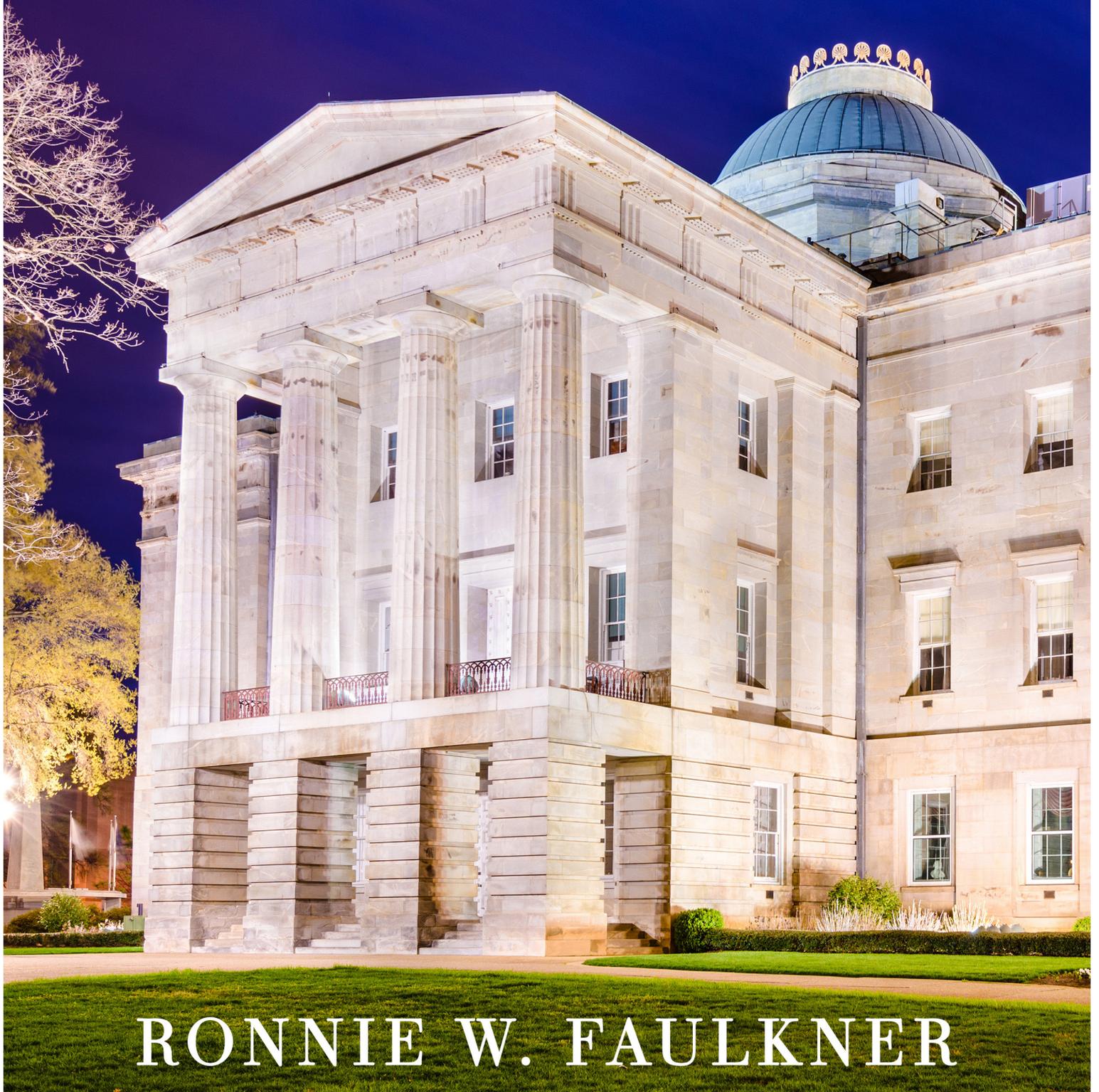


HISTORY OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA
REPUBLICAN PARTY



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NORTH CAROLINA REPUBLICAN PARTY

