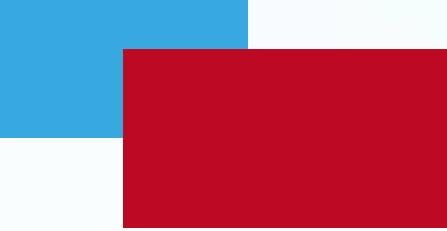


WELCOME TO THE WAKE *Democratic Forum*

August Meeting
8/5/26
6:00-8:00 PM

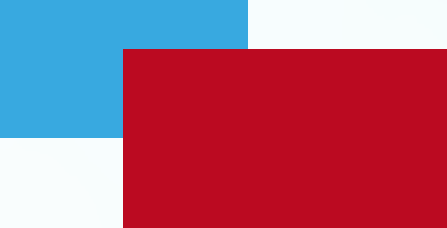




Welcome!

Who is in the Room?
Raise your hand if...





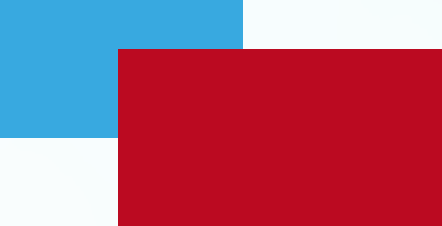
Reflection & Pledge



The Buffet is OPEN



NEW! ***Follow along with tonight's presentation!***
<https://wakedemforum.org/presentations/>



Thank you,

to our Wake Dem Forum Members

- Maya Tucker



Become a Forum Member!

<https://wakedemforum.org/become-a-member/>

wake up

kit

FROM NORTH CAROLINA

SOME OF NC'S COOLEST CONTRIBUTIONS!



Pokémon Cards: Nearly all United States Pokémon trading cards are printed at the Millennium Print Group in Morrisville!



Krispy Kreme Doughnuts: The original Krispy Kreme was founded in Winston-Salem, NC, in 1937.



America's Oldest Amusement Park: Pullen Park in Raleigh, opened in 1887, is the oldest amusement park in the U.S. still operating at its original location.



Mt. Olive Pickles: Born in 1926 in Mt. Olive, NC — it's now one of the largest pickle brands in the country!



★ FIRST IN
FREEDOM
& STILL FIGHTING FOR IT.

★ FIRST IN
FREEDOM
& STILL FIGHTING FOR IT.

WAKE
Democratic Forum



NO KINGS.
JUST US.

WAKE
Democratic Forum



A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

1776

THE HALIFAX RESOLVES

North Carolina became the first colony to officially call for independence from the British King and crown, months before the Declaration of Independence.

1960

THE GREENSBORO FOUR

Four Black college students sat down at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter — and sparked a nationwide movement.

2023

ANDERSON CLAYTON MAKES HISTORY

At just 25 years old, Anderson Clayton became the youngest state party chair in the nation — Leading the Democratic Party right here in North Carolina.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT.

It doesn't matter if you're still trying to find your voice or you're ready to lead. There's a place for you in the fight for a better North Carolina.

Come to a Wake Democratic Forum event next month!

Meet other people who care about the same future you do, and find your role in a movement that stretches from Halifax in 1776 to us, 250 years later.

First in freedom, and still fighting for it!

 wakedemforum.org

WAKE
Democratic Forum



FIRST IN
FREEDOM
&
STILL
FIGHTING
FOR IT.

WAKEDEMFORUM.ORG

OUR MISSION

In 1776, North Carolina led the call for independence with the Halifax Resolves — declaring boldly that no king should control our future.

Today, young North Carolinians are standing up to extremist politicians who want to control our lives. We're organizing for freedom, opportunity, and a future where everyone has a voice.



WAKEDEMFORUM.ORG

WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

FREEDOM TO EARN A FAIR WAGE FOR A HARD DAY'S WORK

AN ECONOMY THAT VALUES WORKERS — NOT JUST BILLIONAIRES

A DEMOCRACY WHERE YOUR VOTE COUNTS

ACCESS TO EDUCATION, NOT CENSORSHIP AND CONTROL

A N.C. WHERE EVERY FAMILY CAN AFFORD A SAFE, STABLE HOME.

