

Thad Beyle
Editor & Associate Director
beyle@email.unc.edu

John Quintero
Managing Editor & Assistant Director
jq@unc.edu

Ferrel Guillory
Publisher & Director
guillory@unc.edu

The Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life provides public leaders opinion makers from across the South with a patch of common ground where they can discuss trends and issues vital to the region. The Program is directed by Ferrel Guillory, a faculty member in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

To receive an electronic version of future issues, send your name and e-mail address to SouthNow@unc.edu.

To subscribe to a printed version, call (919) 843-8174 or e-mail SouthNow@unc.edu.

In This Issue

- 3 Shortened Primary Season Produces Historic Results
- 4 15 Metro Counties Drive Senate Race Outcome
- 6 Down the Home Stretch: Late Decisions in the U.S. Senate Race
- 9 North Carolina Voter Trends
- 10 Rough Parity Emerges in Senate Spending
- 12 Higher Turnout Helps Republicans



A Senator for a Metropolitan State

THAD BEYLE, Pearsall Professor of Political Science, UNC-Chapel Hill

FERREL GUILLORY, Director, Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life

(Editor's Note: In preparation for this edition of NC DataNet, the authors organized a seminar on the 2002 U.S. Senate race in North Carolina for the American Politics Research Group of the UNC political science department. The seminar featured analyses of the race by Brad Woodhouse, press secretary of the Bowles for Senate campaign; Mac McCorkle, an issues adviser to the Bowles campaign; Peter Hans, a Raleigh attorney who advised the Dole campaign, especially on North Carolina issues; and Neal Rhoades, a political consultant who was part of the Dole strategy team. This article draws on that discussion, but represents the analysis of the authors. We acknowledge with appreciation a grant from Progress Energy that provided funding for the seminar and this publication.)

North Carolina entered the 21st century after two decades of robust population growth and rapid, sometimes wrenching, economic change — creating shifts in the state's political terrain. Even as the traditional industries of textiles, tobacco and furniture declined, jobs in services, retail and new-economy enterprises drew people into the state.

The state's population grew by 21 percent in the 1990s and now exceeds 8 million — an increase of about 800,000 whites, 280,000 blacks and 300,000 Latinos. Moreover, eight of every 10 jobs added in the '80s and '90s came in metropolitan areas.

Thus, the 2002 Senate race played out against this backdrop: a state that is increasingly metropolitan in character, that is growing more multi-ethnic but remains for now predominantly white and that no longer features a political party with an assured majority of loyal voters.

Both the Democratic and Republican primaries produced nominees that fit the modern, new-economy North Carolina. Democrats nominated Erskine Bowles, a venture capitalist who had served as White House chief of staff during the Clinton Administration.

Republicans overwhelmingly endorsed Elizabeth Dole, a career public servant who had served as a Cabinet secretary in two presidential administrations.

Dole won the general election for the seat previously held by Senator Jesse Helms. Her margin of victory — slightly more than 200,000 votes — exceeded Helms' largest margin in five elections. Here is an outline of factors that led to her victory:

Two primaries, one competitive: Dole had a smooth glide to her party's nomination, while Bowles had a bumpy ride.

Though Dole had six primary opponents, none proved formidable. Dole won the GOP nomination with 80 percent of the votes. The Dole campaign used the uncompetitive primary to help build a partisan base. Dole's primary vote total — more than 342,000 votes — exceeded the combined total votes received in the competitive 2000 Republican gubernatorial primary by candidates Richard Vinroot, Leo Daughtry and Charles Neely.

Bowles, meanwhile, faced two opponents of statewide stature, Secretary of State Elaine Marshall and former House Speaker Dan Blue. He won with 43 percent of the votes, but his total of somewhat more than 277,000 votes left him with a shallower base than Dole's. After the primary, Blue, a well-known black political leader, gave Bowles a delayed, lukewarm endorsement.

What's more, a prolonged fight over legislative redistricting led to a shift of the primaries from May to September. This stretched out the primary election and compressed the general election. From the perspective of the Bowles campaign, this shift meant more time for the intra-party battle and less time for taking on the Republican opponent.

SEE SENATOR ON PAGE 2 →

“The primary opponents had more time to beat up on us,” said Woodhouse. “We were receiving all the arrows and not sending them out in the primary.”

The messenger matters: From the viewpoint of both the Republican and Democratic strategists, North Carolina politics now gives an advantage to statewide candidates who are articulate and telegenic and whose personality and style put them within the “comfort zone” of suburban voters.

To a certain extent, therefore, Senator Dole won her race for much the same reason that Democratic Senator John Edwards won in 1998. While they have different partisan leanings, both senators have at least one foot in the center and come across as professional people who connect with “metropolitan” voters.

For example, Senator Dole took what had previously seemed a risky position in advocating a form of privatization of Social Security, but she appeared not to have suffered for it. Rhoades said her position allowed Dole to deliver a message that the system is flawed and to come across as a leader. McCorkle said that while Dole survived the criticism from the Bowles campaign, former Republican Senator Lauch Faircloth “couldn’t have gotten away with it” had he taken the same position because he came across as an old-style rural politician.

In addition, said Rhoades, Dole benefited from her status as an “icon.” Her campaign rested on a premise that she was a different kind of candidate, a native daughter who had a resume replete with high-level positions.

The Dole campaign made a deliberate decision not to base its operations in Raleigh, the state capital, but rather in Salisbury, her hometown. The campaign acted not only to offset the criticism that she had returned as a carpetbagger but also to symbolize her rootedness in North Carolina values. “We had to take her home,” said Rhoades.

As a result, said Woodhouse, the Bowles campaign felt as if it were “running for saint against Mother Theresa in Calcutta.”

The value of values: The outcome illustrated anew that the North Carolina electorate looks at governors and U.S. Senators differently. The state, said Hans, is “philosophically conservative, operationally progressive.” In his analysis, this gives Republicans an advantage in Senate races, Democrats an edge in gubernatorial elections.

The state traditionally has elected governors to govern — that is, to run the machinery of government and to produce a legislative program. It elects senators, meanwhile, as advocates, judging them largely for their “values.” While Bowles ran an issue-oriented campaign, Dole connected with voters in large part on their sense of her presence, her competence, her ability to represent a package of values. Several of her TV commercials had a flowery, emotional tone. One ad featured Salisbury, another work in a textile mill. Such commercials, said Rhoades, sought to link the GOP candidate to cultural values rather than specific issues.

All politics are not local: President Bush made five cam-

paign visits to North Carolina on behalf of Dole’s candidacy. The appearances by a president with high approval ratings in the wake of the events of Sept. 11 helped energize Republican voters and contributed to a surge in turnout. Rhoades said that Bush’s approval ratings in North Carolina exceeded Ronald Reagan’s and that pro-Bush voters like him with intensity.