**“Some people have to be fooled a dozen times before they
learn anything, and this is especially true of a Democrat.”**

---Hal W. Ayer, Chairman, NC Populist Party, 1896

Republican Party of North Carolina, 1860-1900

By the mid-1850s there emerged an anti-slavery party to replace the disintegrating Whig Party; this was the new Republican Party. When Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) ran for president as a Republican in 1860, his party was not even on the ballot in North Carolina. Because the new party was associated with abolition and later with a bloody Civil War, it was for a long time referred to in the South as “the Black Republican Party” or even “the Radical Party.” The early Republican Party of North Carolina was to ultimately consist of a combination of black former-slaves, native whites (primarily former members of the defunct Whig Party) disparagingly called “Scalawags,” and northern transplants called “Carpetbaggers.” It was, despite the picture painted by Democrats at the time, a moderate party of nationalism, free enterprise, and racial toleration, supporting political but not social equality for African Americans. While blacks made up a significant proportion of the party, the organization was led primarily by native white Southerners.

The North Carolina party was officially organized by the first interracial political gathering in the history of the state on March 27, 1867, when 101 whites and 46 African Americans gathered in the Capitol House Chamber in Raleigh. The leader of the party was the former Andrew Johnson (1808-1875) appointee as interim governor in 1865, William W. Holden (1818-1892), editor of the *North Carolina Standard*.

The party took immediate positions in support of Congressional Reconstruction, approval of the thirteenth (abolition of slavery) and fourteenth amendments (protecting civil liberties), and

black enfranchisement. Among its early successes were the writing of the Constitution of 1868, the election of Holden as the first Republican governor, and the first participation by freedmen in the electoral process. Historian J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton (1878-1961), himself a white supremacist Democrat, noting the early reliance of the party on black votes, wrote in 1914: “But for Reconstruction, the State would to-day... be solidly Republican.”

A few key industrialists like Washington Duke (1820-1905), Cesar Cone (1859-1917), and John Motley Morehead II (1866-1923) were also associated with the early Republican Party, though most Tar Heel businessmen were Democrats. This pattern persisted well into the twentieth century.

Four African American Republicans represented the 2nd Congressional district, known as “the Black Second,” in Congress between 1872 and 1900. They were John A. Hyman (1840-1891), James E. O’Hara (1844-1905), Henry P. Cheatham (1857-1935), and George H. White (1852-1918). The second district was created by Democrats in an effort to restrict the majority of the black vote to a single district and thereby to help secure other districts for the Democrats. In addition, between 1868 and 1899, a total of 127 black Republicans served in the General Assembly, 101 in the House and 26 in the Senate. This level of service far surpassed that of black Democrats in the 20th century.

Governor Holden was eventually impeached in 1871 and removed from office; this was a partisan effort, owing to the governor’s attempt to suppress the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan had murdered two Republican leaders, including State Senator John W. Stephens (1834-1870) of Caswell County, who was stabbed to death in the basement of the county courthouse. Stephens had been, according to a recent biographer, a man who “threw his influence on the side of political and racial moderation.” Holden called out the militia in response to the vicious crime.

The impeachment was a Klan-motivated activity. In fact, the articles of impeachment were drawn up by Frederick N. Strudwick (1833-1890), an Orange County Klan leader. Holden was tried, convicted, and removed from office on a party-line vote. The Conservatives (i.e., the Democrats) controlled the legislature after 1871, but did not retake the governorship until 1876 with Zebulon B. Vance (1830-1894) as their candidate.

