

Update on 2024 Elections

Joint Legislative Elections Oversight Committee

April 17, 2024

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NORTH CAROLINA
STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Topics for today:

- Facts and figures from 2024 Primary
- New law implementation
- Challenges for election administration
- Elections resource needs

Facts & Figures from 2024 Primary

2024 Primary Overview

- Primary held March 5, 2024
- More than 1.8 million ballots cast (approx. 24% turnout)
 - 2020 Primary: 2.1+ million ballots cast (approx. 31% turnout)
- Registered voters: 7.4+ million (2020 Primary: 6.9+ million)

2020		
Registration Statistics by Party		%
Democratic	2,525,133	36.37%
Republican	2,076,904	29.91%
Unaffiliated	2,295,327	33.06%
Libertarian	40,187	0.58%
Constitution	3,099	0.04%
Green	2,086	0.03%
	6,942,736	100.00%

2024		
Registration Statistics by Party		%
Democratic	2,415,077	32.34%
Republican	2,241,156	30.01%
Unaffiliated	2,751,776	36.85%
Libertarian	50,326	0.67%
Green	2,062	0.03%
No Labels	7,752	0.10%
	7,468,149	

Primary Overview

- Voting method comparison:

	2020	2024
Absentee by mail	26,514	27,872
Early voting	779,254	671,138
Election Day	1.29m+/-	1.10m+/-

2020 ABM & EV			
Ballots Cast by Party		Turnout*	Proportion**
Democratic	381,425	15.11%	47.34%
Republican	205,486	9.89%	25.50%
Unaffiliated	217,814	9.49%	27.03%
Libertarian	877	2.18%	0.11%
Constitution	59	1.90%	0.01%
Green	107	5.13%	0.01%
	805,768		100.00%

2024 ABM & EV			
Ballots Cast by Party		Turnout*	Proportion**
Democratic	250,907	10.39%	35.89%
Republican	248,399	11.08%	35.54%
Unaffiliated	198,977	7.23%	28.47%
Libertarian	684	1.36%	0.10%
Green	19	0.92%	0.00%
No Labels	24	0.31%	0.00%
	699,010		

Primary Overview

- Voting method comparison:

	2020	2024
Absentee by mail	26,514	27,872
Early voting	779,254	671,138
Election Day	1.29m+/-	1.10m+/-

Election Day Voting 2020 Primary Election			
Party	Votes	Turnout	Proportion
Democratic	569,447	22.53%	42.19%
Libertarian	2,947	7.34%	0.22%
Republican	400,061	19.27%	29.64%
Unaffiliated	377,202	16.43%	27.95%
Statewide	1,349,657	19.45%	

Election Day Voting 2024 Primary Election			
Party	Votes	Turnout	Proportion
Democratic	295,395	12.23%	26.97%
Libertarian	2,059	4.09%	0.19%
Republican	464,350	20.72%	42.39%
Unaffiliated	333,603	12.12%	30.45%
Statewide	1,095,407	14.69%	

Primary Canvass and Audits

County canvass process for each election:

- Sample hand count audit
- Reconciliation
- Confirm all eligible ballots have been counted
 - Ballots that were unable to be read in the precinct (ballot jams, torn ballots, etc.)
 - Absentee ballots
 - Provisional ballots

Audits before State canvass:

- Voter history audit
- Sample hand count audit

Voter History Audit

Compares the number of voters who check in with the number of ballots cast.

Findings:

- 27 counties' voter history and ballots cast matched exactly.
- 60 counties had differences of 1, 2, or 3 ballots.
- The absolute combined value of all variances for all counties is 170 ballots or, on average, fewer than 2 ballots per county.
- The 12 counties with differences of 4 or more were asked to explain the differences. Many were due to issues with voters not wishing to vote the ballot associated with their party affiliation.
- **No evidence that vote totals or ballots cast were manipulated.**

Sample Audit

Hand count of randomly selected groups of ballots in each county, compared to tabulated results for those ballots. Counties hand counted the presidential contest for 169 Election Day precincts, 22 early voting sites, and 9 counties conducted a hand count for all absentee-by-mail ballots.

