

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO ELECT DEMOCRATS TO OUR STATE COURTS IN 2024?

WE MUST TAKE BACK NC'S COURTS TO PROTECT OUR DEMOCRACY.

A strong democracy relies on judges who believe in freedom and equality. But right-wing extremists have taken over our North Carolina courts. They are rubber-stamping the Republican supermajority in the legislature and trampling our rights.

STATEWIDE JUDICIAL ELECTIONS HAVE LONG-LASTING IMPACTS.

North Carolina elects its judges through partisan elections.

- **NC Supreme Court (8-year term)**
 - 7 justices who are the final authority for interpreting the NC State Constitution and all other state laws
 - Republicans hold a 5-2 majority
- **Court of Appeals (8-year term)**
 - 15 judges who hear cases in 3-judge panels
 - Review almost all appeals from the trial courts
 - Republicans hold an 11-4 majority, meaning virtually every panel features 2 or 3 Republicans

WE HAVE AN OUTSTANDING DEMOCRATIC SLATE OF STATEWIDE JUDICIAL CANDIDATES, THE "TEAM": Thompson, Eldred, Allison, & Moore.

- **Justice Allison Riggs** has served on the NC Supreme Court since her appointment by Governor Cooper in 2023. She is the youngest woman ever to serve on the Court, and deeply values reproductive freedoms and democracy. Previously, she worked as a civil rights lawyer, partnering with communities across the South to protect voting rights. She has argued twice before the U.S. Supreme Court in landmark redistricting cases.
- **Judge Carolyn Thompson** was appointed to the Court of Appeals by Governor Cooper in 2023. She has over 20 years of judicial and trial experience and is an ordained minister.
- **Martin Moore** is an appellate attorney and Buncombe County Commissioner running for the Court of Appeals. He was previously a public defender and is the youngest statewide candidate this year.
- **Ed Eldred** is a respected appellate lawyer running for the Court of Appeals. He has handled hundreds of appeals, is a board-certified specialist in child welfare law, and often represents parents in DSS court.

DEMOCRATIC JUDGES PROTECT OUR RIGHTS.

In 2022, the 4-3 Democratic majority on the NC Supreme Court:

- ruled that **extreme partisan gerrymandering violated the State Constitution**. They ordered our congressional and NC Senate maps to be redrawn.
- ordered the state to pay **\$677M owed to public school districts** to meet the state's constitutional obligation to provide a basic education (required by the *Leandro* decision).
- invalidated a 2018 voter ID law, ruling it was passed with **racially discriminatory intent**.
- **consistently ruled in favor of working people** in cases brought against corporations, employers, or healthcare providers.

REPUBLICAN JUDGES RUBBER-STAMP THE EXTREME RIGHT.

In the 2022 election, Republicans captured the majority on the NC Supreme Court.

- The new Republican majority reversed the gerrymandering decision and permitted the Republican-led legislature to **rig the legislative and congressional maps**. The current NC congressional delegation of 7 Democrats and 7 Republicans will likely shift to 10-4 or 11-3 in favor of the GOP in November 2024.
- The Republicans **delayed funding owed to school districts** and agreed to rehear the foundational *Leandro* precedent. We are still waiting for their decision.
- Justice Phil Berger Jr. **heard three cases in which his father, NC Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger Sr., was a party**. He ruled in favor twice so far; *Leandro* is still pending.
- Jefferson Griffin, a Court of Appeals judge running against Justice Riggs for the Supreme Court, wrote a decision, since withdrawn, that **life begins at conception**. (This is the basis for Alabama's extreme IVF ruling.)
- Judge Griffin wrote an opinion overturning a lower court's decision holding a parent responsible for the death of a child **after she left bullets next to an unsecured gun**.
- Judge Griffin falsely claimed there is **no racial bias** in the court system.

WE HAVE A PATH TO VICTORY THAT WILL IMPACT OUR STATE FOR A GENERATION.

The North Carolina Democratic Party is invested in winning the fight for the courts.

- To achieve the policy wins we need and deserve in the next decade and beyond, **we must have the courts as a backstop**.
- **We can retake the Supreme Court before the next round of redistricting in 2031:**
 - 2024: KEEP Justice Allison Riggs
 - 2026: KEEP Justice Anita Earls
 - 2028: FLIP 3 seats (and flip the court!)
- **We can take the Court of Appeals in 2028, too:**
 - 2024: KEEP Judge Carolyn Thompson and ELECT Ed Eldred and Martin Moore (FLIP 2 seats)
 - 2026: KEEP 3 seats
 - 2028: FLIP up to 5 seats (and flip the court!)

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