“In a close race,” said Hans, “the national political climate matters.”

The White House’s influence on this election went beyond presidential appearances. Senator Dole’s candidacy flowed out of a national Republican strategy to hold onto the Helms’ seat and to recapture control of the Senate. Looking ahead to 2004, the White House has encouraged Republican U.S. Representative Richard Burr to seek the Edwards seat in the Senate much as it encouraged Dole.

V.O. Key, Jr., wrote that North Carolina politics felt the influence of two strong political “machines” in the first half of the 20th century — first the “Simmons Machine” and then the “Shelby Dynasty.” Now, it appears, at the outset of the 21st century, that another political “machine” has assumed a role in determining candidates for North Carolina — a machine not based within the state borders but situated at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in the District of Columbia.

Democrats, meanwhile, may no longer have a political machine, but they have turned to self-financed candidates in the past two Senate races. Senator Edwards spent \$6 million of his own money in winning his seat in the 1998 election. Bowles provided \$6.8 million in personal loans to help fund his 2002 campaign.

Return to the ground game: Two years ago, the campaign trail nearly disappeared in North Carolina. Governor Mike Easley and his Republican opponent, Richard Vinroot, spent little time and effort traveling around the state, shaking hands and making speeches to crowds, and they instead concentrated on raising funds and votes through TV commercials.

The campaign trail reappeared in 2002. Dole traveled to all 100 counties, and Bowles maintained an aggressive travel schedule. The candidates faced each other in two debates, though neither debate proved a turning point.

Significantly, Republicans caught up with Democrats in election-day voter mobilization. Rhoades pointed out that the Dole campaign invested in a strong organization, and the Republicans utilized their “72-hour” project — focusing on voter turnout in the final three days — to Dole’s advantage. Rhoades said that the Dole campaign employed a “parallel approach,” simultaneously working to motivate the GOP base and reaching out to swing voters. The Dole campaign set higher turnout goals in base counties than previous Republican candidates, said Rhoades, and mostly met or exceeded those goals.

In the end, Bowles won more actual voters than Edwards received in his 1998 victory, and yet the Democrat lost. Dole won by avoiding mistakes, running a disciplined campaign and riding a surge in turnout, especially in metropolitan counties. ■

Shortened Primary Season Produces Historic Results

OWEN COVINGTON, graduate student, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, UNC-Chapel Hill

Republican U.S. Senator Jesse Helms' retirement after 30 years in Washington sparked an unusual succession battle in 2002. The first stage of this contest — the party primaries — was a turbulent period due to the presence of several high-profile candidates and the election's postponement from May until September as a result of legal challenges to the state's legislative redistricting plan

Helms' retirement could have led to the Republican Party's first competitive primary since 1972. Elizabeth Dole's entry into the race and her backing by the White House and the national GOP establishment, however, dissuaded major challengers like former Charlotte Mayor Richard Vinroot and U.S. Representative Richard Burr of Winston-Salem from running. Though six candidates entered the Republican primary, none possessed the support or the financing needed to mount a serious challenge. Moreover, Helms' endorsement bolstered Dole's candidacy.

By contrast, the Democratic primary proved competitive. Although Charlotte businessman Erskine Bowles was the frontrunner, both former state Speaker Dan Blue and Secretary of State Elaine Marshall mounted viable campaigns. The presence of six other candidates created a situation where no candidate could dominate the contest in the way Dole could.

The differences in competition were reflected in the primary results. On the Republican side, Dole won 80.4 percent of the vote, while her closest opponent, attorney Jim Snyder of Lexington, received 14.2 percent. Bowles, meanwhile, won the Democratic primary with a plurality of 43.4 percent.

The 2002 primaries proved historic because the Republican winner received more total votes than the Democratic winner for the first time. Since 1972 the Democratic winner of a Senate primary always had attained a higher vote total than the Republican nominee — a Democratic average total of 660,000 votes compared to a Republican average total of 190,000. This difference was due largely to the Democrats' traditional predominance in North Carolina: there simply were more registered Democrats than Republicans.

In 2002, the Republican winner topped the Democratic winner. Dole garnered 342,631 primary votes, which was approximately 125,000 more than the previous Republican high, set in 1992 by former U.S. Senator Lauch Faircloth. In winning the Democratic

nomination, Bowles received 277,239 votes, the third lowest Democratic off-year total since 1972.

Part of Dole's primary success may be attributed to her conscious effort to campaign hard even though she lacked a formidable challenger. Neal Rhoades, a consultant to the Dole campaign, noted that the campaign strove to post a big win in the primaries based on the assumption that a more motivated Republican base would be more apt to turn out in the general election.

Another factor contributing to the difference between Dole and Bowles may have been the late primary, though this point has been contested. Advisers to the Bowles campaign have argued that the lengthened primary season — caused by legal challenges to the legislative redistricting plan — hurt Bowles.

According to Brad Woodhouse, press secretary for the Bowles campaign, the long primary coupled with the competitive Democratic field afforded Bowles' primary opponents with more time to attack him and less time

for him to recover before facing Dole.

Democratic political consultant Mac McCorkle, meanwhile, said the shortened time period before the general election gave the Democrats less time to regroup and unite behind Bowles — a dynamic illustrated by Blue's late and lukewarm endorsement. Because Dole was relatively unchallenged in the primary, she could focus her message and energy on the general election even before the primary votes had been cast.

Interestingly, the idea of holding the primaries in September, which some credit with aiding Dole, has gained the support of some North Carolina politicians and may become a standard practice in the future. Democrat Marc Basnight, who serves as president pro tem of the state Senate, has been pushing for a shortened campaign season for several years, and he said after last year's election that he believes the idea is gaining more support. Though Dole may have benefited from the short general election last year, Basnight said he does not think the change would necessarily benefit one party over the other. ■

U.S. Senate Primary Results (September 10, 2002)

Democrats	Votes	%	Republicans	Votes	%
Erskine Bowles	277,329	43.4	Elizabeth Dole	342,631	80.4
Dan Blue	184,216	28.8	Jim Snyder	60,477	14.2
Elaine Marshall	97,392	15.2	Jim Parker	8,752	2.1
Cynthia Brown	27,799	4.4	Ada Fisher	6,045	1.4
Albert Wiley, Jr.	12,725	2.0	Douglas Sellers	3,771	0.9
Bob Ayers	12,326	1.9	Timothy Cook	2,643	0.6
David Tidwell	10,510	1.6	Venkat Challa	1,787	0.4
Duke Underwood	9,940	1.6			
Randy Crow	6,788	1.1			
Totals	639,025	100.0		426,106	100.0

SOURCE: North Carolina State Board of Elections (<http://www.sboe.state.nc.us>)

General Election Results for Elizabeth Dole's U.S. Senate Seat, 1972–2002

Year	Winner, Party	Votes	%	Loser, Party	Votes	%
1972	Helms, R	677,293	54.0	Galifinakis, D	576,953	46.0
1978	Helms, R*	619,151	54.5	Ingram, D	516,663	45.5
1984	Helms, R*	1,156,768	51.7	Hunt, D	1,070,488	47.8
1990	Helms, R*	1,088,331	52.6	Gantt, D	981,573	47.4
1996	Helms, R*	1,345,833	52.6	Gantt, D	1,173,875	45.9
2002	Dole, R	1,248,664	53.6	Bowles, D	1,047,983	45.0

NOTES: **Bold** =Presidential Election Year; * = incumbent;

SOURCES: Michael Barone, et.al., *The Almanac of American Politics* (Washington DC: National Journal), various issues. *North Carolina Manual*, various issues.

