Carolina Forward | NC Statewide | Toplines | January 2026

1,105 likely general election voters; Modeled Margin of Error: 3.5%

U.S. Senate Ballot (with leans)
47%   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
42   Michael Whatley, the Republican
9   Not sure
1   Would not vote

NC Supreme Court Ballot (with leans)
42%   Sarah Stevens, the Republican
41   Anita Earls, the Democrat
16   Not sure
2   Would not vote

U.S. House Generic Ballot (with leans)
44%   The Democratic candidate
43   The Republican candidate
12   Not sure
1   Would not vote

NC Stage Leg Generic Ballot (with leans)
43%   The Democratic candidate
43   The Republican candidate
13   Not sure
1   Would not vote

Republican Primary Ballot (with leans)
36%   Michael Whatley
6   Don Brown
4   Michele Morrow
50   Not sure
3   Would not vote

Q1.   How are you currently registered to vote in North Carolina?
28%   With the Democratic party
32   With the Republican party
37   As unaffiliated
3   With some other political party
0   Not registered to vote

Polling was conducted online from January 5 - 7, 2026. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Change Research polled 1,105 likely general election voters in North Carolina. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, region, and 2024 presidential vote. You can see a full methodology statement here, which complies with the requirements of AAPOR's Transparency Initiative. Members of the Transparency Initiative disclose all relevant details about our research, with the principle that the public should be able to evaluate and understand research-based findings, in order to instill and restore public confidence in survey results.

Q2. **How did you vote in the 2024 election for President, or for some reason were you unable to vote?**
45%   Kamala Harris, the Democrat
46   Donald Trump, the Republican
4   A third party candidate
0   Not registered/Too young/Ineligible
5   Did not vote

Q3. **Do you plan to vote in the 2026 election for U.S. Senate and other state and local offices in North Carolina?**
83%   Yes, definitely
9   Yes, probably
6   Maybe (50-50)
2   No, probably not
1   No, definitely not

Q4. **Do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald Trump is doing as President?**
32%   Strongly approve
14   Somewhat approve
5   Somewhat disapprove
47   Strongly disapprove
2   Not sure
46   **Total Approve**
52   **Total Disapprove**

Q5. **Do you approve or disapprove of the job Josh Stein is doing as Governor?**
24%   Strongly approve
25   Somewhat approve
15   Somewhat disapprove
20   Strongly disapprove
16   Not sure
49   **Total Approve**
36   **Total Disapprove**

Q6. **If the 2026 election for U.S. Senate were today, and the candidates were the following, who would you vote for?**
46%   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
41   Michael Whatley, the Republican
12   Not sure

U.S. Senate Ballot (with leans)
47%   Roy Cooper, the Democrat
42   Michael Whatley, the Republican
9   Not sure
1   Would not vote

Q7. **If the election for North Carolina Supreme Court were today, and the candidates were the following, who would you vote for?**
41%   Sarah Stevens, the Republican
40   Anita Earls, the Democrat
19   Not sure

NC Supreme Court Ballot (with leans)
42%   Sarah Stevens, the Republican
41   Anita Earls, the Democrat
16   Not sure
2   Would not vote

Q8. **If the election for U.S. House of Representatives were held today, who would you vote for?**
44%   The Democratic candidate
41   The Republican candidate
15   Not sure

U.S. House Generic Ballot (with leans)
44%   The Democratic candidate
43   The Republican candidate
12   Not sure
1   Would not vote

Q9. **If the election for North Carolina state legislature were held today, who would you vote for?**
43%   The Democratic candidate
42   The Republican candidate
16   Not sure

NC Stage Leg Generic Ballot (with leans)
43%   The Democratic candidate
43   The Republican candidate
13   Not sure
1   Would not vote

Q10. **[IF REPUBLICAN/UNAFFILIATED] On Tuesday, March 3rd, North Carolina will hold a Republican primary election for United States Senate, and other offices. Do you plan to vote in the Republican primary election in March?**
47%   Yes, definitely
15   Yes, probably
18   Maybe (50-50)
13   No, probably not
8   No, definitely not

Q11. **[IF YES/MAYBE] If the Republican primary election for U.S. Senate was held today, who would you vote for?**

32%   Michael Whatley
4   Don Brown
4   Michele Morrow
60   Not sure

Republican Primary Ballot (with leans)
36%   Michael Whatley
6   Don Brown
4   Michele Morrow
50   Not sure
3   Would not vote

Q12. **Which of the following statements comes closest to your view of the recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions in Charlotte, Raleigh and other areas of North Carolina?**

37%   ICE agents mistreated people and targeted people for their skin color
13   The ICE action was disruptive and unnecessary
24   ICE didn't go far enough to catch and deport illegal immigrants
20   I didn't see any problem with it
6   I don't know enough about it to say

Q13. **Do you support or oppose a system of independent redistricting in North Carolina, in which the power to draw election districts was taken away from the state legislature and given to a citizens redistricting commission made up of North Carolina voters with equal representation from Republican, Democratic and Unaffiliated voters?**

28%   Strongly support
23   Somewhat support
8   Somewhat oppose
15   Strongly oppose
27   Not sure
50   **Total Support**
23   **Total Oppose**

Q14. **[IF GOP] Some experts believe that an independent redistricting system could result in a state legislature with more Democratic representation. Knowing that, do you support or oppose support or oppose establishing an independent redistricting system?**

4%   Strongly support
11   Somewhat support
22   Somewhat oppose
39   Strongly oppose
24   Not sure
15   **Total Support**
61   **Total Oppose**

Q15. **[IF DEM] Some experts believe that an independent redistricting system could result in a state legislature with more Republican representation. Knowing that, do you support or oppose support or oppose establishing an independent redistricting system?**

20%	Strongly support
14	Somewhat support
15	Somewhat oppose
36	Strongly oppose
14	Not sure
35	**Total Support**
51	**Total Oppose**

Q16. **Which political party do the following statements describe?**

	Dem More		Rep More				Not
	A lot	Smwt	Smwt	A lot	Both	Neither	sure
Tolerates corruption by their party leaders	31	5	3	36	22	1	3
Cares more about big donors and special interests than everyday people	29	4	5	32	26	1	2
Wants what's best for North Carolina	28	10	10	25	6	16	4
Cares about people like me	26	14	11	22	2	22	2
Aligns with my community's values	25	15	11	30	3	11	5

Q17. **And finally, which best describes where you were born?**

43%	I was born in North Carolina
55	I was born in another U.S. state
3	I was born outside the United States

D1. **Are you:**

46%	A man
54	A woman

D2. **Age**

16%	18 to 34
21	35 to 49
31	50 to 64
32	65+

D3.   What is your race?
75%   White / Caucasian
17   Black or African American
3   Hispanic or Latino/a
1   Asian / Pacific Islander
0   American Indian or Alaska Native
3   Other

D4.   What is the highest level of education you have completed?
11%   High school diploma or less
25   Some college, but no degree
15   Associate's degree, or two-year college degree
28   Bachelor's degree, or four-year college degree
21   Graduate degree

D5.   Party Identification
21%   Strong Democrats
5   Weak Democrats
15   Independent lean Democrats
14   Pure independents
15   Independent lean Republicans
6   Weak Republicans
25   Strong Republicans

40%   Democrats
14   Pure independents
46   Republicans

26%   Base Democrats
43   Independents + Leaners
31   Base Republicans