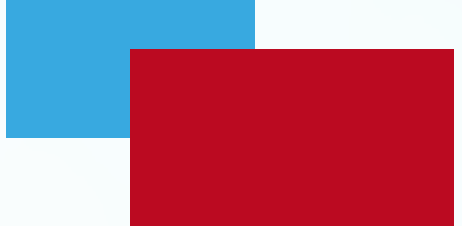
You don't have to wait to lead, and you don't have to do it alone. You have a role to play in protecting our democracy and shaping NC's future.

● Start or grow your campus club — We'll connect you to resources, guest speakers, and organizing support.

▶ Lead an issue campaign — Take action with your friends in your community.

♥ Build your network — Meet other young leaders at Wake Dem Forums.

Wherever you are, there's a way to help with the Wake Democratic Forum.



The Dem Forum

BOARD MEETING REVIEW

- **No monthly ticket price increase in 2026/2027**
- **The NC State University Club will remain our location**
- **Thanks to generous donations, we can continue to offer the YD discount**

Top Goals For 2026/2027

- **Recruit more board members, with a focus on diverse backgrounds**
 - **Planning for a Spring 2027 Trailblazer Award**
 - **Bylaw Committee will review the bylaws and suggest updates**
-



The Dem Forum State of the State

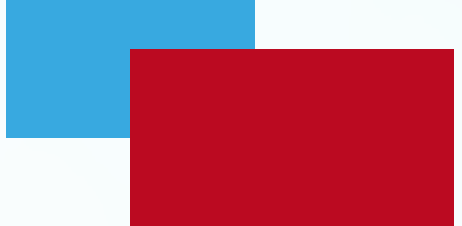
LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Wake Co. Commission

- Commissioners adopted a \$2.28 billion budget, year beginning July 1, 2026
- New revenue steered to growth/public safety: reopening the jail annex, adding EMTs

◦ <https://www.wake.gov/news/wake-county-commissioners-adopt-228-billion-fiscal-year-2027-budget>

- The County is subsidizing where state funding falls short – education, social services, public safety





The Dem Forum State of the State

LOCAL GOV: Wake Co. Schools

- **WCPSS approved a 2026-27 budget with \$10.5M in cuts plus \$5M drawn from savings (adopted early May)**
 - <https://www.cbs17.com/news/local-news/wake-county-news/wake-county-school-board-approves-2026-2027-budget-that-includes-10-5-million-in-cuts/>
- **BOE tied the crunch to the state's failure to fund public ed and asked the legislature to close the Blue Ridge loophole**
 - *The "Blue Ridge Housing loophole" is a North Carolina property tax loophole that allows for-profit investors to avoid paying local property taxes by partnering with a nonprofit. Developers secure the tax exemption by giving a nonprofit a fractional, often sub-1% ownership stake in an apartment complex.*
 - <https://www.wake.gov/news/wake-county-commissioners-adopt-228-billion-fiscal-year-2027-budget>



The Dem Forum State of the State

LOCAL GOV: On The Ballot

- Board of Commissioners expands from 7 to 9 seats; two new at-large seats filled countywide beginning this election

▪ https://ballotpedia.org/Government_of_Wake_County,_North_Carolina

- Also on the ballot: sheriff, clerk of superior court, commission, and judgeships

▪ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2026_Wake_County_elections

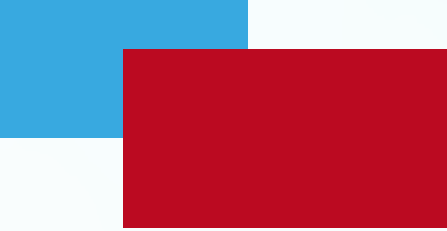


The Dem Forum State of the State

STATE GOVERNMENT: The 367 Days Late Budget

- **First full state budget since 2023 – more than 1,000 days on the old plan**
 - <https://carolinapublicpress.org/76016/nc-budget-agreement-finally-reached/>
- ***Berger and Hall unveiled the 634-page deal June 30 and forced votes within 48 hours, before July 4 recess***
 - <https://ncnewslines.com/2026/06/30/nc-legislature-releases-34b-budget-deal-expects-votes-this-week/>
- **Gov. Stein signed the \$34B plan July 7**
 - <https://www.theassemblync.com/news/politics/josh-stein-signs-long-awaited-budget/>