The national Republican Party passed Civil Rights legislation in both 1866 and 1875 to protect rights of freedmen and provide for their right to use public accommodations. In 1871 and 1872, Congress, recognizing that state governments were unwilling or unable to deal with spreading Klan violence, passed the Ku Klux Klan Acts empowering the federal government to suppress such activity. By late 1872 the Klan vanished as an organized group in North Carolina. Two developments helped the Republican Party of the 1880s. One of these was the creation of anti-prohibition party called the Liberal Party, which many former Democrats joined. A prohibition attempt was smashed in a referendum in August of 1882 by a vote of 166,325 to 48,370. The split among the Democrats on the issue was clear, but they managed to narrowly hold the legislature in the 1882 election.

The Republicans, however, in 1886 were helped even more by “Independentism,” as it was called at the time. A group of disgruntled Democrats, calling themselves Independents, held the balance of power in the legislature that was elected on November of 1886. They promptly united with the Republican minority and elected one of their own, John R. Webster (1853-1938) of Reidsville, as Speaker of the House. Despite their reformist inclinations—many wanted to democratize the election process and create a railroad commission—the Republican-Independent combination was stymied by dissent within the ranks, as well as by Democratic control of the State Senate. They managed the House for only two years, 1887-1889.

Between 1868 and 1900, the state Republican vote averaged about 46%, while the Democrats averaged 54%. In spite of this strength, the Republicans were effectively in power in the 19th century only in 1868-70 and in 1895-99, a total of six years.

The major reason the Republicans did no better in the 19th century was the election manipulation of the Democrats, whose officers routinely challenged, intimidated, and used nefarious methods to discourage black voters. Also, the notorious County Government Act of 1877, which was strengthened in the late 1880s, took election of county commissioners out of the hands of voters and gave it to justices of the peace appointed by the General Assembly. This was a highly undemocratic law!

The Democrats were able to keep power by such methods until economic issues came to the forefront of politics in the 1890s. Deflation in agricultural prices combined with the Panic of 1893 (really a depression), brought about a united front of the farmer-oriented People's or Populist Party and the Republican Party against Democratic control of the state in what was called "Fusion." In 1894, this combination swept into the General Assembly.

The Fusionists in the legislature elected Republican Jeter C. Pritchard (1857-1921) and Populist Marion Butler (1863-1938) both to the United States Senate. Pritchard was the first Southern Republican elected in over 20 years and was the only one in the Senate at the time. Because of this he was frequently consulted by President William McKinley (1843-1901) on matters related to the South. He introduced a bill to create a Southern forest reserve, often credited as being the first step toward the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. After service in the Senate, Pritchard became a federal judge and developed an impressive record from the bench as an upholder of Constitutionally-guaranteed rights.

Fusion led to increased expenditures for education and charitable activities. The charter for the Farmers' Alliance (repealed by the Democrats in 1893) was reinstated and the County

Government Act repealed. Liberalization of election laws added over 50,000 new voters to rolls. Over 1,000 blacks served in both elective and appointive offices at all levels of government in the state.

In 1896, when the Fusionists increased their majority, Republican Daniel L. Russell (1845-1908) was elected governor. One of his key advisers was black state Representative James H. Young (1858-1921), whom Governor Russell appointed as director of the state institution for the deaf, dumb, and blind; and later appointed as colonel of a regiment of black volunteers in the Spanish-American War. Young was described at one point as “easily the outstanding Negro in state influence.”

During the Fusion period, Hal W. Ayer, chairman of the North Carolina Populist Party and State Auditor, 1897-1901, made one of the most memorable observations ever made about the Democratic Party. “Some people have to be fooled a dozen times before they learn anything,” remarked Ayer in October of 1896, “and this is especially true of a Democrat.”

By 1898 the state’s Democrats launched a racist “White Supremacy” campaign to unseat the Republican-Populist combination. Furnifold M. Simmons (1854-1940), the Democratic chairman, and a number of other leaders attacked what they called “negro rule” and “negro domination.” During the campaign Red Shirts, reminiscent of the Klan activities of an earlier era, intimidated Republican voters. The Democrats smashed the Fusionists.