15 Metro Counties Drive Senate Race Outcome

JUSTIN GUILLORY, sophomore political science major, UNC–Chapel Hill

JOHN QUINTERNO, assistant director, Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life

Increased voter turnout in metropolitan areas compared to North Carolina's 1998 off-presidential year election and the decision of most of these additional voters to opt Republican illustrate that statewide elections hinge on metros.

1998 vs. 2002

Democratic candidate Erskine Bowles received almost 20,000 more votes than did his 1998 counterpart, U.S. Senator John Edwards. Yet Edwards won a seat in the Senate, and Bowles lost by 200,681 votes. Why?

The answer can be found by comparing Dole's performance to her 1998 counterpart, former U.S. Senator Lauch Faircloth. Dole received 302,721 more votes than Faircloth, and she bettered his performance in 96 of the state's 100 counties. Dole outperformed Faircloth by at least 10 percent in 89 counties, at least 30 percent in 44 counties and at least 50 percent in 10 counties.

Dole and the Metros

While Dole performed well across the state, her performance in metropolitan areas relative to Faircloth explains the extent of her victory. Dole's performance in two particular metro areas — the state's two largest metros, Wake and Mecklenburg counties, and the counties along the I-85 corridor — ensured her victory.

Wake County, the state's largest in terms of total votes cast, has experienced tremendous population growth over the past decade, and many of its newest voters appear to lean Republican. While Bowles exceeded Edwards' 1998 Wake County total by 8,000 votes (8.5 percent), Dole bettered Faircloth's total by 37,898 votes (45 percent).

A similar dynamic occurred in Mecklenburg County, the state's second richest source of votes. Mecklenburg resident Bowles added 13 percent to Edwards' total, while Dole added 43 percent to Faircloth's total.

Dole also succeeded in the traditional Republican counties running along I-85 between Greensboro and Charlotte. Salisbury, the Rowan County town where Dole lives and headquartered her campaign, lies at the area's heart. Most of these counties are either metropolitan like Forsyth or merging into metros like Iredell. Dole outperformed Faircloth in this region, adding at least 25 percent to his totals

in Guilford, Cabarrus, Forsyth, Union, Randolph, Rowan, Iredell and Davidson counties.

The Power of a Few

Dole's metro performance not only ensured her victory, but also illustrated the concentration of electoral power that has occurred in North Carolina. Over the past several election cycles, rapid population growth has concentrated the state's political power in metros. In the 2002 Senate race, for example, the votes cast in 15 counties accounted for 50 percent of the total vote. Fifteen counties, in other words, cast more votes than the remaining 85.

Consolidation means that voters in a handful of counties determine statewide elections. The 99,205 votes Dole gained in Mecklenburg, Wake, Guilford, Forsyth and Cumberland, the state's five largest counties, alone almost gave her enough to win. Meanwhile, the additional 102,612 votes Dole received in the five counties where she most improved over Faircloth — Wake, Mecklenburg, Guilford, Cabarrus and New Hanover — would have been enough to win.

Who Voted for Dole and Why?

Without exit polls it is difficult to identify who voted for Dole and why, but the election returns suggest several possibilities.

First, high turnout played a pivotal role in the race. Thirty-eight percent of North Carolina's voting age population (46.2 percent of registered voters) went to the polls, according to the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, compared to 35 percent in 1998. This translated into 320,000 additional votes.

Second, Dole performed well in eastern counties, especially those with large concentrations of "Jessecrats" — Democrats who supported former Republican Senator Jesse Helms. Dole outperformed Faircloth by at least 25 percent in many eastern counties and by more than 50 percent in some.

Third, higher turnout and Republican support along the I-85 corridor may have been attributable to a combination of factors — Dole's name recognition, her celebrity status, her native status and President Bush's strong popularity in North Carolina. These same issues may have enticed unaffiliated and swing voters across the state

into the Republican camp.

Finally, newcomers to metro areas, especially Wake and Mecklenburg counties, appear to have supported Dole. The growth of the Raleigh-Durham and Charlotte areas has caused an in-migration of workers from the Northeast and Midwest — areas where the Republican Party is perceived as more moderate than the Southern GOP. It is impossible without exit polls to identify transplanted voters or gauge their impact, but Republican votes in areas like Raleigh and Charlotte increased over 1998, and Dole drew sizable support in these places.

Future Ramifications

Dole's victory highlights anew the fact that North Carolina has become a two-party state where Republicans can win statewide office.

In fact, the Democratic Party is no longer the state's majority party. In November 2002, the State Board of Elections reported that 48 percent of registered voters were Democrats, 34 percent were Republicans and 17 percent were unaffiliated.

The recent election testifies to the importance of metro areas. Since so much political power is now concentrated in metros, and assuming that unaffiliated voters are more likely to live

in metros, then candidates for statewide office must find ways to connect with metropolitan voters.

Though Dole posted impressive gains in North Carolina's metro areas, this in no way means that the Democratic Party has become uncompetitive. If the recent work of two scholars, John Judis and Ruy Teixeira, is to be believed, Democrats may be developing an

advantage in areas like Raleigh-Durham.

Given the size of metros and the current lack of a majority party, however, metros likely will serve as the state's main electoral battleground in the near future, and successful future candidates for statewide office will be those capable of understanding and appealing to metropolitan voters. ■

Political Lineage of Elizabeth Dole's US Senate Seat

Senator	Party ⁱ	NC County	Years In Senate	How Senator Entered ⁱⁱ /Left Office ⁱⁱⁱ	
Matt Ransom	D	Northampton	1872-95	e	LG
Marion Butler	Pop	Sampson	1895-1901	e	LG
Furnifold Simmons	D	Jones	1901-31	e	LP
Josiah Bailey	D	Wake	1931-46	e	d
William B. Umstead	D	Durham	1946-48	a	LP
J. Melville Broughton	D	Wake	1948-49	e	d
Frank Porter Graham	D	Orange	1949-50	a	LP
Willis Smith	D	Wake	1950-53	e	d
Alton Lennon	D	New Hanover	1953-54	a	LP
W. Kerr Scott	D	Alamance	1954-58	e	d
B. Everett Jordan	D	Alamance	1958-73	a	LP
Jesse Helms	R	Wake	1973-2002	e	r
Elizabeth Dole	R	Rowan	2003-	e	

ⁱ Party: D = Democrat; Pop. = Populist; R = Republican.

