAVIE	20,918	73.8%	11,205	54%	363	1.7%	775	2.8%
DUPLIN	20,707	68.9%	9,245	45%	407	2.0%	1,559	5.3%
DURHAM	147,497	69.4%	102,102	69%	4,807	3.3%	19,505	9.7%
EDGECOMBE	27,152	68.0%	17,707	65%	849	3.1%	2,207	5.7%
FORSYTH	175,807	71.2%	98,843	56%	3,626	2.1%	14,474	6.1%
FRANKLIN	28,575	70.9%	15,081	53%	768	2.7%	1,446	3.7%
GASTON	91,064	66.9%	54,864	60%	2,013	2.2%	6,378	4.8%
GATES	5,482	63.8%	2,138	39%	104	1.9%	552	6.7%
GRAHAM	4,109	61.8%	1,943	47%	17	0.4%	448	6.8%
GRANVILLE	26,459	72.0%	16,871	64%	704	2.7%	1,673	4.6%
GREENE	8,296	72.3%	4,726	57%	210	2.5%	421	3.8%
GUILFORD	255,944	70.6%	161,760	63%	6,274	2.5%	20,426	5.9%
HALIFAX	26,371	69.1%	14,997	57%	1,203	4.6%	2,694	7.2%
HARNETT	43,714	63.8%	22,335	51%	1,386	3.2%	4,031	5.9%
HAYWOOD	28,364	65.7%	14,736	52%	327	1.2%	1,350	3.2%
HENDERSON	52,997	67.0%	30,138	57%	650	1.2%	2,353	3.1%
HERTFORD	11,023	71.8%	6,213	56%	376	3.4%	1,411	9.4%
HOKE	17,242	57.7%	10,247	59%	728	4.2%	2,419	8.2%
HYDE	2,408	65.4%	646	27%	34	1.4%	224	6.5%
IREDELL	76,894	69.5%	39,006	51%	1,158	1.5%	2,364	2.2%

Ways People Voted in 2012	# Ballots Cast	Turnout Rate	# Who Used Early Voting	% Who Used EV	# Using SDR	% Who Used SDR	# Without NCID	% Without NCID
JACKSON	17,001	59.8%	9,282	55%	446	2.6%	1,586	6.0%
JOHNSTON	77,218	71.5%	40,745	53%	1,761	2.3%	3,512	3.3%
JONES	5,260	69.7%	2,239	43%	88	1.7%	417	5.6%
LEE	24,392	69.9%	16,317	67%	851	3.5%	1,338	3.9%
LENOIR	28,503	71.0%	18,631	65%	743	2.6%	1,269	3.2%
LINCOLN	37,028	69.6%	18,593	50%	717	1.9%	1,596	3.1%
MACON	17,077	67.7%	9,325	55%	242	1.4%	866	3.5%
MADISON	10,394	62.3%	5,373	52%	157	1.5%	890	5.6%
MARTIN	12,744	70.6%	5,800	46%	241	1.9%	852	4.9%
MCDOWELL	18,324	63.4%	9,913	54%	294	1.6%	1,127	4.0%
MECKLENBURG	452,861	66.8%	250,995	55%	8,728	1.9%	40,724	6.3%
MITCHELL	7,892	67.2%	4,216	53%	92	1.2%	780	6.6%
MONTGOMERY	11,372	68.0%	4,177	37%	173	1.5%	1,005	6.2%
MOORE	46,648	72.5%	24,625	53%	761	1.6%	2,078	3.3%
NASH	48,806	71.6%	29,932	61%	1,161	2.4%	2,052	3.1%
NEW HANOVER	104,405	65.6%	60,259	58%	2,216	2.1%	6,521	4.3%
NORTHAMPTON	10,857	69.9%	5,869	54%	361	3.3%	1,379	9.0%
ONSLOW	51,774	53.0%	27,658	53%	1,395	2.7%	7,176	7.8%
ORANGE	77,050	68.7%	50,230	65%	2,392	3.1%	7,332	7.0%
PAMLICO	6,835	70.7%	4,100	60%	159	2.3%	465	5.0%
PASQUOTANK	18,221	62.0%	11,938	66%	534	2.9%	1,772	6.3%
PENDER	24,887	68.5%	16,452	66%	589	2.4%	1,199	3.3%
PERQUIMANS	6,718	67.3%	3,688	55%	97	1.4%	350	3.6%
PERSON	19,211	72.7%	12,789	67%	519	2.7%	995	3.9%
PITT	79,323	68.1%	49,102	62%	2,675	3.4%	5,133	4.5%
POLK	10,579	69.2%	6,612	63%	140	1.3%	775	5.1%
RANDOLPH	61,276	67.0%	28,164	46%	885	1.4%	3,006	3.4%
RICHMOND	19,632	63.3%	10,359	53%	388	2.0%	1,392	4.6%
ROBESON	43,406	57.6%	17,440	40%	1,079	2.5%	6,358	8.6%
ROCKINGHAM	42,253	69.4%	22,316	53%	787	1.9%	2,006	3.4%
ROWAN	62,752	66.8%	32,566	52%	??	??	3,522	3.9%
RUTHERFORD	29,201	66.5%	15,905	54%	404	1.4%	1,518	3.5%
SAMPSON	26,444	69.6%	13,653	52%	723	2.7%	2,124	5.7%
SCOTLAND	14,229	61.6%	8,485	60%	429	3.0%	1,427	6.4%
STANLY	28,939	71.6%	15,828	55%	428	1.5%	2,188	5.5%
STOKES	21,880	70.7%	9,122	42%	345	1.6%	926	3.0%
SURRY	29,953	66.8%	15,853	53%	577	1.9%	1,569	3.6%
SWAIN	5,829	57.2%	2,966	51%	95	1.6%	624	6.1%
TRANSYLVANIA	16,994	69.9%	10,113	60%	263	1.5%	951	4.0%
TYRRELL	1,799	69.8%	876	49%	41	2.3%	104	4.2%
UNION	95,382	70.0%	55,103	58%	1,876	2.0%	3,362	2.5%
VANCE	20,997	68.2%	13,836	66%	644	3.1%	1,435	4.8%
WAKE	488,599	74.6%	260,726	53%	8,824	1.8%	24,462	3.8%
WARREN	10,268	74.8%	6,328	62%	310	3.0%	717	5.3%
WASHINGTON	6,548	71.4%	3,806	58%	133	2.0%	529	5.9%
WATAUGA	27,855	62.2%	15,316	55%	742	2.7%	2,711	6.4%
WAYNE	51,677	69.0%	35,640	69%	1,492	2.9%	3,054	4.2%
WILKES	29,512	69.5%	12,743	43%	394	1.3%	1,313	3.2%
WILSON	39,478	70.2%	24,288	62%	775	2.0%	2,128	3.9%
YADKIN	16,951	70.2%	4,945	29%	183	1.1%	676	2.9%
YANCEY	9,729	66.4%	4,764	49%	86	0.9%	1,053	7.4%
Totals	4,542,488	68.3%	2,556,228	56%	97,312	2.1%	318,643	5.0%

Source: Data from State Board of Elections for 2012 general election