

# North Carolina Governor Voter Guide

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# ABSTRACT

The Phenix Policy Institute, a nonpartisan, student-run think tank, presents an overview of the four candidates competing for the governorship of North Carolina in the November 5, 2024 election. This guide provides concise summaries of each candidate, detailing their policy interests, age, educational backgrounds, and a neutral assessment of the three most pressing issues identified by North Carolina voters: public safety, the economy, and healthcare, as revealed by a poll from the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research. By examining each candidate's positions and initiatives regarding these critical topics, the guide emphasizes the importance of being well-informed as an engaged voter. Additionally, it outlines the roles and responsibilities of the governor, showcasing why local elections matter significantly in shaping policies that directly affect everyday life. This guide serves as a vital resource for voters seeking to make knowledgeable decisions in a democratic society. We hope you use this guide in the way you deem fit and vote on November 5th.



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# INTRODUCTION

Exercising your right to vote means far more than just earning an “I voted!” pin on election day. As U.S. Representative John Lewis said, “The vote is precious. It is almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have in a democracy.” Former President Barack Obama emphasized, “There is no such thing as a vote that doesn’t matter.” In the words of American pastor Harry Emerson Fosdick, “Democracy is based upon the condition that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people.” Ultimately, you can choose to vote by voting or vote by not voting but remember: your vote is your voice in this democracy, and if you don’t use it, someone else will be heard over you.

So, make your voice count! Engage with the democratic process for the greater good. Being an informed voter is one of the most powerful tools you possess as an engaged citizen. In North Carolina, a pivotal swing state, the outcomes of governor and state elections can influence your everyday life in ways that federal elections often cannot. Local policies shape your schools, healthcare, and public safety, so it’s vital to be informed about the candidates and their positions. When you understand the stakes at the state level, you empower yourself to make decisions that will affect your community directly. So, educate yourself, stand up, and vote—because there are no excuses!



# NORTH CAROLINA GUBERNATORIAL VOTER GUIDE

## WHO THEY ARE

### JOSH STIEN

Josh Stein is a 58 year-old democratic candidate running for North Carolina Governor. Born and raised in Chapel Hill, Stein is also a graduate of Harvard Law School, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and Dartmouth College.



### MARK ROBINSON

Mark Robinson, 56, is the Republican candidate for North Carolina governor. Born and raised in Greensboro he is the current Lt. Governor for the state and an adult graduate from UNCG.

### MIKE ROSS

Entrepreneur Mike Ross is a 42-year-old libertarian candidate running for North Carolina Governor in this upcoming 2024 election on November 5th. Born in Florida, Ross has his bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix.



### WAYNE TURNER

Wayne Turner is a 69 year-old green party candidate that has been involved in third party independent politics for the past two decades. A graduate from North Carolina State University in 1980.

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# Josh Stein

## Meet Josh:

Attorney General, Josh Stein is a 58 year-old democratic candidate running for North Carolina Governor in this upcoming 2024 election on November 5th. Born and raised in Chapel Hill, Stein is also a graduate of Harvard Law School, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and Dartmouth College. Stein announces his values in freedom, justice, and opportunity for everyone in addition to holding his faith close.

For his campaign, Stein leads with his motto, “Always putting the people of North Carolina first”. His platform states a specific interest in protecting families. Stein is running off of 13 priority platform consisting of: Making the Economy Work for Everyone, Improving Education, Building a Strong Workforce, Keeping North Carolinians Safe, Addressing Housing Affordability, Increasing Access to Health Care, Standing Up for Women’s Freedom, Protecting our Fundamental Rights, Strengthening Rural Communities, Supporting Small Businesses, Protecting & Preserving Our Natural Beauty, Supporting Veterans and their Families, Making Government Work for the People.

In North Carolina, the three most cared about issues voters want to see addressed during this election season are public safety, the economy, and health care.

## Stein’s stance on Public Safety:

Josh Stein’s stance is one that emphasizes the importance of public safety, asserting that

everyone should feel secure in their daily lives, whether at school, work, or worship. As North Carolina's chief law enforcement officer since 2017, he has prioritized the prosecution of violent criminals and worked across party lines to enhance laws protecting children from sex crimes. Stein has also focused on addressing the backlog of untested rape kits to deliver justice to survivors. He advocates for strategies to recruit and retain law enforcement officers amid staffing shortages, recognizing the challenges they face in their roles. Additionally, his campaign says he supports initiatives aimed at ensuring accountability and integrity within law enforcement, including measures to intervene in cases of excessive force. Stein is running under the argument that he committed to continuing efforts to reduce violent crime and tackle the fentanyl crisis as he seeks to enhance community safety.