ⁱⁱ How entered office: a = appointed; e = elected.

ⁱⁱⁱ How left office: d = died; LG = lost in general election; LP = lost in party primary; r = retired.

Dole 2002 vs. Faircloth 1998: Top 15 Counties for Dole Gains (# votes)

County	Dole Votes	Faircloth Votes	Dole Less Faircloth	% Difference
Wake	122,445	84,547	37,898	44.8
Mecklenburg	100,762	70,279	30,483	43.4
Guilford	64,997	49,154	15,843	32.2
Cabarrus	25,434	16,194	9,240	57.1
New Hanover	29,478	20,330	9,148	45.0
Forsyth	50,867	42,054	8,813	21.0
Union	24,032	16,121	7,911	49.1
Randolph	22,134	15,735	6,399	40.7
Rowan	22,688	16,404	6,284	38.3
Iredell	21,646	15,458	6,188	40.0
Cumberland	27,941	21,773	6,168	28.3
Brunswick	14,002	8,122	5,890	72.6
Johnston	22,719	16,884	5,835	34.6
Catawba	25,318	19,517	5,801	29.7
Davidson	27,277	21,646	5,631	26.0
Total	601,740	434,218	167,522	38.6

SOURCE: NC State Board of Elections (www.sboe.state.nc.us)

Down the Home Stretch: Late Decisions in the U.S. Senate Race

TIM VERCELLOTTI, assistant professor, Department of Political Science, Elon University

Twenty-five percent of survey respondents who reported voting in last November's U.S. Senate race said they did not reach a decision until the campaign's final two weeks or Election Day, according to a statewide poll conducted by Elon University's Center for Public Opinion Polling.

Surveyed voters also identified the candidates' issue positions as the key selection factor, and respondents most often cited job creation as the issue of greatest concern, though previous government experience and party affiliation were important. In addition, two-thirds of respondents characterized the race's political advertising as "mostly negative," while 20 percent of respondents stated that advertising discouraged them from voting.

The Elon Poll interviewed 618 registered voters two weeks after the election (November 18–21, 2002). Though not a substitute for exit polling, Elon's survey offers the best available insights into the electorate's mind and illustrates the relative effects of issue positions, previous government experience and campaign advertising on voters of different party affiliations, genders and races.

The over-reporting of turnout is a serious poll limitation. Approximately 76 percent of registered voters who were surveyed claimed to have voted for a Senate candidate — a level well in excess of the actual turnout. Such over-reporting frequently occurs in post-election polls due to social desirability bias. These results,

therefore, should be treated as a rough approximation of public opinion on Election Day.

Timing of Voters' Decisions

Survey respondents who reported voting varied considerably in terms of when they chose a candidate. Approximately 27 percent said they knew a year in advance, and another 17 percent decided over the spring or summer before the primaries. The remainder decided this fall, with 25 percent waiting until the campaign's last two weeks or Election Day (Table 1).

In terms of party affiliation, unaffiliated voters were most likely to make their choice late in the campaign. Nearly 23 percent said they decided by mid-October, 24 percent in the last two weeks of the campaign, and 5 percent waited until Election Day. Women were slightly more likely than men to wait until the final weeks of the campaign to decide.

Meanwhile, the racial breakdown showed that African Americans were more likely than white voters to decide in the final two weeks or on Election Day. On the surface this appears odd, given African Americans' tendency to vote Democratic. African Americans in North Carolina, however, may have tuned out after two African-American candidates for the Democratic nomination — former state Representative Dan Blue and former Durham City Councilwoman Cynthia Brown — lost to Erskine Bowles in the September primary.

Table 1: Timing of Vote Choice

Q: How long before the November 5 Senate election did you decide that you were going to vote the way you did?

A - A year ago, when the candidate announced plans to run; B - Last Spring or Summer; C - Right before the primary in September; D - By mid-October; E - Last two weeks of the campaign; F - On election day; G - Don't know/Refused.

Resp.	All	Party Affiliation			Gender		Race		
		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.	Female	Male	White	Black	Other
#	472	212	185	75	243	229	381	69	22
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A	26.5	29.7	27.0	16.0	26.8	26.2	25.7	29.0	31.8
B	17.0	17.0	16.2	18.7	16.5	17.5	18.9	8.7	9.1
C	15.0	16.5	15.1	10.7	14.0	16.2	13.4	20.3	27.3
D	14.8	11.8	15.1	22.7	14.0	16.7	16.5	8.7	4.6
E	19.5	17.0	20.5	24.0	22.2	16.6	18.9	23.2	18.2
F	5.5	5.2	6.0	5.3	4.9	6.1	5.2	7.2	4.6
G	1.7	2.9	0.0	2.7	1.6	1.7	1.3	2.8	4.6

Decision Factors

In deciding whom to support, voters cited the candidates' issue positions as the critical factor, followed by previous experience in government and party affiliation. Yet the relative weight accorded to each of those factors varied along party, gender and racial lines (Table 2).

Forty-five percent of Republicans said that issue positions were most important, compared to 37 percent of Democrats and 36 percent of unaffiliated voters. Nearly 23 percent of Republicans said previous experience in government was important, compared to about 16 percent of Democrats and 13 percent of unaffiliated voters. Respondents in the latter two categories were more likely to cite party affiliation as the most important factor.

Women were slightly more likely than men to list issue positions as the most important factor in making their selection, although the margin of error of plus or minus 4.58 percent could eliminate that difference. The second most frequently cited factor among women was party affiliation, while men stressed government experience.

A similar pattern emerged in regards to race. Voters of all races pointed to issue positions most often, but white voters gave that response more often than African-American voters and voters of other races. Experience in government was the second most frequently cited consideration for white voters, but party affiliation was more important for African-American voters.

Decisive Issues

Given the emphasis on issues, which ones

mattered most to voters? Job creation was the top issue for 27 percent of voters, followed by prescription drug benefits for senior citizens (Table 3). This emphasis on job creation held across groups, but the second most frequently cited issue varied with party, gender and race.

Republicans emphasized strengthening the military, while Democrats more likely cited positions on prescription drug benefits. A similar split occurred between male and female voters, with male voters more often focusing on strengthening the military.

Stark racial divisions existed. About 46 percent of African-American voters said job creation was the most important issue, compared to 25 percent of white voters. In contrast, nearly 14 percent of white voters pointed to military strength, while none of the surveyed African-American voters cited the issue as the most important.

