



Why Judges Matter



Even if you personally never stand before a judge, judges will make decisions that affect your privacy, your safety, your children's safety and the quality of their education, your voting rights, your equality under the law and many other issues.

Sometime in your life, a judge may make decisions about your most personal issues--your divorce, child support or living circumstances, your inheritance, your property, your debts or the debt someone owes you.

Judges interpret the law. Judges believe that their core beliefs don't sway their judgments. But judges are human, so they can't block out those core beliefs.

In the next year or two, NC judges will make decisions about:

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|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| voting policies and rights | the safety of our drinking water |
| birth control | fracking |
| school funding | rights of LGBTQ citizens. |

We all need to learn about judges, and vote for judges who share our core attitudes and beliefs.

Who Are the Candidates for Judge on My Ballot?

Find your Sample Ballot by Googling "[NC Voter Search](#)."

Search on your name, and click on the active link associated with your name. Look for the live link showing your sample ballot for November.

So How Do You Judge Judges?

For first-time judicial candidates, look at:

- their public service record
- organizations they belong to
- political party affiliation, if any
- who endorses them
- their ratings by the NC Bar Association jpe.ncbar.org **Phase 2** results (available mid-April)

For sitting District or Superior Court judges, look at all the above, plus:

their ratings by the NC Bar Association jpe.ncbar.org **Phase 1** results, decisions they have made

Biographies of NC Supreme Court Justices: appellate.nccourts.org/Bios/?c=1

Biographies of NC Court of Appeals Judges: appellate.nccourts.org/Bios/?c=2



TELL YOUR FRIENDS: FIVE REASONS TO VOTE FOR JUDGES

1. **DEFENDING THE RIGHT TO VOTE:** The fight over the laws governing voting rights continues in NC courts – judges elected in 2016 will determine whether hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians will continue to face new and unnecessary barriers that will operate to deny their right to vote.
2. **COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC EDUCATION:** Education issues including whether public funding for private schools will be expanded to the detriment of public school budgets, and whether charter schools are meeting student diversity requirements or will they become an instrument to re-segregate North Carolina schools?
3. **PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES:** North Carolina judges will decide cases related to environmental devastation from North Carolina polluters. How these cases are decided will affect the quality of life and the integrity of our communities and waterways for decades to come.
4. **PRESERVING JUSTICE FOR ALL:** Republicans in the North Carolina General Assembly repealed the Racial Justice Act, an act which ensured that all North Carolina citizens stand equally before the law. Without the protections of the RJA, Judges elected in 2016 will be called on to respond to racial bias in our judicial system.
5. **ENSURING GOVERNMENT BY AND FOR CITIZENS:** North Carolina courts are increasingly the last line of defense in keeping government open to its citizens – the GOP led Legislature and Governor McCrory have passed laws to selectively limit rights of citizens and rights of cities and counties, they refuse to make public behind the scenes emails regarding the development of the Voting Rights Bill or House Bill 2 ('bathroom law'), and they make extreme ideological appointments to governing councils who protect our environment.

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July, 2016