Findings:

- Of the 200 samples audited (more than 103,100 ballots statewide), the audits found a 14-vote discrepancy between the machine count and the human count, limited to 11 ballot groups; the average ballot count difference in those 11 groups was 1.3.
- Differences were attributed to human error, such as a voter using an x instead of filling in the bubble, or to human error during the hand count itself.
- In the other 189 samples, the machine and hand counts matched exactly.

Implementation of New Election Laws

Photo ID Implementation

2023 Municipal Elections

- 99.91% of voters showed a valid photo ID when voting in person

2024 Primary Election

- 99.94% of voters showed a valid photo ID when voting in person

Photo ID – Provisional Voting (Primary)

- 1,185 voters cast provisional ballots for reasons related to photo ID
 - 6.6 ballots out of every 10,000 cast
 - 697 counted (59%)
 - 557 filled out ID Exception Form
 - 550 related to reasonable impediments
 - 4 said they had a religious objection to being photographed
 - 3 voters cited natural disaster
 - 140 did not fill out ID Exception Form and presented ID at CBE
 - 11 partially counted (1%)
 - 477 not counted (40%): vast majority were voters who did not return to CBE with ID

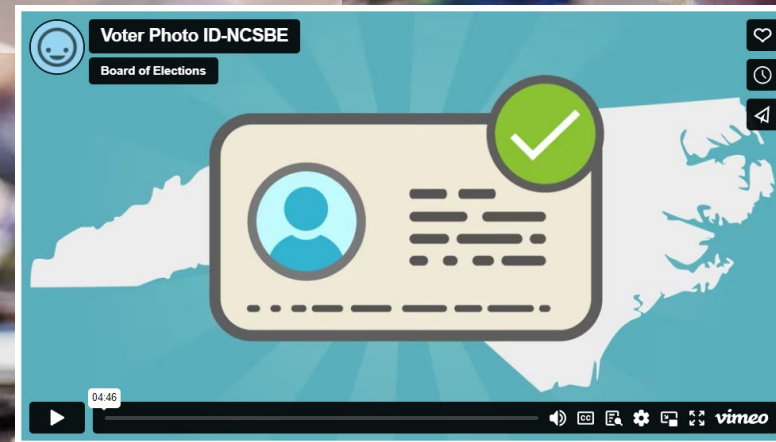
Photo ID – Absentee (Primary)

- 28,000 absentee ballots accepted
 - 3,203 used ID Exception Form* (11%)
- Higher use of exception form is expected in absentee voting due to need for a voter to make a photocopy
- Absentee voters confirm their identity in ways that in-person voters do not—by providing personal identifying information (DOB + DL/SSN) on the ballot request form

*Absentee data available in the statewide system is not as detailed as provisional voting data, so specifics on the exceptions claimed or Exception Forms rejected are not available at this time.

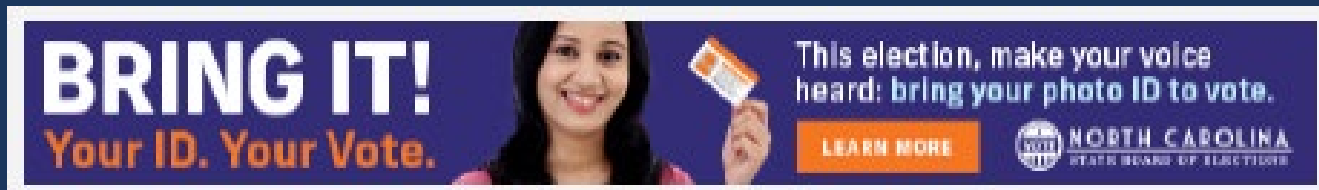
How Are We Educating Voters about Photo ID?

- Press releases, media availabilities, interviews
- [NCSBE.gov/voterID](https://www.ncsbe.gov/voterID) or [BringItNC.gov](https://bringitnc.gov), county websites
- Social media posts
- Public meetings/events at county & state levels
- Mailings
- Paid advertising (\$1 million from state budget)



Paid Outreach Campaign

- Audience: Eligible voters 18 and older in all 100 counties
- Primary campaign spend: ~\$99,400
- Facebook, Instagram, newspapers, radio, TV, billboards, Internet, digital displays at gas stations, convenience stores, restaurants, bars, etc.
- Total impressions: 21.8 million (# times ads were shown)
- Will spend ~\$730K between now and November 5



Change in Absentee Ballot Deadline

- Absentee envelope instructions
- Statewide mailer to 4.9M households
- Press releases and media availabilities
- Outreach seminars
- State and county websites

Voting in North Carolina?