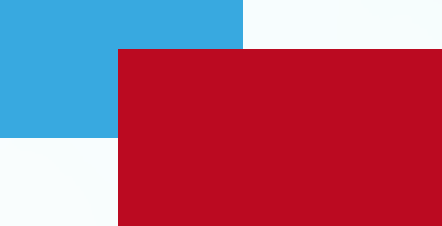




The Dem Forum State of the State

STATE GOVERNMENT: Budget Lowlights

- **Income tax drops to 3.49% , corporate tax phase-out to zero untouched**
 - <https://www.theassemblync.com/news/politics/josh-stein-signs-long-awaited-budget/>
 - ***Retirees got a one-time 2.5% payment, not a permanent cost-of-living adjustment***
 - <https://ncnewsline.com/2026/06/30/nc-legislature-releases-34b-budget-deal-expects-votes-this-week/>
 - **Budget cuts the equivalent of 755 jobs (*DHHS, Adult Corrections, Public Safety*)**
 - <https://www.theassemblync.com/news/politics/josh-stein-signs-long-awaited-budget/>
 - **Most state workers see only 3%, and no retroactive pay**
 - <https://ncnewsline.com/2026/06/30/nc-legislature-releases-34b-budget-deal-expects-votes-this-week/>
- 



The Dem Forum State of the State

STATE GOVERNMENT: Elections Changes

- Both chambers returned in July/Aug.; the House cleared two Senate-revised election bills Aug. 4-5, sending both to Stein's desk
 - (HB958 mostly bad, HB834 mostly okay)
- *HB 958 cuts early voting from 17 to 10 days for primaries and runoffs, adding proof-of-citizenship at registration and post-election audits, takining affect in 2027*

▪ <https://carolinapublicpress.org/80268/nc-lawmakers-send-two-big-election-bills-to-governor/>

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The Dem Forum State of the State

STATE GOVERNMENT: Still on the Table

- The House shelved the near-total hemp ban (HB 328) Aug. 4 after hundreds of advocates flooded the building; Hall punted it to a study group

- <https://ncnewsline.com/2026/08/04/as-law-enforcement-backs-a-hemp-ban-protestors-push-lawmakers-to-vote-no>

- ***SB 50 permitless "Freedom to Carry" remains the one veto never overridden***

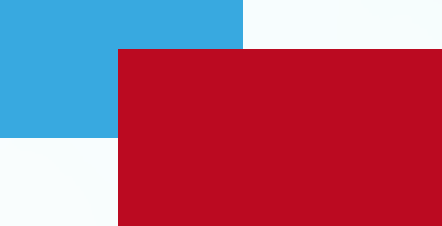
- <https://carolinapublicpress.org/80250/five-takeaways-from-the-2026-legislative-session/>

- ***Lawmakers enacted 56 bills this session as of Aug.4***

- <https://carolinapublicpress.org/80250/five-takeaways-from-the-2026-legislative-session/>



Photo Credits: Will Doran, WRAL



The Dem Forum State of the State

STATEWIDE ELECTIONS: Roy Cooper

- **Roy Cooper looks to be the first dem to win NC's senate seat since 2008**
 - <https://www.yahoo.com/news/articles/ex-north-carolina-gov-roy-000738233.html>
- **Fox News (July 23-27): Cooper +9, with Trump underwater at 40/58 in the state**
 - <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/fox-news-poll-democratic-enthusiasm-shapes-north-carolina-senate-race>
- **Cooper raised \$14.8M in Q2, pushing his total past \$40M**
 - <https://ncnewsline.com/2026/06/30/nc-legislature-releases-34b-budget-deal-expects-votes-this-week/>
- **GOP outside groups countered with \$58.6M in ad reservations by end of June vs. \$45.4M for Democrats**
 - <https://rollcall.com/2026/07/28/as-roy-cooper-leads-in-polls-democrats-arent-measuring-the-drapes-yet/>



The Dem Forum State of the State

STATEWIDE ELECTIONS: Justice Anita Earls

- **Justice Anita Earls faces Rep. Sarah Stevens (R) for one of seven seats on a 5-2 GOP-majority court**

- <https://ncnewsline.com/2025/08/05/justice-anita-earls-leads-gop-challenger-sarah-stevens-in-fundraising-for-2026-nc-supreme-court-race/>

- **She's campaigning statewide with the party, including introducing Cooper at the Unity Dinner**