Table 2: Most Important Factor in Vote Choice

Q: What was the most important factor in making your choice for the Senate? Was it the candidate's ...
A - Position on the issues; B - Experience in government; C - Political party; D - Experience in the private sector; E - Television and radio ads; F - Gender; G - Other; H - Don't know/Refused.

Resp.	All	Party Affiliation			Gender		Race		
		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.	Female	Male	White	Black	Other
#	471	211	185	75	243	228	381	68	22
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A	40.1	37.0	45.4	36.0	42.4	37.7	42.8	29.4	27.3
B	18.1	15.6	22.7	13.3	14.8	21.5	18.4	14.7	22.7
C	17.2	19.4	13.0	21.3	16.5	18.0	16.5	19.1	22.7
D	4.7	4.7	3.8	6.7	4.9	4.4	4.5	4.4	9.1
E	4.7	5.2	3.2	6.7	6.2	3.1	4.2	8.8	0.0
F	1.5	1.0	2.2	1.3	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.5	0.0
G	11.0	13.7	9.2	8.0	11.1	11.0	10.2	14.7	13.6
H	2.8	3.3	0.5	6.7	2.8	2.6	1.8	7.4	4.6

Table 3: Most Important Issue in Vote Choice

Q: Thinking of the Senate candidates' positions on issues, which issue was most important to you in choosing a candidate?

A - Creating jobs; B - Prescription drug benefits for senior citizens; C - Strengthening the military; D - Privatizing Social Security; E - Abortion; F - School vouchers; G - Environmental protection; H - Free trade; I - Other; J - Don't know/Refused.

Resp.	All	Party Affiliation			Gender		Race		
		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.	Female	Male	White	Black	Other
#	469	210	185	74	242	227	380	67	22
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A	27.3	31.4	24.9	21.6	27.7	26.9	25.0	46.3	9.1
B	13.9	19.5	8.6	10.8	17.4	10.1	12.1	22.4	18.2
C	11.7	6.7	18.4	9.5	6.6	17.2	13.7	0.0	13.6
D	9.2	11.9	7.0	6.8	12.8	5.3	9.7	7.5	4.6
E	8.7	5.2	10.8	13.5	9.5	7.9	10.3	1.5	4.6
F	4.3	4.3	3.8	5.4	4.6	4.0	4.2	3.0	9.1
G	3.0	1.9	3.2	5.4	2.9	3.1	3.2	1.5	4.6
H	2.3	1.9	2.2	4.0	0.8	4.0	2.6	1.5	0.0
I	12.2	11.9	11.4	14.9	11.6	12.8	11.8	10.4	22.7
J	7.5	5.3	9.8	8.2	6.2	8.8	7.4	6.0	13.7

The Role of Advertising

Two-thirds of registered voters described the tone of political advertising as "mostly negative." Democrats were more likely than Republicans and unaffiliated voters to view the ads as negative, as were white voters. African-American voters and those of other races were more likely than white voters to view the tone of the ads as "evenly divided" (Table 4).

Despite this negative assessment, 59 percent of respondents claimed that the advertising did not affect their decision to vote. Approximately 20 percent of voters said the ads discouraged them from voting, while 18 percent said the ads prompted them to vote (Table 5).

Breaking down the results by party registration, unaffiliated voters were far more likely than Republicans and Democrats to blame ads for their decision to stay home. Women, on the other hand, were more likely than men to say that the ads prompted them to vote. The same held for African-American voters.

Lessons Learned

The following three lessons emerge from the poll data:

- ◆ A sizable percentage of party members decided early in the campaign, but unaffiliated voters and women were more likely to decide late in the campaign.
- ◆ Issue positions, especially those related to job creation, tended to be the deciding factor for most voters.
- ◆ A majority of voters viewed the tone of campaign advertising as mostly negative, but this perception exerted a limited effect on voting behavior. ■

SEE TABLES 4-5 ON PAGE 8 →

Table 4: Tone of Television and Radio Ads

Q: How would you describe the tone of the television and radio ads that were aired on behalf of the Senate candidates?

A - Mostly positive; B - Evenly divided between positive and negative; C - Mostly negative;

D - Don't know/Refused.

Resp.	All	Party Affiliation			Gender		Race		
		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.	Female	Male	White	Black	Other
#	618	242	267	109	329	289	479	107	32
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A	5.5	3.8	7.0	6.4	6.1	4.8	5.8	4.7	3.1
B	23.5	20.6	26.4	23.8	24.6	22.2	20.9	30.8	37.5
C	66.5	71.5	62.8	62.4	64.7	68.5	69.5	57.9	50.0
D	4.5	4.2	3.7	7.4	4.5	4.5	3.7	6.5	9.3

Table 5: Effect of Ads on Voting

Q: Keeping in mind the campaign ads, which of the following statements best describes you?

A - The ads discouraged me from voting; B - The ads prompted me to vote; C - The ads had no effect on whether I voted or not; D - Don't know/Refused.

Resp.	All	Party Affiliation			Gender		Race		
		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.	Female	Male	White	Black	Other
#	616	242	266	108	327	289	478	106	52
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A	19.6	17.4	18.4	27.8	20.2	19.0	20.3	15.1	25.0
B	17.7	16.9	18.4	17.6	21.7	13.2	16.7	26.4	3.1
C	59.2	63.2	59.4	50.0	56.0	63.0	60.0	53.8	65.6
D	3.4	2.5	3.7	4.6	2.1	4.8	2.9	4.7	6.2

2002 North Carolina US Senatorial Election 'Horse-Race' Polls

Date ⁱ	Sample ⁱⁱ	Pollster ⁱⁱⁱ	Dem% ^{iv} Bowles	Rep% ^v Dole
10/15-17/01	994 lvs	Hill Research-R	27	65
12/3-6/01	519 rvs	Elon University	13	60
3/18-20/02	800 lvs	Cooper-Secret-D	33	52
3/24-27/02	600 lvs	Voter/Consumer Res.-R	27	62
7/23-25/02	600 lvs	Voter/Consumer Res.-R	29	61
9/12-14/02	625 avs	Mason-Dixon	35	49
9/15-18/02	551 lvs	HickmanB-D/PopSt.-R	41	52
9/15-18/02	600 rvs	HickmanB-D/PopSt.-R	40	51
9/17-18/02	500 lvs	Zogby International	32	55
10/7-8/02	608 lvs	Garin-Hart-Yang-D	41	47
10/11-14/02	625 lvs	Mason-Dixon	40	50
10/22-23/02	603 lvs	Garin-Hart-Yang-D	41	45
10/28-29/02	625 lvs	Mason Dixon	42	48
10/28-31/02	560 rvs	UNC-CH Carolina Poll	40	47
10/31-11/2/02	500 lvs	MSNBC/Zogby International	42	46
11/2-4/02	525 lvs	MSNBC/Zogby International	39	46
11/5/02	Projection	MSNBC/Zogby International	43	53
11/5/02		The actual vote	45	54

ⁱ Date the poll was in the field.