A few days after the election, on November 10, the Democrats staged a *coup d’etat* in Wilmington, which started with burning down the offices of the *Daily Record* newspaper, and was followed by unseating the legitimate Republican government of the city by force in what is commonly referred to as the Wilmington Race Riot. Dozens of persons, mostly blacks, were killed in the violence. Democrat Alfred M. Waddell (1834-1912), leader of the mob and the newly installed mayor of the city, boasted that the mob “choked the Cape Fear with corpses.” A

full investigation of this racial violence was not completed until 2005—a record 107 years between the incident and an official state investigation and report. The Report noted: “Republican Governor Russell, threatened with impeachment and death, was effectively silenced...” The Report concluded that “the foremost victims of the tragedy were the city’s African Americans in a multitude of ways—banishment, the fear of further murders, dealing with the deaths of loved ones, destruction of property, exile into cold swampland, or injury as a result of the gunfire.”

But, with or without Republican acquiescence, the Democrats were determined to end African American participation in politics. The disfranchisement amendment introduced a poll tax, a literacy test, and a grandfather clause, which provided that a person who could vote or whose ancestor could vote on January 1, 1867, was exempted from the literacy test. By this means, illiterate whites were “grandfathered into” the election process and most blacks were excluded. No black could vote in January of 1867 because the Reconstruction Acts were not passed until March of that year. The disfranchisement amendment was approved at the polls on August 2, 1900 by a vote of 182,117 to 128,285.

The above amendment devastated the state Republican Party as evidenced by the following returns for governor between 1896 and 1904:

Year	Republican Vote	Democrat Vote	Populist Vote	Total
1896	154,025	145,286	30,943	330,254
1900	126,296	186,650		312,946
1904	79,505	128,761		208,266

As 1901 dawned it appeared that, except for presidential patronage, the Republican Party was finished as a political force in North Carolina. At this point, with all but 6,145 blacks disfranchised statewide, certain leaders of the GOP started to move toward a white party, in

imitation of the existing Democrats. The new, tiny rump Republican Party did not begin a serious recovery of lost votes for almost six decades.

Republican Party of North Carolina, 1900-2000

After the disfranchisement of African Americans in the Tar Heel State in 1900, the N.C. Republican Party went into immediate serious decline. It only received 38% of the gubernatorial vote in 1904. In 1905 the previously insignificant “lily-white” faction in the General Assembly was able to vote to end patronage recommendations for blacks and disconnect from the black voters, in imitation of the new majority Democrats. Despite this move, several prominent blacks were able to hold onto their positions for a number of years and all such office holders were not eliminated entirely until Democrat Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) became president in 1913. Republican James H. Young, at the time deputy internal revenue collector in Raleigh, was the last significant black office holder to be removed.

During the period from 1900 to 1928, the Republican Party was extremely weak, but tended toward a moderation not characterized by their opponents. For example, the GOP endorsed the women’s suffrage amendment, though it was opposed by the state’s Democratic leadership as a threat to disfranchisement, white supremacy, and even segregation itself.

The Republicans made a few very temporary gains in the legislature in 1928, when the Democrats nominated Al Smith (1873-1944), a New York Catholic and anti-prohibitionist for president, against Republican Herbert Hoover (1874-1964). There followed the Great Depression and all gains were wiped away in the election of 1930. Throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, the legislative Republican caucus could have truly been held in any available phone booth because the party never broke into double digits in representation.

From 1900 to 1956, the average Republican vote for governor was only 33.8%. The statement of former Republican Governor James G. Martin (1935-), who once said GOP stood

for “Greater Opportunity for Postmasters” instead of “Grand Old Party,” was basically correct for the first six decades of the 20th century. The Republican Party existed primarily for the sake of federal patronage.

