

# N.C. Democrats May Field All White Male Ticket In 1988 Elections

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 Though the Democratic leadership is required by party rules to remain neutral in primaries, leaders can play a behind-the-scenes role in helping nudge candidates in or out of races.  
 Butterfield said Democratic Party leaders were able to apply subtle pressure to persuade Rep. Billy Watkins, D-Granville, and State Auditor Ed Renfrow not to run against Jordan in the Democratic primary for governor.

persuade people not to run when the stakes are high," he said.  
 "If the Hydes and the Bennetts decided to get behind a black candidate for statewide office, that would be a signal that the Democratic Party is ready to see this problem resolved," Butterfield said. He was referring to Democratic Party leaders Wallace N. Hyde and Bert L. Bennett.  
 Pressure to get a black statewide candidate has been growing since 1985, when Virginia Democrats engaged in some slate-making and elected a white man as governor, a black man as lieutenant governor and a white woman as attorney general.

rather than by voters in a primary.  
 In fact, Virginia Lt. Gov. Douglas Wilder is the only non-judicial black candidate elected statewide in the South in this century, according to the Joint Center for Political Studies in Washington.  
 "Black candidates still have a very difficult time attracting white votes," said Linda F. Williams, a senior political analyst with the center. Not enough blacks have actually run for statewide office, perceiving the difficulty in winning.  
 North Carolina had one of the closest races for a black in the South in the 1976 Democratic primary for lieutenant governor.

primary field but was defeated in the runoff by then-House Speaker James C. Green, who is white.  
 Lee, who had said he was considering running for secretary of state next year, said last week that he was leaning against running because he was starting a new business.  
 Former Attorney General Rufus L. Edmisten is regarded as the front-runner to succeed Secretary of State Thad Eure, 88, who announced last month that he would retire.  
 In the lieutenant governor's race, four white Democrats have a large head start on any black candidate who might enter the contest. Marion Rex Harris, a black Fayetteville businessman, has said he is considering running for the post.

In the race for superintendent of public instruction, Rep. Bobby Etheridge, D-Harnett, is considered a strong front-runner. No black candidates have been mentioned for the post.

"The party can act on behalf of a black Democratic candidate the same way they told Billy Watkins and Ed Renfrow to get off Bob Jordan's case," Butterfield said. "In religious circles, it would be called a prayer meeting."  
 "The party is shrewd enough to


But Virginia Democrats could put together a slate more easily because they nominate their candidates in a convention.

## Assembly Approves Car Law, Housing For Mentally Ill

General Assembly appropriated \$982,000 to fund eight group home/apartment living projects for people with long-term mental illness in North Carolina.  
 The money will be used to fund

start-up and operating costs for the eight projects.

W. Pete Cunningham is a North Carolina House Representative for District 59.



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Anyone who has bought a lemon during the past few weeks now has someone to turn to, thanks to a law passed by the General Assembly during the 1987 session.

Known as the "lemon law," legislation went into effect October first which allows new car buyers whose cars have been unsuccessfully repaired four or more times for the same problem to demand a refund or a replacement vehicle.

New car buyers whose cars have spent at least 20 business days in the shop during a one-year period can also demand a refund or a replacement vehicle. Automakers who ignore valid claims can be sued for three times the damages, plus attorney's fees.

The new law covers any defects which would impair the value of the vehicle to its owner.

Experts consider the "lemon law" to be one of the most significant

pieces of consumer protection legislation to have passed the 1987 General Assembly. The consumer protection section of the Attorney General's office estimates that complaints about defective new cars form the single largest source of complaints to the Attorney General's office.

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