- <https://www.theassemblync.com/politics/nc-supreme-court-politics/>

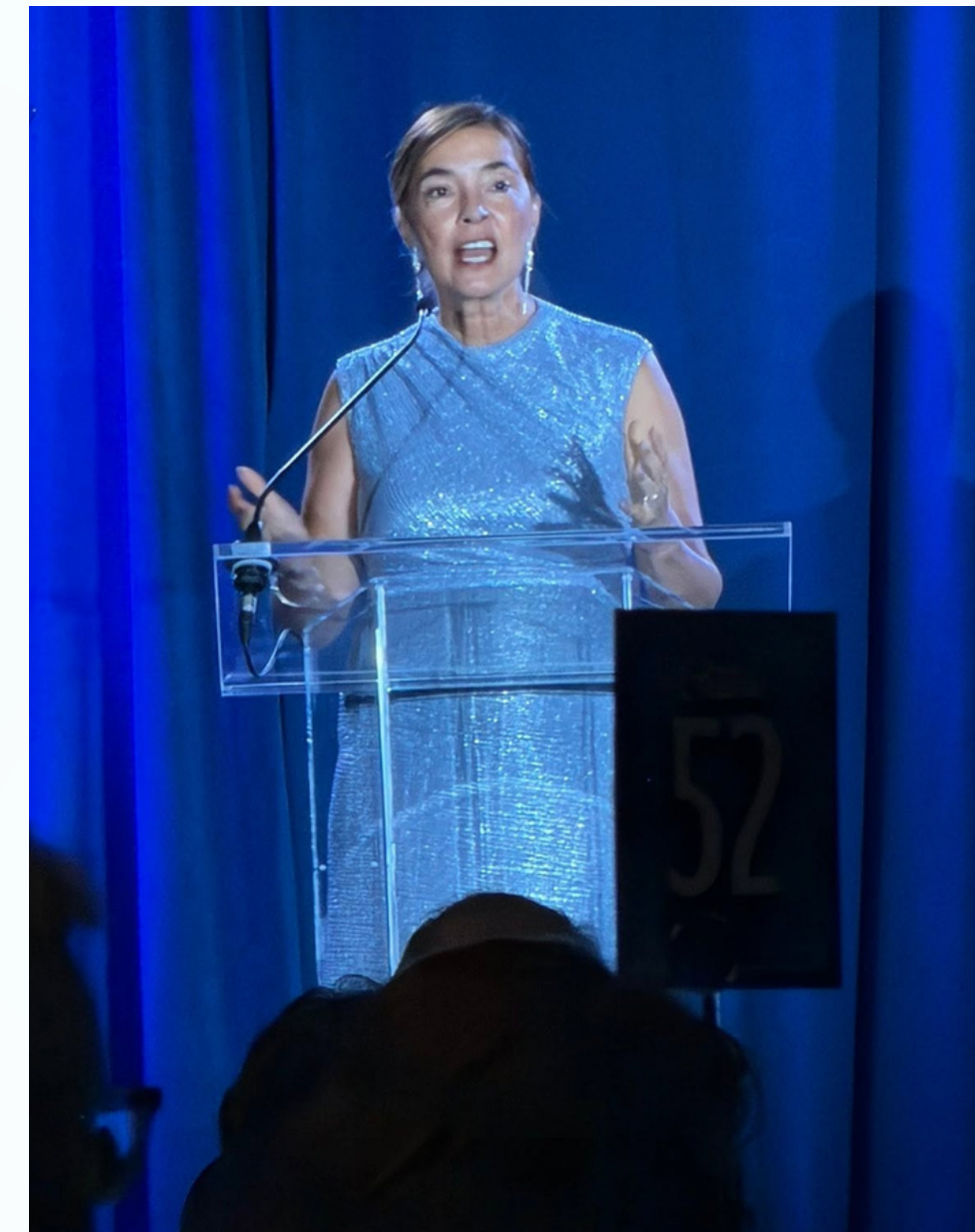
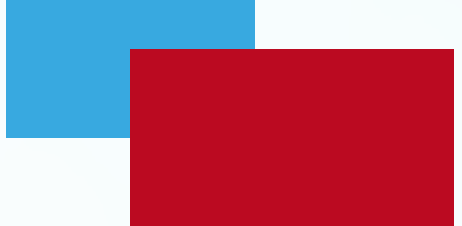


Photo Credits: Rep. Julia Greenfield, Facebook



The Dem Forum State of the State

Election Day is November 3, 2026

T

89 : 18 : 23 : 35

DAYS

HOURS

MINUTES

SECONDS



Exploring New Media with The Hometown Holler

WAKE
Democratic Forum



THANK YOU & NEXT STEPS

- Next meeting: September 3, 2026

