Carolina Forward | NC Statewide | Toplines | September 2025

855 likely voters statewide in North Carolina; Modeled Margin of Error: 3.6%

US Senate Ballot (with leans)
48%   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
41   Michael Whatley, the Republican
9   Not sure
2   Would not vote

Generic US House Ballot (with leans)
45%   The Democratic candidate
42   The Republican candidate
12   Not sure
1   Would not vote

Generic State Leg Ballot (with leans)
45%   The Democratic candidate
41   The Republican candidate
13   Not sure
1   Would not vote

Q1.   How did you vote in the 2024 election for President, or for some reason were you unable to vote?
45%   Kamala Harris, the Democrat
48   Donald Trump, the Republican
2   A third party candidate
1   Not registered/Too young/Ineligible
4   Did not vote

Q2.   How likely are you to vote in the 2026 election for U.S. Senate and other state and local offices in North Carolina?
83%   Yes, definitely
7   Yes, probably
7   Maybe (50-50)
2   No, probably not
0   No, definitely not

Q3.   How favorable are your feelings about each of the following?

	Favorable		Neu	Unfavorable		Never Heard of	Total Fav	Total Unfav
	Very	Smwt		Smwt	Very			
Donald Trump	33	10	6	4	45	1	*44*	*50*
Roy Cooper	31	13	13	8	29	6	*44*	*37*
JD Vance	33	10	8	5	41	3	*43*	*46*
Josh Stein	26	12	21	10	20	11	*38*	*30*
Jeff Jackson	17	11	20	5	10	36	*28*	*15*
Elon Musk	10	17	19	9	44	1	*27*	*52*
Michael Whatley	9	10	19	5	15	41	*19*	*20*
Ted Budd	8	10	23	8	25	27	*18*	*33*
Thom Tillis	3	10	26	19	32	10	*14*	*51*
Anita Earls	7	7	17	3	8	58	*14*	*11*
Phil Berger	3	8	21	5	19	44	*11*	*24*

Q4.   If the 2026 election for U.S. Senate were today, and the candidates were the following, who would you vote for?

47%   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
40   Michael Whatley, the Republican
13   Not sure

[IF NOT SURE] If you had to choose, who would you vote for?
11%   Michael Whatley, the Republican
9   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
65   Not sure
15   Would not vote

US Senate Ballot (with leans)
48%   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
41   Michael Whatley, the Republican
9   Not sure
2   Would not vote

Q5. **If the election for U.S. House of Representatives were held today, who would you vote for?**
44% The Democratic candidate
40 The Republican candidate
16 Not sure

[IF NOT SURE] If you had to choose, who would you vote for?
11% The Republican candidate
8 The Democratic candidate
74 Not sure
7 Would not vote

Generic US House Ballot (with leans)
45% The Democratic candidate
42 The Republican candidate
12 Not sure
1 Would not vote

Q6. **If the election for North Carolina state legislature were held today, who would you vote for?**
45% The Democratic candidate
40 The Republican candidate
14 Not sure

[IF NOT SURE] If you had to choose, who would you vote for?
15% The Republican candidate
8 The Democratic candidate
71 Not sure
6 Would not vote

Generic State Leg Ballot (with leans)
45% The Democratic candidate
41 The Republican candidate
13 Not sure
1 Would not vote

Q7. **Do you approve or disapprove of the job _____ is doing?**

| | Approve | | Disapprove | | Not | Total | Total |
	Strong	Smwt	Smwt	Strong	Sure	Approve	Disapprove
Donald Trump as President	34	14	4	46	2	*48*	*50*
Josh Stein as the Governor	25	23	16	21	15	*48*	*36*
The North Carolina State Legislature	6	27	23	28	17	*32*	*51*

Q8. **Over the past two years, would you say North Carolina's economy has:**
15% Gotten better
49 Gotten worse
36 Stayed about the same

Q9. **The cost of housing and rent is a major contributor to the overall cost of living. Which TWO of the following policies do you think would be most effective in bringing down the cost of housing? (Select up to two)**

49%	Cracking down on corporate investors
33	Reducing demand by deporting illegal immigrants
31	Setting legal limits on how much landlords can charge for rent
29	Providing tax credits or subsidies to help renters and homebuyers afford housing
26	Expanding public housing and affordable housing programs
20	Building more housing of all types (apartments, single-family homes, etc.)
4	None of these would be effective
5	Not sure

Q10. **Which factor do you think is most responsible for the rising cost of living?**

36%	Corporate price gouging and greed
20	Illegal immigration straining resources and raising costs
18	The Trump administration's policies
15	Government regulations and red tape
7	Tariffs and trade policies on imported goods
5	Not sure

Q11. **Which political party do you think is more responsible for the rising cost of living?**

37%	The Democrats
33	The Republicans
27	Both equally
4	Not sure

Q12. **In thinking about your own party or the party you most align with, how strongly would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**

	Approve		Neither	Disapprove		Not Sure
	Strong	Smwt	Neither	Smwt	Strong	Sure
My party hasn't gone too far. If anything, it hasn't gone far enough	35	27	18	9	8	3
My party has stayed reasonable and not become extreme at all	22	32	19	14	9	3
Neither party really represents me because neither stands for what I believe in	15	21	17	17	27	3
Neither party really represents me because they've grown too extreme	12	20	21	16	29	3
Some parts of my own party have grown too extreme for me	11	24	23	13	26	3

Q13. **Regardless of your party, which of the following do you most agree with?**

37%	The Republican Party has become more extreme
39	The Democratic Party has become more extreme
18	Both major parties have become more extreme
2	Both parties are too cautious and not extreme enough
5	Not sure

Q14. **In your view, the biggest challenges facing North Carolina's public school system are (pick two):**
48% Not enough funding and resources
37 Political indoctrination in the classroom
36 Recruiting and keeping enough qualified teachers
26 Lack of leadership and accountability from state lawmakers
22 Students not performing well academically
20 Too much bureaucracy and red tape
10 Outdated school buildings and infrastructure
2 None of these
5 Not sure

D1. **Are you:**
45% A man
55 A woman

D2. **Age**
23% 18 to 34
22 35 to 49
27 50 to 64
28 65+

D3. **What is your race?**
70% White / Caucasian
18 Black or African American
4 Hispanic or Latino/a
2 Asian / Pacific Islander
1 American Indian or Alaska Native
4 Other

D4. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**
12% High school diploma or less
27 Some college, but no degree
17 Associate's degree, or two-year college degree
26 Bachelor's degree, or four-year college degree
18 Graduate degree

D5. **Party Identification**
21% Strong Democrats
8 Weak Democrats
13 Independent lean Democrats
14 Pure independents
10 Independent lean Republicans
7 Weak Republicans
27 Strong Republicans

29% Base Democrats
37 Independents + Leaners
34 Base Republicans

42% Democrats
14 Pure independents
45 Republicans