Then in the 1950s came the Supreme Court rulings against segregation; followed in the 1960s by the ruling against school prayer; and a massive expansion of the welfare state under the auspices of “The Great Society.” The 1960s was characterized by the Civil Rights Acts, riots in major cities, a violent anti-war movement, increasing illegitimate birthrates, and campus leftists parading at the University of North Carolina. The party of disfranchisement and segregation became associated with each of these trends and emerged as the preferred party of most African Americans. This occurred despite the fact that most votes against civil rights legislation in Congress came from Democrats and despite the fact that the Southern Republicans had always exhibited a racial tolerance not often shared by Southern Democrats.

All these developments were associated with a strong general move to the left by the national Democratic Party, culminating in George McGovern’s nomination for president in 1972. In the popular Southern mind the Democratic Party became tainted by this leftward trend. “States Rights”—a traditional staple of Democratic Party politics since the time of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)—was anathema to the newly northeastern-dominated Democrats.

It became increasingly characteristic of the Tar Heel Democrats to distance themselves from the national party in order to hold onto power at the state and local level. The party started to appear schizophrenic, with a minority of activists supporting the national party and its leaders, while conservative Democratic voters continually strayed to the Republicans in national elections.

Traditional conservative Southern Democrats started the slow shift toward voting and then ultimately registering as Republicans. In this sense, former Democratic Alabama Governor

George C. Wallace (1919-1998), who mounted three campaigns for president from 1964 to 1972, was a transitional figure. His 1968 campaign as the nominee of the American Independent Party was the last hurrah for many Southern white Democrats before they ultimately shifted to the Republican Party. It was after this pivotal election that Kevin P. Phillips developed the idea of a “Southern Strategy” whereby Republicans would appeal, at least at the presidential level, to conservative Southern Democrats and recent GOP converts to assure a new Republican majority nationwide

The Tar Heel Republicans, however, first started to see brighter prospects as early as 1960, well before the development of the “Southern Strategy,” when their candidate for governor, Robert L. Gavin (1916-1981), polled 613,975 votes or 45.5%, the best showing of a Republican candidate for governor since 1896. By 1968 the Republicans started holding gubernatorial primaries.

The year 1972 was an historic year for the North Carolina Republican Party. The Democrats helped Tar Heel Republican prospects by a further shift leftward with the nomination of McGovern (1922-2012) for president. “That government is best which Mc-Governs least,” became a catchphrase. In that year, the Republicans gained enough strength to elect their first governor and first U.S. senator in the 20th century.

The governor was James E. Holshouser, Jr. (1934-2013), a moderate Republican from Boone, North Carolina. Holshouser was a traditional mountain Republican, tracing his roots to Civil War unionism. Such traditionalists supported low taxes, limited government, and moderation in civil rights. Holshouser had a tough time making his mark on the state because the Democratically-controlled General Assembly passed legislation that weakened the governor’s office by reducing its appointive powers.

Jesse Helms (1921-2008), the first Republican U.S. senator elected in the 20th century, was a member of the conservative wing of the state GOP, sometimes termed by critics as “the radical right” or “the new right.” Many of the persons in that portion of the party became first active in the campaign of Senator Barry Goldwater (1909-1998), who ran unsuccessfully for president in 1964. Many, also like Helms, were former Democrats, who had supported I. Beverly Lake, Sr. (1906-1996) in his two primary campaigns for governor.

In the 1976 presidential primary, the only truly significant Tar Heel presidential primary ever held, Jesse Helms supported Ronald Reagan (1911-2004). Reagan won, and while he lost the nomination, he was positioned for a more successful run four years later. Many experts believe that Reagan would have never been president but for the steadfast support of Helms and the North Carolina Republican Party. Writing near the end of Reagan’s two terms as president, Jesse Helms stated: “North Carolina has played a key role in the conservative movement. It will be pivotal in the years ahead.” Looking back on the Reagan era Michael Barone, famed political observer said: “What would history have done without North Carolina?”

In that same year, 1976, the Republican Party exhibited its continuing racial moderation when it became the first major party to nominate an African American to run for a statewide office in the South since Reconstruction. Asa T. Spaulding, Jr. (1934-2015) of Durham—son of the president of the North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company—was nominated for the office of Secretary of State. Spaulding lost his bid for the post in the November election against the long-serving incumbent Thad A. Eure (1899-1992).