ⁱⁱ Sample = size and type of sample: ads - adults, avs - active voters, hpv - high propensity voters, lvs - likely voters, pvs - probable voters, rvs - registered voters.

ⁱⁱⁱ Name of the poll, noted if it was one of the political party's inner polls.

^{iv} Percent of the respondents indicating an intention to vote for the Democratic candidate.

^v Percent of the respondents indicating an intention to vote for the Republican candidate.

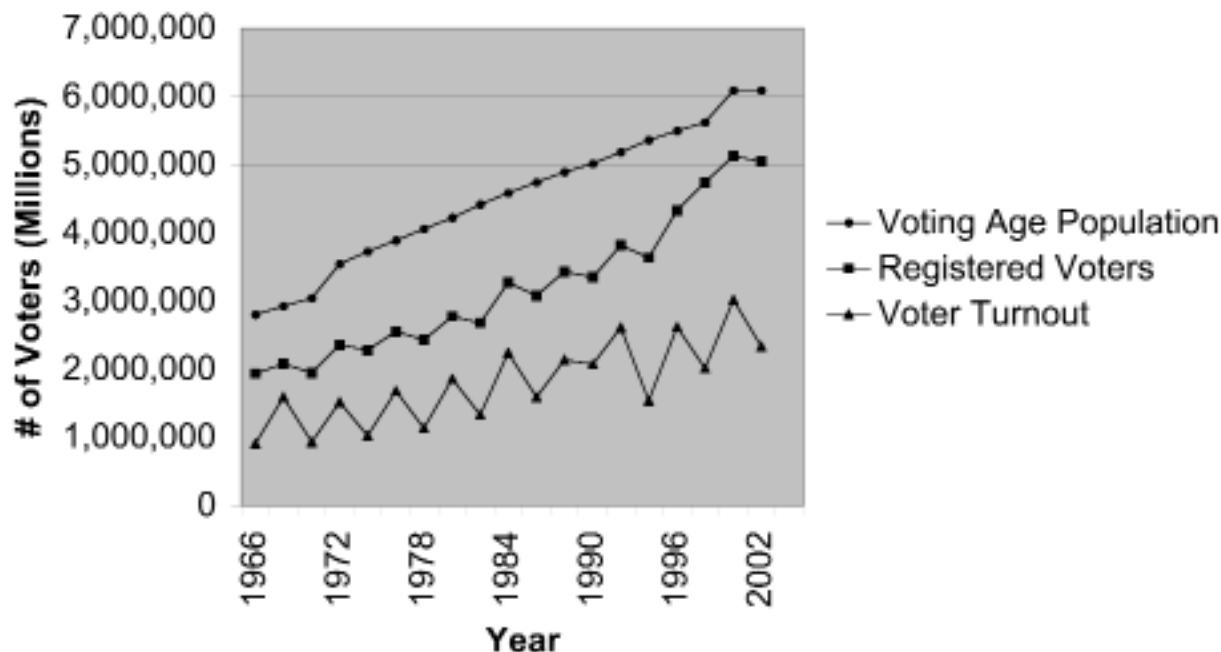
North Carolina Voter Trends

NC Voter Registration & Turnout in General Elections, 1960–2002

Year	Total NC Voting Age Population	Total NC Registered Voters		North Carolina Turnout			President	Party of Winner	
		#	% of Voting Age Pop.	# of Voters	% of Reg. Voters	% of Voting Age Pop.		Senator	Governor
1960	2,585,000	N/A	N/A	1,268,556	—	49.0	D	D	D
1962	2,647,000	N/A	N/A	813,155	—	30.7	—	D	—
1964	2,723,000	N/A	N/A	1,424,983	—	52.3	D	—	D
1966	2,798,000	1,933,763	69.1	901,978	46.6	32.2	—	D	—
1968	2,921,000	2,077,538	71.1	1,587,493	76.4	54.4	D	D	D
1970	3,043,000	1,945,187	63.9	932,948	48.0	30.7	—	—	—
1972	3,541,399	2,357,645	66.6	1,518,612	64.4	42.9	R	R	R
1974	3,725,037	2,279,646	61.2	1,020,367	44.8	27.4	—	D	—
1976	3,884,477	2,553,717	65.7	1,677,906	65.7	43.2	D	—	D
1978	4,053,977	2,430,306	59.9	1,135,814	46.7	28.0	—	R	—
1980	4,222,654	2,774,844	65.7	1,855,833	66.9	43.9	R	R	D
1982	4,416,444	2,674,787	65.1	1,330,630	49.7	30.1	—	—	—
1984	4,585,788	3,270,933	71.3	2,239,051	68.5	47.4	R	R	R
1986	4,738,687	3,080,990	65.0	1,591,330	51.6	33.6	—	D	—
1988	4,887,358	3,432,042	70.2	2,134,370	62.2	43.7	R	—	R
1990	5,016,747	3,347,635	66.7	2,068,904	61.8	41.2	—	R	—
1992	5,182,321	3,817,380	73.7	2,611,850	68.4	50.4	R	R	D
1994	5,359,333	3,635,875	67.8	1,533,728	42.2	28.6	—	—	—
1996	5,499,000	4,330,657	78.8	2,618,326	60.5	47.6	R	R	D
1998	5,620,000	4,740,272	84.3	2,012,143	42.4	35.8	—	D	—
2000	6,085,266	5,122,123	84.2	3,015,964	58.9	49.6	R	—	D
2002	6,085,281	5,043,334	82.9	2,330,454	46.2	38.3	—	R	—

SOURCES: Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, *The Almanac of American Politics* (Washington, DC: National Journal, 1972–2002); US Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (various years); Federal Elections Commission; Office of the Secretary of State, *North Carolina Manual* (Raleigh: Department of State, since 1966); NC State Board of Elections web site, "General Voter Registration and Election Statistics"; NC Center for Public Policy Research, *North Carolina Focus* (1989) and "The Two Party System in North Carolina," (Raleigh, December 1987); and Curtis Gans, Committee for the Study of the American Electorate.

Size of NC Voting Age Population, Number of Registered Voters, and Voter Turnout, 1966-2002



Rough Parity Emerges in Senate Spending

JOHN QUINTERNO, assistant director, Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life

Though popularly perceived as the most expensive North Carolina Senate race, the 2002 campaign between Republican Elizabeth Dole and Democrat Erskine Bowles actually ranks as the fourth most expensive of the 11 held in North Carolina between 1972 and 2002, when compared in 2002 dollars. Moreover, the financial component of the Bowles–Dole campaign highlights four trends that have developed in the state’s Senate races over the last 30 years.