## Stein’s stance on the economy:

Josh Stein advocates for equitable economic opportunities for all North Carolinians, emphasizing that hard work should enable success regardless of one's background. While he acknowledges the state's strong economic growth, he points out that many families are struggling with rising costs for essentials like housing and groceries. As Attorney General, he has taken action against predatory practices that contribute to these rising prices. Stein aims to enhance economic security by focusing on reducing costs, raising the minimum wage, and cutting

taxes for working families. He highlights the importance of investing in North Carolina's talented workforce and educational institutions to attract new businesses and create job opportunities statewide. Stein also supports initiatives to strengthen rural hospitals, combat the opioid crisis, and expand broadband access to foster economic development in underserved areas.

### **Stein's stance on the Health care:**

Josh Stein prioritizes access to quality health care for all North Carolinians, emphasizing the importance of reproductive health services and supporting women's rights in areas such as contraception and medication abortion. He highlights the long-standing refusal of the General Assembly to expand Medicaid, which he believes has negatively impacted thousands of lives and contributed to rural hospital closures. As Attorney General, he successfully defended the Affordable Care Act, ensuring continued access to care for those with pre-existing conditions and working to keep prescription drug costs manageable for seniors. Stein has also led efforts to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for the opioid crisis and to combat anti-competitive practices in the drug market. He aims to improve hospital price transparency and ensure that rural communities maintain access to essential health services. Additionally, he is addressing youth mental health challenges by taking action against social media companies for their impact on young users. As Governor, he plans to build on Medicaid expansion and enhance the availability of affordable healthcare through various initiatives, including telemedicine and increasing the number of healthcare providers in rural areas.

In brief, Steins 13 priority platform highlights where his efforts and commitments lay. Josh Stein's campaign for Governor of North Carolina focuses on creating equitable economic opportunities for all, prioritizing affordable housing, healthcare, and quality education. He aims to support working families through accessible childcare, job training, and the expansion of public education while addressing the rising costs of living. Additionally, Stein is committed to fostering safe communities and protecting individual rights, including reproductive freedoms and anti-discrimination efforts, ensuring that every North Carolinian has the opportunity to thrive.



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# Mark Robinson

## **Meet Mark:**

Mark Robinson, 56, the Republican candidate for North Carolina governor, is a man with years of experience in politics. Robinson currently serves as the state's lieutenant governor, a position he has held since 2021. In this position, he was the first black lieutenant governor ever for the state, creating a legacy for people to follow and breaking down barriers. Mark is originally from Greensboro, the third largest city in the state, and has served in the US Army Reserve. This position and past have led Mark to be a strong advocate for veteran's rights and care. In his early life, Mark lived with an alcoholic father who abused his mother. Mark and his nine other siblings were raised by their mother despite her only having a fifth-grade education. Robinson credits his leadership skills and work attitude to his mother, who taught him many of these necessary life skills.

Robinson defines himself as an average man working to better the North Carolina people. He is working to be the ultimate advocate for all people and create the best in North Carolina.

## **Mark's stance on public safety:**

Public safety is a top concern for Mark and a defining characteristic of his run for governor. According to a definition by Cornell law, public safety is the protection of one's life, health, and property. Increasing public safety is a top concern for Mark, and he hopes to ensure that by taking three steps. The first step Mark hopes to take is to give law enforcement the support they need. Mark does not specify what this support will entail, but it is his top priority.

The second step is to stand up for law enforcement, a statement that needs to be elaborated on. There is one line of detail that Robinson goes into sharing about how law. There is one line of detail that Robinson goes into sharing about how law enforcement needs training and the highest level of equipment. Yet, they must be held to professional standards to ensure safety for them and the community. Creating a system in which public safety is prominent revolves around providing a solid police force and police presence.