In the mid-1960s and early 1970s, the Republicans started to make gains in legislative and congressional seats after 100 years of intimidation and electoral manipulation by the Jim Crow Democrats. The Watergate Scandal, however, connected with President Richard M. Nixon (1913-1994), did serious harm to the Tar Heel party, which lost many legislative seats in 1974.

Nevertheless, Helms retained his senate seat in 1978 and served 30 years in office, making him the longest-serving statewide Republican elected official in history.

After the 1980 election of Reagan, who was extremely popular in N.C., gains in GOP membership were steady. Party registrations reveal the story (rounded to nearest 1000):

Year	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
1980	1,970,000 (71%)	680,000 (25%)	120,000 (4%)
1990	2,010,000 (64%)	960,000 (31%)	160,000 (5%)
2000	2,500,000 (51%)	1,670,000 (34%)	760,000 (15%)
2005	2,497,000 (46%)	1,881,000 (35%)	1,037,000 (19%)
2016	2,736,000 (40%)	2,100,000 (30%)	2,076,000 (30%)

The Democrats are today a minority in North Carolina party registration. Republican growth, while impressive, has been surpassed by the pace in the unaffiliated growth over the past twenty-five years. Also, the tendency of most unaffiliated and many conservative Democrats to vote split tickets means Democrats need up to 55% or more in any legislative district to consider it safe.

For a brief period in the late 1980s, the Republicans gained some influence in the legislature, just as had their predecessors in the 1880s, by combining with maverick Democrats led by the interestingly-named Josephus L. “Joe” Mavretic (1934-). Mavretic served as Speaker of the House in 1989-1990, with Republican support, after wresting control from long-time Speaker Liston B. Ramsey (1919-2001).

In 1994, for the first time since 1896, the Republicans gained a majority in the N.C. House of Representatives, even though districts were gerrymandered against them. They retained control in the 1996 elections, but lost in 1998. Harold J. Brubaker (1946-) of Randolph County became the first and only Republican to serve as Speaker of the House in the twentieth century. During this historic period of control, the Republicans passed tax cuts, had a balanced budget, and left office with a more than \$1 billion surplus. Their successors quickly squandered this

surplus and overspent even though the Constitution required a balanced budget. Looking at the spending, a one-time high ranking Democratic politician was moved to say, “If that budget is balanced, I’ll eat my hat.”

Also in 1994, I. Beverly Lake Jr. (1934-) became the first Republican elected to the state Supreme Court in the twentieth century. In 2000 he was elected chief justice. Because the Republicans came to dominate the state judiciary in the party elections by the late 1990s, the Democratic legislature passed a law for “non-partisan” judicial races. This was simply the latest manifestation of traditional Democratic efforts since the late 19th century to change election law to favor their candidates. This move, as anticipated, did lead to Democrat gains in the judiciary. Unfortunately, district lines were redrawn by a Democratic majority after the 2000 census, with the assistance of a small group of disgruntled Republicans led by Richard T. Morgan (1952-) of Moore County. Morgan, who bolted his own party caucus to support Democrat James B. Black (1935-) as Speaker, was rewarded with the position of Co-Speaker, from which position he managed to punish his Republican opponents, even getting several redistricted out of office. Black himself resigned from the General Assembly in 2007 over public corruption charges after reaching a plea deal with federal prosecutors.

The vast majority of state House and Senate districts remained highly unfavorable to Republican prospects on into the 21st century and were not reversed until after the 2010 census. Even before redistricting based on that census, however, voting trends, had favored the GOP among the General Assembly’s 120 House and 50 Senate members at least since the 1970s:

Years	House GOP Average	Senate GOP Average
1970s	18	6
1980s	32	10
1990s	50	17
2000s	56	19
2010s	73	33

Republican Party of North Carolina since 2000

The Republicans would have had a majority in the legislature even before 2010 but for extreme Democrat gerrymandering. In 2000 the Republicans got 50% of the vote for state senators, but elected only 20 of 50 (or 40%). In 2004 the GOP again won 50% in senate races, but had only 21 of 50 (or 42%) seats. In both 2000 and 2004 the Democrats got 48% of the vote.