North Carolina Senate Elections, 1972–2002

Eleven U.S. Senate races have been held in North Carolina since 1972. During that time, one of the state’s two Senate seats consistently has been occupied by a Republican, first by U.S. Senator Jesse Helms and now by Dole. Helms won the seat in 1972 and defended it successfully in 1978, 1984, 1990 and 1996, before retiring and being succeeded by Dole last November.

Meanwhile, the state’s other seat has alternated between the two parties, and no incumbent has managed to win reelection. Republicans have won the seat in presidential election years, and Democrats have succeeded in off-presidential years. Democrat Robert Morgan won the seat in 1974, followed by Republican John East in 1980, Democrat Terry Sanford in 1986, Republican Lauch Faircloth in 1992 and current Democratic Senator John Edwards in 1998.

Financial Trends, 1972–2002

A total of \$213.4 million in 2002 dollars was spent on the 11 Senate races between 1972 and 2002. Seventy-six percent of that amount went to the six races involving the Dole/Helms seat, while 24 percent flowed to the five races involving the Edwards seat. Four trends emerged during this period.

First, the overall cost of Senate races rose. Helms and his 1972 opponent, Democrat Nick Galifianakis, spent \$4.9 million (\$1.1 million in 1972) at the beginning of the period, while Dole and Bowles spent \$26.1 million in 2002 — five times more.

Second, the growth in spending was not uniform and developed differently for each senate seat. The cost of the Helms seat rose sharply, but the pattern that developed for the Edwards seat was one in which, with the exception of 1992, each election for the seat cost less than the Helms’ contest two years earlier but more than the previous election for the same seat. In 1986, for example, Sanford and Republican James Broyhill spent a combined \$15.5 million (\$9.4 million in 1986), far less than the cost of the 1984 race for Helms’ seat but three times as much as East and Morgan spent in 1980.

Third, Helms’ spending habits fueled much of the increase in costs. In his 1978, 1984 and 1990 reelection contests, Helms raised and spent huge sums of money. In his 1978 victory over Democrat John Ingram, for example, Helms spent approximately 11 times as much as he had spent in 1972 despite the fact that Ingram only spent \$733,000 (\$264,000 in 1978).

The high watermark of Senate spending came in 1984 when Helms spent \$29 million (\$16.9 million in 1984) in a race against former Democratic Governor Jim Hunt. Unlike Ingram, Hunt raised a significant amount of money — \$16.5 million (\$9.5 million in 1984). Combined, Helms and Hunt spent \$46 million (\$26.4 million in 1984), making it by far the most expensive race in state history.

Finally, the Democratic share of spending on Senate races has grown. After Ingram was overwhelmed by Helms in 1978, Democratic candidates began raising and spending more money on Senate races. While Republicans outspent Democrats during the period, Democratic candidates managed to increase their spending.

Election 2002

The 2002 campaign ranks as the fourth most expensive in the period 1972 to 2002. Dole and Bowles’ November reports with the Federal Election Commission show that, of the combined \$26.1 million spent, Dole spent \$13.4 million (51 percent) while Bowles spent \$12.7 million (49 percent). Bowles spent more than any Democratic senatorial candidate in North Carolina, with the exception of Hunt’s 1984 run. ■

Most Expensive U.S. Senate Races, 1972–2002

Year	Actual \$ (millions)	2002\$ (millions)	Winner, Party
1984	26.379	46.037	Helms, R
1990	25.573	35.469	Helms, R
1996	22.582	26.567	Helms, R
2002	26.135	26.135	Dole, R
1978	8.387	23.297	Helms, R
1998	17.707	19.587	Edwards, D
1986	9.357	15.466	Sanford, D
1992	5.438	7.026	Faircloth, R
1972	1.124	4.866	Helms, R
1980	2.124	4.678	East, R
1974	1.167	4.290	Morgan, D

Political Television Advertising in North Carolina, 2002 Election (All Races)

Market	Political Ad Dollars	Number of Ads Aired
Charlotte NC	\$4,631,140	13,265
Raleigh-Durham/Fayetteville NC	\$8,336,156	12,105
Greenville SC/Asheville NC	\$8,136,274	23,905
Greensboro/Winston Salem NC	\$3,563,809	11,846
Totals	\$24,667,379	61,121

NOTE: Totals for the Charlotte and Asheville markets include spending on ads for the gubernatorial and senate races in South Carolina. The actual amount spent solely on North Carolina campaigns, therefore, is lower.

SOURCE: Alliance for Better Campaigns (<http://www.freeairtime.org>)

'Mother's Milk' and U.S. Senate Races in North Carolina, 1972-2002*

	Actual Dollars (millions)			2002\$ (millions)**			Winner Pty %	Spent*** Most %
	Dem	Rep	Total	Dem	Rep	Total		
1972	.470	.654	1.124	2.035	2.831	4.866	R - 55	R - 60
1974	.781	.386	1.167	2.871	1.419	4.290	D - 63	D - 67
1978	.264	8.123	8.387	.733	22.564	23.297	R - 55	R - 97
1980	.948	1.176	2.124	2.088	2.590	4.678	R - 50	R - 55
1984	9.462	16.918	26.379	16.513	29.525	46.037	R - 52	R - 64
1986	4.169	5.188	9.357	6.891	8.575	15.466	D - 52	D - 55
1990	7.812	17.762	25.573	10.835	24.635	35.469	R - 53	R - 69
1992	2.486	2.952	5.438	3.212	3.814	7.026	R - 50	R - 54
1996	7.993	14.589	22.582	9.404	17.164	26.567	R - 53	R - 65
1998	8.331	9.376	17.707	9.216	10.372	19.587	D - 51	R - 53
2002	12.735	13.400	26.135	12.735	13.400	26.135	R - 54	R - 51
Totals	(Not applicable)			76.533	136.889	213.418	D - 3	D - 2
				36%	64%	100%	R - 8	R - 9

*The major party candidates in these elections were: 1972 - Nick Galifianakis, D and Jesse Helms, R; 1974 - Robert Morgan, D and William Stevens, R; 1978 - John Ingram, D and Helms, R; 1980 - Morgan, D and John East, R; 1984 - Jim Hunt, D and Helms, R; 1986 - Terry Sanford, D and James Broyhill, R; 1990 - Harvey Gantt, D and Helms, R; 1992 - Sanford, D and Lauch Faircloth, R; 1996 - Gantt, D and Helms, R; 1998 - John Edwards, D and Faircloth, R; 2002 - Erskine Bowles, D and Elizabeth Dole, R.

