

United States Senate to replace retiring Senator Thom Tillis

Candidate	✓ Roy Cooper	Michael Whatley
General information	<p>Democrat.</p> <p>Former NC governor (2017-2025), NC attorney general (2001-2017), NC state senator (1991-2001, including as majority leader), and NC state representative (1987-1991).</p> <p>Holds law degree from UNC Chapel Hill.</p> <p>He is a deacon and elder at White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Raleigh. Has tutored students in public schools.</p> <p>Website: roycooper.com</p>	<p>Republican.</p> <p>Formerly chair of the Republican National Committee, chair of the North Carolina Republican Party, chief of staff for Senator Elizabeth Dole, senior official for G. W. Bush administration, and partner at old industry lobbying firm HBW Resources.</p> <p>Holds law degree from University of Notre Dame.</p> <p>Endorsed by Donald Trump.</p> <p>Website: michaelwhatley.com</p>
An economy for all?	<p>Cooper supports stronger antitrust regulations, banning algorithm use that raises grocery prices, and providing employee child-care subsidies (guides vote). “North Carolina succeeds by creating good-paying jobs that put more money in the pockets of hardworking North Carolinians.” (NC.gov) In 2019, supported raising NC minimum wage (Isidewith.com). Opposed lowering income tax rates for corporations and wealthy individuals (<i>Raleigh News and Observer</i>).</p>	<p>Whatley’s plan for NC is to “Enact the Trump agenda in the U.S. Senate” (candidate website). He defends the “One Big Beautiful Bill,” extending 2017 Trump tax cuts; and largest corporate tax cut in U.S. history. Supports cuts to Medicaid and SNAP. “We do not need waste, fraud and abuse in these programs” (GOP.com). The former oil lobbyists states: “America’s economic strength depends on reliable, affordable energy and reining in Washington’s reckless spending (candidate website).</p>
Healthcare for all?	<p>Cooper expanded Medicaid coverage to over 600,000 NC people (nchealthnews). Would reinstate ACA tax credits, reverse Medicaid cuts, and cap drug costs. Pledges to make healthcare more affordable by reversing cuts to ACA tax credits. Advocates for affordable child care (candidate website).</p>	<p>Defended significant Medicaid cuts. “We need to get the government out of the way and get back to market-driven solutions on health care”; 888,000 NC citizens’ healthcare premiums could double (<i>American Journal News</i>). Proud to be “most pro-life chair” of the Republican Party (guides.vote)</p>
Childcare and Quality K-12 education?	<p>Cooper’s mother was a public-school teacher, helping to establish his deep commitment to public education (candidate website). Cooper vetoed a bill to expand private school vouchers in NC. Opposes private school funding with no accountability. (AP news). Wants “moratorium on destructive private school vouchers until we fully fund our public schools” (EdNC). Believes private school vouchers especially harm rural schools (WUNC).</p>	<p>Supports the Education Freedom Tax Credit which will be enacted in January 2027, for the first time allowing for public funding to be used for private educational expenses: “Dollars should follow students, whether it is to a public school, a private school, a charter school, or homeschooling” (WXII12.com).</p>
Fair and accessible Elections?	<p>As governor Cooper vetoed bill adding absentee voting restrictions, requiring “signature match” in some counties: “We need to make sure ... elections are secure and that just citizens are voting, but we don’t need to create more barriers” (Guides vote).</p>	<p>As chair of NC GOP, led the charge to require voter ID, filed 170+ lawsuits to keep non-citizens from voting; Falsely claimed former President Trump won the 2020 presidential election (electiondeniers.org).</p>
A healthy planet?	<p>Supports “whole-of-government approach to advance environmental justice efforts.” Re-established advisory board on environmental justice (NC Governor). Vetoed bill limiting wetlands protections: “Protecting forests, wetlands, and farmlands makes us more resilient to climate hazards ... supports local economies” (Guides vote). Wants large tech companies to build their own energy sources (Candidate website).</p>	<p>Lobbied for oil and gas industry companies to limit air pollution regulations (Spectrum News.) Opposed EPA provisions: “In the name of ‘flexibility,’ Supports coal-fired plants; “We need to have all options on the table;” Lobbied for offshore drilling off NC’s Atlantic coast (Guides vote).</p>