The Republicans did even better on the House side of the equation getting 54% in 2002, but ending up with only 60 out of 120 seats after a desertion from their ranks. The districts created by the Democrats in the legislature after the 2002 elections were even less amenable to Republicans than those that had previously existed. Not surprisingly in 2004, while winning 51% of the vote, the Republicans could win only 57 seats. Even in 2006, a bad year for the Republicans nationally, they won a majority of NC House votes and ended up with only 52 seats. Clearly, the gerrymandered districts of the Democrat Party were undemocratic and unreflective of the will of the voters.

Despite the legislative situation, in 2004 the Republicans managed for the first time in over a century to capture three Council of State seats: holding the seat of Commissioner of Labor Cherie K. Berry (1946-), and winning seats with Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Troxler (1952-) and State Auditor Leslie W. "Les" Merritt (1951-). In 2008, the GOP lost the auditor's position in a year that was especially good for Democrats, but held 6 to 7 in U.S. House seats. In U.S. Senate the party was represented by Richard M. Burr (1955-), a former congressman who took the seat in 2004. The election year of 2008 was not a good one for the Republicans either in the state or nationally, they lost the Senate seat of Elizabeth Dole (1936-), the successor to Senator Helms, and narrowly failed to win the governorship.

In 2006, the Republican State Executive Committee leadership took the unusual step of openly opposing a Republican incumbent in the May primaries. The impetus for this came primarily from the rank and file of the party, who felt that the will of the voters and party chances of victory were both undermined by the conscious actions of a few renegades. The incumbent leader of the renegade group, Representative Richard Morgan, was targeted and ultimately defeated. *The North Carolina Conservative* happily declared: “The RINO reign of terror is over!” The term “RINO” was an abbreviation for the phrase “Republican In Name Only.”

The Democrats proved adept at revising laws and redistricting to their advantage in both the 19th and 20th centuries. They continued this until the Republicans finally broke through in the election of November of 2010, winning control of both the N.C. House and Senate for the first time in over a century. This gave them control of the redistricting following the recent U.S. census. Soon to be new Senate President Pro Tem leader Phil Berger (1952-) of Rockingham County correctly noted, “We have broken a 112-year dry spell.” Republican businessman Thom R. Tillis (1960-) of Mecklenburg County became the new Speaker of the House.

The Republicans, who required a super majority vote to wrestle power in the gerrymandered state, now redistricted the state electoral districts along fairer lines. This helped them gain an overwhelming victory in the 2012 elections, when they won control of the county commissions in 55 of the state’s 100 counties and increased their control over the legislature.

Even before the 2016 vote John Hood of Raleigh’s John Locke Foundation correctly predicted that the Republicans would continue to dominate in Tar Heel elections with the governor’s race being “highly competitive.” He based this on an analysis of the following eight variables since 1950:

- 1) the share of the GOP vote in the most recent gubernatorial election,
- 2) its share of Council of State seats (other than governor),

- 3) its share of U.S. House seats,
- 4) its share of U.S. Senate seats,
- 5) its share of N.C. Senate seats,
- 6) its share of N.C. House Seats,
- 7) its share of N.C. Supreme Court seats, and
- 8) its share of county commission majorities.

Despite the narrow loss of the governorship by Republican and former Charlotte mayor Pat L. McCrory (1956-) in 2016, the GOP swept to their first majority on the Council of State.