Bring Your Photo ID

North Carolina voters will be asked to show a photo ID when they check in to vote.

Most voters will use their driver's license, but many other forms of photo ID will be accepted. Voters who vote by mail will be asked to include a photocopy of their ID when returning their ballot.

All voters will be allowed to vote with or without photo ID.

Voters who do not have photo ID when they vote can make sure their vote counts by either (1) filling out a form explaining why they are unable to show ID, or (2) showing their ID at their county board of elections office **by 5 pm on March 14**, the ninth day after the election.

2024 Primary Election Calendar

JAN. 1	Voters can start requesting an absentee ballot for the March primary.
FEB. 15	In-person early voting begins; same-day registration available.
FEB. 27	Absentee ballot request deadline (5pm)
MAR. 2	In-person early voting ends (3pm)
MAR. 5	Primary Election Day (Polls open 6:30am - 7:30pm)
MAR. 5	Absentee ballot return deadline (7:30pm) Ballots must be received by the county board of elections by this time.

Scan to learn more about the photo ID requirement and see complete list of acceptable IDs.

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Change in Absentee Ballot Deadline

- 2024 Primary: 1,128 absentee-by-mail ballots returned after the deadline (7:30 PM Election Day)

2020:

Voter Party	Count
DEM	397
REP	116
UNA	287
Grand Total	800

2024:

Voter Party	Count
DEM	445
LIB	3
REP	268
UNA	412
Grand Total	1128

Absentee Ballot Deficiency Process

- SB 747 enacted a process for absentee voters to address deficiencies with their absentee ballot envelope that can be addressed with additional documentation (i.e., “cure”) – usually missing voter signature or missing photo ID documentation
- Voter is notified and provided with instructions to address the deficiency
- Some deficiencies cannot be remedied with documentation and require the ballot to be reissued (e.g., one witness and not two)
- March primary:
 - 474 absentee voters resolved ballot deficiencies
 - 147 were notified but did not resolve the deficiencies

Election Observer Law Changes

- SB 747 modified appointment deadlines, challenge procedures, appeal process for removals, and list of authorized and unauthorized activity
- State Board issued rules for hearing challenges and appeals, and requiring observers to wear identifying badges to make their role clear to voters and election officials
- State Board issued training, guidance, and voting site materials to county boards to ensure the new procedures and rules were implemented smoothly

Same-Day Registration Changes

- SB 747 enacted a process to determine same-day registrant's address through documentation provided during early voting
- Also calls for a single mailing (VR card) to verify address
- If card returned undeliverable by two days before canvass, a recent court decision requires notice to the voter and an alternative process to confirm their address
- March 2024 primary – 5,702 total same-day registrants
 - 51 same-day registrants' VR card returned undeliverable
 - 15 used "cure" process and ballot counted

Absentee Signature Pilot Program

- SB 747 requires a pilot program to examine signature verification on absentee ballots through software
- State Board selected 10 diverse counties, has generated guidance on carrying out the program, and is procuring a vendor
- Initial procurement failed to locate a vendor that could meet all requirements. Working on a new procurement to be completed soon.
- State Board will report results to the General Assembly as soon as available

Challenges for Election Administration

Elections Challenges: County Director Turnover

	# of Changes	Retired	Resigned	Death	Termination
2019	11	9	2		
2020	10	6	4		
2021	12	7	4	1	
2022	10	7	3		
2023	8	3	4		1
2024	9	5	4		
	60	37	21	1	1
<i>Date based upon new director appointment</i>		1=SBE role; 1=CBE deputy TOTAL=2	3=Other CBE; 3=SBE role; 1=county in other state TOTAL=7		