## **Mark's stance on the economy:**

Mark has been personally impacted by various economic actions in prior years, losing two jobs to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a policy he views as devoutly evil. With a country deeply affected by inflation, regulations, and high taxes, it is time for change to occur. Marks hopes to ease the grip inflation has on North Carolinians, reform the regulatory system to free businesses, and cut taxes for not just some people but all people. Robinson hopes that real solutions are created that put families and businesses first. To build off of this, Mark has created a ten-point plan that will solve the issues stated prior. The first of these steps is easing inflation through less government spending due to out-of-control bureaucrats, reduced energy costs, and responsibly managing the state budget. The second point is increased infrastructure and investment in it, which can occur through increased rural broadband, safe and comprehensive roads, coastal protection, and



well-maintained roads and ports. With proper infrastructure, the economy will only prosper. As stated previously, tax cuts for all is another way the economy will grow; as more money is brought home, the more money people will have to spend. The fourth point is supporting agricultural communities and industries. Food sources will be cheaper for all with support from America and North Carolina. Robinson thinks another step must be taken is developing the workforce through various measures, from increased education, more trade knowledge, and better wages to encouraging people to work. A critical point that Robinson brings up is creating space for ALL, as an economy with everyone is robust and one for everyone.



### Mark's stance on healthcare:

His beliefs remain strong, while Mark has not been the most widely discussed healthcare. For Mark, healthcare is a standing principle because of his beliefs in veterans' care. With a desire to make North Carolina the gold standard for veterans. Marks has also been very outspoken about Medicare and Medicaid, saying, "I hope that it fails because I don't want our health care in this state to be turned over to the federal government." Healthcare and limited federal control are a big part of Robinsons' policy.



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# MIKE ROSS

## **Meet Mike:**

Starting off in the tech and computer sector, entrepreneur Mike Ross is a 42 year-old libertarian candidate running for North Carolina Governor in this upcoming 2024 election on November 5th. Born in Florida, Ross has his bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix. Mike Ross takes pride in his modesty and selflessness, which his campaign highlights as the driving force behind his active involvement in community and non-profit organizations. Ross's campaign runs off his quote: "We all see how bad things have gotten – the polarization of the country, the ideological capture of our institutions, and the charade of "governing" our politicians play. We all want something different. So let's vote for something different. "

For his campaign, Ross is stated to run off of "the Golden Rule" as his backing for his six priority platform campaign: Free Market Education, Protect the Police and the Public, Peace Through Prosperity, The Environment, Controlled Substances, and Health Care.

In North Carolina, the three most cared about issues voters want to see addressed during this election season are public safety, the economy, and health care.

## **Ross' stance on Public Safety:**

Mike Ross advocates for public safety through a comprehensive approach aimed at supporting law enforcement and enhancing community trust. He proposes a minimum entry-level police salary of \$50,000, along with a 20% immediate salary increase for all officers. Additionally, he emphasizes the importance of mental health support, suggesting full psychological resources and

mandatory annual evaluations for officers. Ross also calls for reforms to police practices, including the elimination of qualified immunity and no-knock warrants, and the end of civil asset forfeiture. He supports transparency through body camera requirements and civilian review boards, while encouraging mentorship programs to cultivate positive relationships between officers and the community. Overall, his stance seeks to ensure that police are well-equipped, well-trained, and accountable to the communities they serve.

## **Ross' stance on the economy:**

Mike Ross emphasizes the need for economic reform in North Carolina, advocating for the elimination of excessive layers of taxation that he believes hinder prosperity for residents. He calls for a cessation of government interference in the free market, arguing that revenue-generating schemes often create unfair advantages for certain groups. Ross believes that fostering a prosperous economy is essential for promoting a peaceful and tolerant society. His approach focuses on encouraging equitable economic growth, allowing all North Carolinians to benefit from a thriving marketplace. Overall, his stance aims to create an environment where economic opportunities are accessible to everyone.

## **Ross' stance on Health Care:**

Mike Ross emphasizes the need to minimize government involvement in healthcare to enhance the free market's ability to meet individual needs. He advocates for removing

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bureaucratic barriers and unnecessary regulations that he believes contribute to high healthcare costs and poor outcomes. Key proposals include ending certificates of need and prescription import restrictions, as well as implementing medical billing transparency. Ross also stresses personal autonomy, asserting that individuals should have the right to make their own choices regarding their health and what they consume. His approach aims to create a healthcare environment that better serves the people of North Carolina.

In brief, Mike Ross's campaign centers on promoting government transparency and advocating for a hands-off approach to personal issues. He believes that all legislation should be open for public comment, and he opposes any bills that infringe on the fundamental rights of North Carolinians. Ross emphasizes the need for innovative, free-market solutions in education, healthcare, and policing, while also advocating for fair resource distribution and personal autonomy. His overarching goal is to create an environment where individuals can thrive without excessive government interference.