While retaining Troxler at Agriculture and Berry at Labor, the Republicans won the Lieutenant Governorship with Dan Forest (1967-), the post of Insurance Commissioner with Mike Causey (1950-), Superintendent of Public Instruction with Mark Johnson (1983-), and Treasurer with Dale Folwell (1958-). At the same time, the Republicans won a 74 to 46 majority in the House and a 35 to 15 majority in the Senate.

Since 1980 the Tar Heel State has been carried 9 out of 10 times by the Republican presidential candidate, with 2008 and Barack Obama (1961-) being the lone exception. In the most recent election (2016), the state voted for Republican candidate Donald J. Trump (1946-), a billionaire businessman and political outsider, who ran under the motto “Make America Great Again.” The GOP currently holds 10 of the state’s 13 U.S. House seats and both U.S. Senate seats since Thom R. Tillis joined Burr after his 2014 victory over the Democrat incumbent J. Kay Hagan (1953-).

Since 1911, the Republicans have controlled the General Assembly. In this time, they have both cut personal income and corporate taxes, while restraining state budget growth to an average annual rate of 2.5%. The state rainy day fund has grown to an impressive \$1.8 billion. All the while, the state has experienced significant economic development and job creation, receiving top rankings from *Forbes* and Ernst & Young. This led Patrick Gleason, director of

state affairs for Americans for Tax Reform, to conclude: “North Carolina is really a national model for what smart, conservative, responsible pro-growth tax relief looks like.”

From its earliest history as a state, North Carolina has always had a strong legislative branch and a relatively weak executive. This came from the negative experiences with strong royal governors. The Democrats have routinely exercised legislative superiority and limited gubernatorial power in the past when Republicans were elected to the governorship. This is but another way that the Democrats maintained a strangle-hold on governance. In earlier times, such actions raised hardly a peep from either the state or the national press. This has not been the case since the GOP victory in 2010. Now, every minor electoral change or limitation on the governor elicits angry editorials about the “unprecedented” partisanship of the N.C. General Assembly, confirming yet again that most of the press is bias in only one direction. Perhaps if the Republicans control the state for a century, then their exercise of legislative power will elicit the same yawns from the press characteristic of the past century of Democratic one-party rule.

Philosophically, the Tar Heel State has long seemed more aligned with the Republican than with the Democratic Party. Free enterprise, economic opportunity, low taxes, controlled spending, voter integrity, patriotism, and family values (including the sanctity of marriage and respect for human life) are American values dearly adhered to by most North Carolinians. These traditional beliefs continue to be the true and lasting values of the Republican Party.

It was in the 21st century that J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton’s prescient statement of a century earlier about North Carolina’s Republican tendencies was fulfilled and the Tar Heel State headed toward becoming “solidly Republican.” Now in its 150th year, the Republican Party of North Carolina has dominated in the last four general elections in the state and appears headed for future victories. State Party Chairman Robert C. “Robin” Hayes (1945-) of Concord, a former congressman, has declared that “the sky is the limit” for the N.C. GOP! It has been a long and

hard uphill battle for the party of Lincoln—an organization once so despised that it was not even listed on the state’s ballot in a presidential election. At long last, the clouds are dissipating and the sun is shining.

Republican Governors and U.S. Senators That Have Served N.C.

Governors	Years of Service	Senators	Years of Service
William W. Holden	1865, 1868-1871*	Joseph C. Abbott	1868-1871
Tod R. Caldwell	1871-1877	John Pool	1868-1873
Daniel L. Russell	1897-1901	Jeter C. Pritchard	1895-1903
James Holshouser Jr.	1973-1977	Jesse Helms	1973-2003
James G. Martin	1985-1993	John P. East	1981-1986
Pat L. McCrory	2013-2017	James T. Broyhill	1986-1987**
		D. M. (Lauch) Faircloth	1993-1999
		Elizabeth H. Dole	2003-2009
		Richard M. Burr	2005-present
		Thom R. Tillis	2015-present

*Holden served as provisional governor in 1865 and won election as governor in 1868.

**East committed suicide and was replaced by Broyhill, who failed to win election to a full term in 1986.

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