28-31

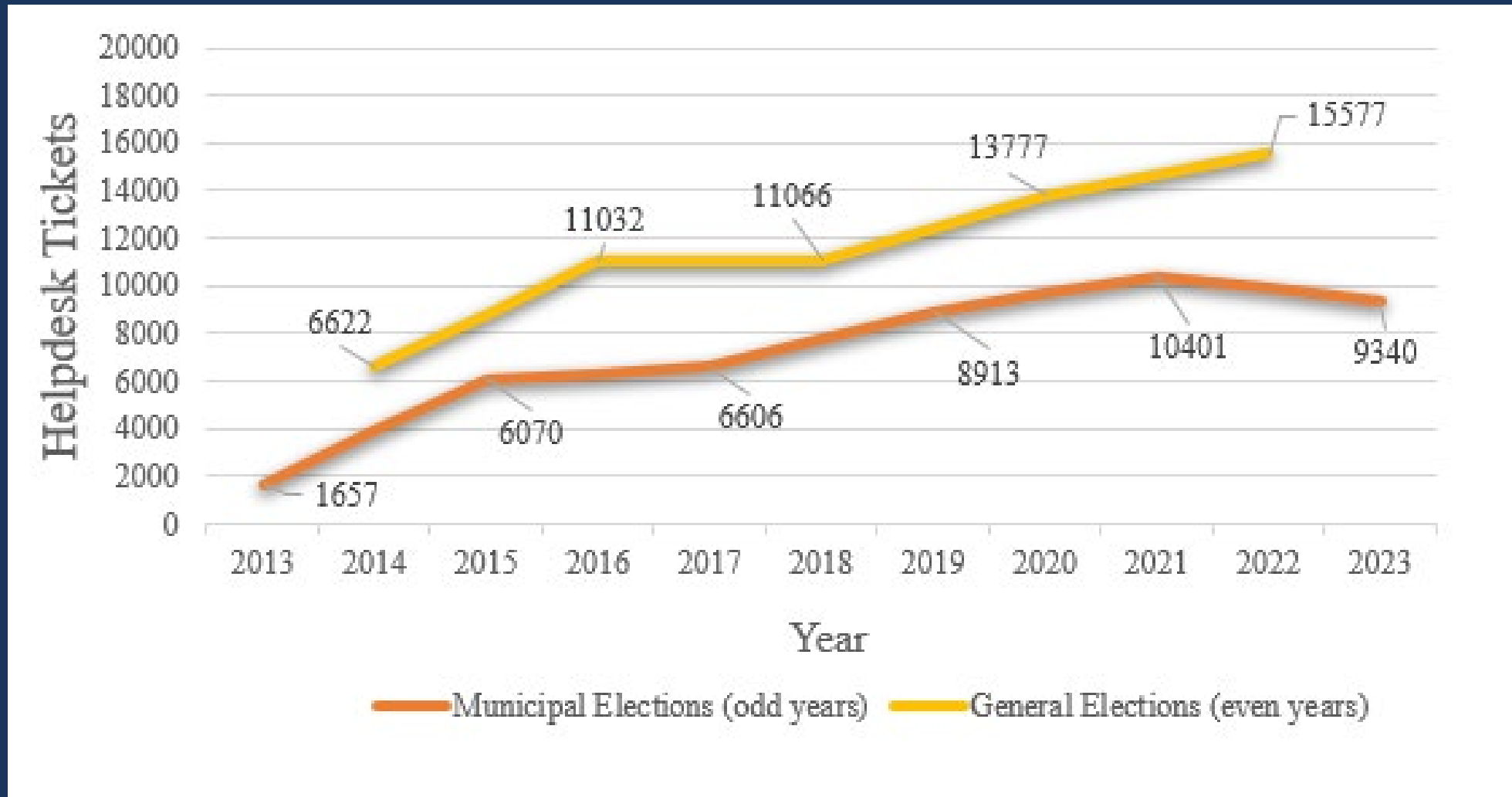
2024 will be first presidential election as county elections director (may have been interim or worked on elections staff but not officially named director at time of last presidential election).

6

Retired or resigned before conducting first presidential election as a county director.



Elections Support Demands



Elections Resource Needs

Funding for Secure Elections

Additional funding requests for the short session:

- Securing elections by investing in critical information technology software and services and funding critical IT positions
- Supporting counties by providing recurring funding for 2 additional regional election field support specialists; restores to 2020 level
- Continued investment in modernizing statewide elections management system
- Improving data analytics to build on existing list maintenance programs

Questions?

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North Carolina State Board of Elections



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