# WAYNE TURNER

## Meet Wayne:

Wayne Turner is a 69 year-old green party candidate that has been involved in third party independent politics for the past two decades. A graduate from North Carolina State University in 1980 Turner has worked as a general manager, research engineer, project manager, and community college instructor. Endorsed by the North Carolina Green Party, Turner's plan for all North Carolinians takes interest in Economy, Education, Environment, Healthcare, Criminal Justice, Immigration, and Labor. In North Carolina the three most pressing issues according to voters are public safety, the economy, and health care.



## Turner's Stance on the Economy:

Turner's stance on economic issues He proposes on his website that he will one: "work to attract state companies that offer good wages and benefits, and have a track record or clear intent to treat their employees fairly". Two: he wishes to "promote worker cooperatives which have the potential to make our economy more resilient to downturns and will keep money within local communities and the state." Turner believes this approach to businesses will reduce wealth inequality and will make it more likely to implement humanitarian solutions to economic downturns as well as create strong communities invested in more than just its profits. Three: "promote the creation of a state-owned public bank." Through public banking this change would attempt to build better communities and promote reasonable lending rates, returns on deposits, and overall a better view towards their community that is more than just profit. Four: "encourage North Carolina to implement ESG standards European companies look for when deciding to open new facilities in the US." This would work to attract European companies that must comply with these standards as it is required by law to report their progress if they are based in the European Union.



**NORTH CAROLINA  
GREEN  
PARTY**

## Turner's Stance on Public Safety:

On Public Safety, Turner does not directly mention public safety, however he does talk about “ending the millions of dollars on school “resource” officers” an approach that similarly follows his plan for criminal justice. Turner hopes to address criminal justice by working to “abolish prisons in North Carolina”. Turner explains that he will push for reformation of the criminal justice system while staying in accordance with Green principles and the framework of the state and federal legal system. Turner's stance for public safety seems to be focused on humanitarian issues and efforts targeted to solve inequities.

## Turner's Stance on Healthcare:

On Healthcare, Turner suggests that he will “advocate for state representatives in Congress to support Medicare for All Act in the US House and US Senate,” believing that private health insurance only benefits a privileged part of the population. Similarly, he vows to work in the absence of universal healthcare “implement a state universal health program.” In addition, Wayne Turner acknowledges the large uninsured population in North Carolina, and he wants to work to “direct the state to reach out to this population to obtain the largest possible health insurance coverage”. Finally Turner has expressed his wish to “limit private equity investment in the health services field in North Carolina.”



# NC GOVERNOR ROLES

What are their duties?

**1**

- ✓ Governor shall reside as the seat of the the government and faithfully execute laws

**2**

- ✓ The Governor must give General Assembly information of State affairs and recommend to their consideration things he deems expedient

**3**

- ✓ The Governor prepares and recommends to the General Assembly a comprehensive budget of anticipated revenue and proposed expenditures of the State for that fiscal period.

**4**

- ✓ The Governor is required to reconvene the General Assembly when specified by Section 22 of Article II of the Constitution. The purpose of the session being to reconsider bills returned by the Governor.

**5**

- ✓ The Governor is the Commander in Chief of the military forces of the State except when they are called into service of the United States.

**6**

- ✓ The Governor may grant reprieves, commutations, and pardons, after conviction, for all offenses (except in cases of impeachment).

**7**

- ✓ The Governor with the advice of the Council of State, may convene the General Assembly in extra session.

**8**

- ✓ The Governor nominates with the advice and consent of a majority of the Senators appoint all officers whose appointments are not otherwise provided for.

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# CONCLUSION

Voting and the exercising the right to vote is a civic duty crucial to upholding and promoting a strong democracy. Democracy relies on the active participation of its citizens to delegate power to elected officials to represent the will of the people contributing to the legitimization of power. Informed voting is the knowledge about how to vote, the recognition of the importance to vote, the evaluation and education of candidates and policies, and preparation to know what to expect at the polls. Through informed voting we can strengthen democracy through educated decision making, reduced misinformation, and accountability of elected officials. With that said the State of North Carolina is a swing state, a toss-up that could go either way in the election. This means that your vote most especially matters in the outcome of the election and makes it even more imperative to get registered and make an informed vote. To vote in North Carolina you must find the location of your polling place which you can do by visiting the North Carolina Board of Elections or scanning the QR code. Now with the knowledge you have to be an informed voter, it is imperative to get out on election day and exercise your civic duty to uphold democracy and vote!



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