

# N.C. gubernatorial race still too close to call

Ahead of Gov. Pat McCrory by 0.1 percent, challenger Roy Cooper eyes victory

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On election night, the atmosphere inside the North Carolina Democratic Party headquarters in Raleigh was similar to that of a funeral. The mounting prospects of a Donald Trump presidency accompanied by a huge defeat in the senatorial race offered the party little hope.

It was approaching midnight when the tides started to turn.

The gubernatorial race between Democratic Attorney General Roy Cooper and Republican Gov. Pat McCrory was neck and neck.

**Regardless of who wins the gubernatorial race, the governor will have Republican supermajorities in the state House and Senate.**

The 12 unreported precincts remained in urban, Democratic-leaning counties, giving Cooper a final push to take the slimmest of leads. He pulled ahead by about 4,000 votes — putting him just 0.1 percent ahead of McCrory.

McCrory refused to give a concession speech, vowing to his supporters the race was far from over. Cooper, on the other hand,

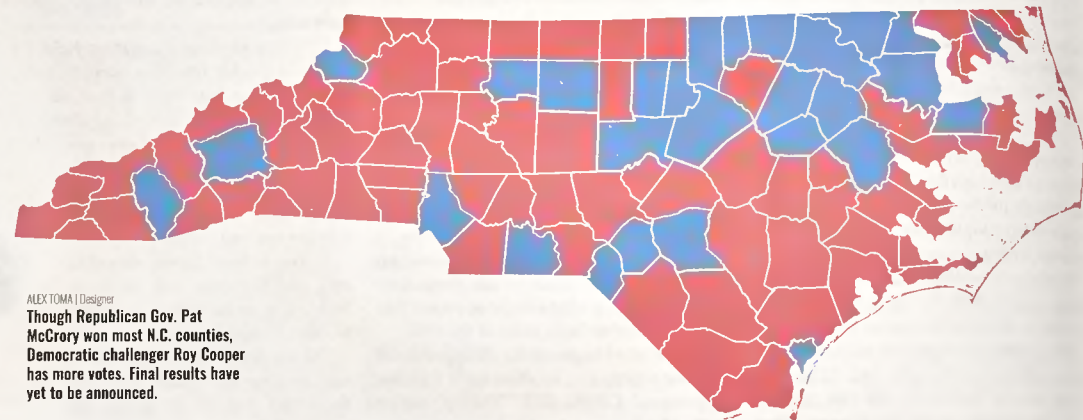
spoke for two minutes and claimed victory.

“Because of your hard work, we have won this race for governor of North Carolina,” Cooper said to his supporters at 1 a.m. “I’m glad you stayed. It’s been a long journey to get to this point.”

The gubernatorial race between Cooper and McCrory is not over. McCrory is challenging the results and will wait for all the votes to be counted on Nov. 18. According to the North Carolina State Board of Elections, if the vote difference remains less than 10,000, the person defeated can call for a recount by Nov. 22 and await the final results on Nov. 29.

McCrory does not appear to be in any hurry to concede.

Jason Torchinsky, chief legal counsel for Pat McCrory Committee’s Legal Defense Fund, said in a news release he would work re-



ALEX TOMA | Designer  
**Though Republican Gov. Pat McCrory won most N.C. counties, Democratic challenger Roy Cooper has more votes. Final results have yet to be announced.**

lentlessly to make sure the results are correct.

“We have assembled a team of the very best legal minds and election lawyers in the country to ensure that the results of this election are accurate and that every legal vote is properly counted,” Torchinsky said in an email.

With about 90 percent of precincts reporting on election night, McCrory led Cooper by 1 percent. At the time, a Cooper campaign spokesman said the race was far from over because several votes in Durham County — arguably the most liberal county in the state — had yet to be counted.

The elections board tweeted early Tuesday morning there had been “problems in Durham with the electronic poll books that check voters in.”

That evening, the board voted to extend voting times past the 7:30 p.m. deadline in nine precincts, eight of which were in Durham County. Extensions ranged from 20 to 60 minutes.

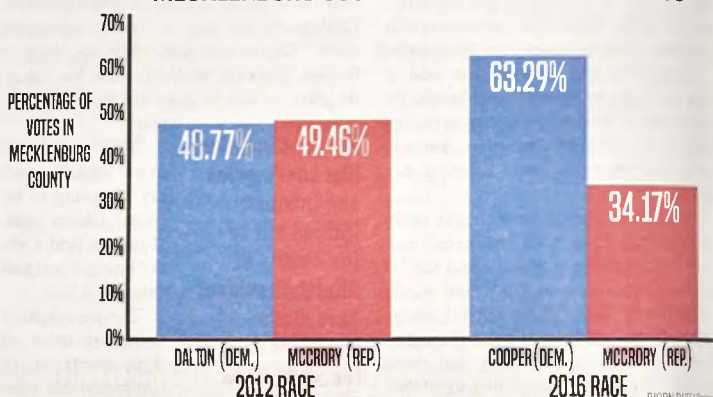
At 11:12 p.m., the elections board also tweeted Durham County had yet to upload its roughly 93,000 early voting results.

Though Durham County was instrumental in giving Cooper an edge over McCrory, Mecklenburg County was perhaps the biggest decider. McCrory is a former mayor of Charlotte and won the county in 2012 by 0.69 percent. He lost the county in 2016 by a whopping 29.12 percent.

The dramatic swing reflects voters’ frustrations with McCrory and highlights the impact House Bill 2 had on the race. HB2 is a bill the

## ELECTION RESULTS BREAKDOWN BY COUNTY

### MECKLENBURG COUNTY GUBERNATORIAL RESULTS



state legislature passed in March that, among many things, required people to use the bathroom of the gender on their birth certificate. The Charlotte Community and much of the state did not respond favorably to the economic impact HB2 had on the state.

The results of the gubernatorial race are not yet official. Provisional, mail-in absentee and overseas and military ballots are being counted, and the county boards of elections will certify results at public meetings held at 11 a.m. on Friday. McCrory said in his election night speech that he plans to wait for Friday’s results. After Friday, if he is within 10,000 votes, he will have four days to decide

whether he wants to accept the outcome or demand a recount.

Regardless of the final results, Republicans will enjoy supermajorities in the state House and Senate. Nearly half of all races for a seat in North Carolina General Assembly were uncontested, giving many incumbents free passes back to the legislature.

Republican supermajorities make it possible to override a governor’s veto. Under a Cooper administration, it could be difficult to implement specific policy goals. A McCrory administration could face hurdles in trying to exert authority over a powerful legislature.

## POST-ELECTION TIMELINE

**NOV. 14**

### DOMESTIC ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Mail-in absentee ballots that have been postmarked on or before Election Day accepted until 5 p.m.

**NOV. 17**

### INTERNATIONAL ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Overseas and military absentee ballots must be received by this date.

**NOV. 18**

### COUNTY CANVASS

The county board of elections holds a public meeting at 11 a.m. to certify the election results.

**NOV. 22**

### RECOUNTS

If the vote difference between the candidates is 10,000 votes or less, candidates may demand a recount. The demand must be received in writing by the State Board of Elections Office no later than noon.

**NOV. 29**

### OFFICIAL ELECTION RESULTS

The State Board of Elections certify all federal, statewide, multi-district and judicial contests at a public meeting held at 11 a.m. Results from each election are not considered official until this date.