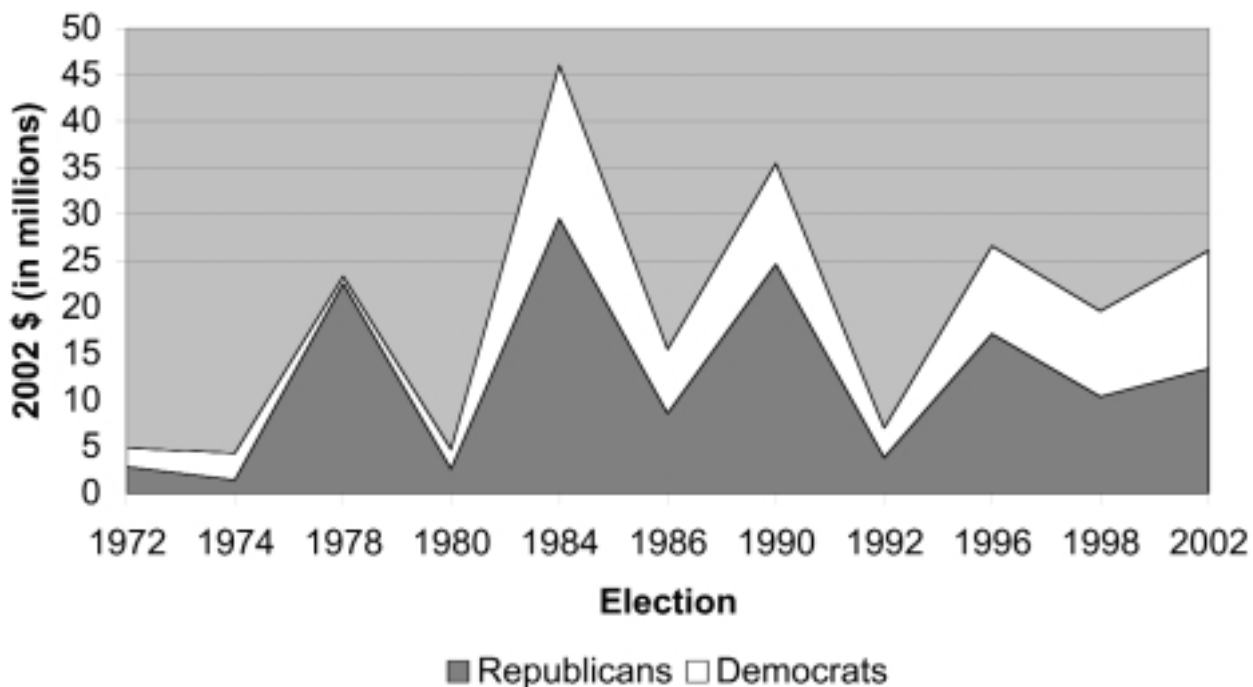
**The 2002 Dollar Equivalents are based on the 1982-84 Consumer Price Index equal to 100 and modified to 2002 dollars. The value of the 2002 dollar on the 1982-84 base was 1.813. The 2002 dollar equivalents for the above years are as follows: 1972 dollars = .231 of the 2002 dollar; 1974 = .272; 1978 = .360; 1980 = .454; 1984 = .573; 1986 = .605; 1990 = .721; 1992 = .774; 1996 = .850; 1998 = .904; and 2002 = 1.000.

***Pty % = party of winning candidate and the winner's % share of the vote. Spent most % = which party's candidate spent the most money in the campaign and the % share of that spending.

NOTE: 2002 expenditures are taken from the Post-Election Report filed by the candidates' campaign committees with the FEC. The reports only cover spending through 11/25/02.

SOURCES: Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, *The Almanac of American Politics* (Washington, DC: National Journal) 1978, p. 625; 1986, pp. 996-7; 1998, pp. 1058-9; 2002, pp. 1138, and the Federal Election Commission web site: www.fec.gov.

Allocation of Total U.S. Senate Race Costs by Party, 1972-2002



This publication of the Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life is funded in part by a grant from PROGRESS ENERGY.



Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life
The Center for the Study of the American South
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

CB #9127
The University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, NC 27559-9127

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 177
Chapel Hill, NC

Higher Turnout Helps Republicans

JOHN QUINTERNO, assistant director, Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life

Voter turnout in the 2002 North Carolina U.S. Senate race was higher than in 1998, the state's last off-presidential year Senate election. According to the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, 38 percent of North Carolina's voting age population (46.2 percent of registered voters) voted in 2002, up from 35 percent in 1998.

Election returns from the 11 races held between 1972 and 2002 — a period in which Republicans won eight times — show that higher turnout favors Republican candidates.

Turnout in Senate elections is higher in years with presidential elections (1972, 1980, 1984, 1992, 1996) than in off-presidential years (1974, 1978, 1986, 1998, 2002). Two clear patterns emerge from these elections:

- ◆ Republican Senate candidates swept all five races held in presidential election years.
- ◆ With the exception of 1998, Republicans have won all the elections in which turnout exceeded 1.8 million voters.

The adjacent table divides the 11 Senate races since 1972 into presidential and off-presidential

year contests and ranks them by voter turnout.

Not only did Republicans win all five presidential year races, but also the Republican margin of victory has increased along with turnout since the 1980 election.

In 1980, Republican challenger John East defeated Democratic incumbent Senator Robert Morgan by just over 10,000 votes in a race with turnout of just over 1.8 million voters. In 1996, a year when turnout exceeded 2.6 million voters, former U.S. Senator Jesse Helms won his final term by 171,958 votes.

A similar dynamic applies to off-presidential year elections where the parties have split their wins equally at three apiece. Democrats won their three races every 12 years — 1974, 1986 and 1998. In each case, Republican political consultant Peter Hans argues, the Republican candidates were being "punished" for the Watergate scandal (1974), the Iran-Contra affair (1986) and the Clinton impeachment effort (1998). In two of the more recent off-year races — 1990 and 2002 — Republican candidates won as the turnout passed the 1.8 million mark, and their margins of victory increased along with turnout.

In the 2004 Senate election, turnout likely will be high because it is a presidential election year. Three million North Carolinians voted in 2000, and population growth may mean that the electorate will be just as large, if not larger.

Given that large turnouts tend to favor Republicans and that the party has won all the Senate races that have occurred during presidential years since 1972, the GOP presumably will field a strong contender for Edwards' seat in 2004. ■

Voter Turnout and Margins of Victory, North Carolina U.S. Senate Races, 1972-2002

A) Presidential Election Years, 1972-2000

Year	Winner, Party	# Voters**	Margin of Victory
1996	Helms, R*	2.618	171,958
1992	Faircloth, R*	2.612	103,877
1984	Helms, R*	2.239	86,280
1980	East, R	1.856	10,411
1972	Helms, R	1.473	117,955

B) Off-Presidential Election Years, 1974-2002

Year	Winner, Party	# Voters**	Margin of Victory
2002	Dole, R	2.330	200,681
1990	Helms, R*	2.071	106,758
1998	Edwards, D	2.012	83,294
1986	Sanford, D	1.591	55,994
1978	Helms, R*	1.137	102,448
1974	Morgan, D	1.011	256,157

NOTES: * = incumbent; ** in millions

SOURCES: Various issues of NC DataNet and The Almanac of American Politics.