

Today's election gives voters a chance to choose their representatives within the state and in Washington, D.C.

END OF THE LINE

Make the right choices at the polls

The DTH Editorial Board throws its support behind these hopefuls in races for state and local offices.

Erskine Bowles for U.S. Senate

North Carolina has consistently shown that it doesn't flirt with ideological extremes. The state needs a representative in the Senate that reflects that centrist mentality.

Erskine Bowles is that candidate. He is a Democrat, but he has proven not to be far left of center. He has also shown an ability to get others to negotiate and compromise, a quality that would benefit both the state and the country in Washington, D.C.

Although Richard Burr might have served his conservative constituency well in North Carolina's 5th District, he would be a less independent voice for the state as a whole. He voted with the president 96 percent of the time in 2003, saying Bush was right that often — but North Carolina needs more than a "yes" man.

Mike Easley for governor

Incumbent Mike Easley is the only candidate whom North Carolinians can rely on to ensure a healthy fiscal future after years of heavy shortfalls.

In 2002, the state faced a budget deficit of \$1.5 billion. Through a combination of cuts and temporary tax increases, Easley oversaw the creation of improved budgets — and projections for 2004-05 show balance between revenue and spending.

Patrick Ballantine, a former state senator from Wilmington, presents a fresh challenge to Easley, but his plans for the state budget simply don't add up.

Although he claims he can cut \$1 billion through tort reform, information technology streamlining and reform of the state construction office, there's little to guarantee that the savings will actually be there.

Easley represents the stability of leadership that North Carolina needs as it continues to crawl out of tough economic times.

David Price for U.S. House

David Price has demonstrated a commitment to his constituents in North Carolina's 4th District. His hard work in representing their interests makes him the best candidate for the House.

Price supported students in his constituency by fighting for income tax deductions for student loans. He also wrote a bill in 2003 that gives scholarships to aspiring teachers and helped push it through the House.

His spirited defense of free trade in the face of a growing isolationism and intense political pressure is also worth noting. Price has displayed a kind of leadership all too rare in politics.

He deserves two more years in Congress.

Ellie Kinnaird for N.C. Senate

Ellie Kinnaird's experience and strong support for education, health care, the environment, a death penalty moratorium and other initiatives help to make her the best candidate for the job.

North Carolina needs a legislator who is willing and able to advocate for politically risky initiatives. Her pro-tax ideas wouldn't sell well in any other area of North Carolina, but the state's programs need funding. Citizens need her to fight for that money.

Franklin, Carey for Board of Commissioners

Artie Franklin promises to work to set up a districting system that would guarantee rural residents control of at least one seat on the board in a county dominated by the votes of Chapel Hill and Carrboro residents — an idea that would help ensure more proportional representation among commissioners. Moses Carey, who has served on the board since 1984, brings an invaluable amount of experience and a strong record to the table.

Although Carey's pursuit of a merger of Chapel Hill-Carrboro City and Orange County schools has been somewhat reckless at times, he has legitimate concerns about the discrepancy of funding between the systems. He has shown that he is willing to work toward a compromise to equalize funding.

The two candidates bring different but complementary approaches to the board. Voters should strongly consider both of them.

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MICHELLE JARBOE
EDITOR, 962-4086
OFFICE HOURS 11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
MON. WED.

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MANAGING EDITOR, 962-0750

NIKKI WERKING
DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR, 962-0750

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By Steven Oklesh, elven@email.unc.edu

WHAT READERS THINK

During the past few months, UNC has seen a flurry of political activity and efforts to get out the vote — now, several readers justify their support for the candidates whom they want to emerge victorious today.

Patrick Ballantine represents a welcome change for the state

TO THE EDITOR:

Patrick Ballantine has a strong plan for North Carolina. He intends to make available better funding for our public universities and community colleges and to make it easier for parents to choose their children's education options, be it public, private, charter or home-schooling.

He wants to balance economic development with environmental protection by supporting legislation to prevent pollution in the Great Smoky Mountains as well as on our coast. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund, co-sponsored by Ballantine as a state senator, has been a beneficial piece of legislation for every geographic region of North Carolina.

Ballantine will work to keep health-care costs down for citizens of North Carolina by supporting tort reform to curb frivolous lawsuits, to cap non-economic damage payments and to limit emotional jury awards; authorizing health savings accounts to allow citizens to save money for health costs with tax-free dollars; allowing health insurance tax credits for individuals and small businesses; and supporting insurance "pooling" to make volume discounts available in order to lower insurance premiums.

Most importantly, Ballantine plans to fight for cuts in tax rates, which have been raised three times because of Gov. Mike Easley's broken campaign promises. It's time for a change in North Carolina, and that change is Patrick Ballantine.

Jenny Stevens
Sophomore
Political science

Consider a presidential hopeful who hasn't tried to deceive us

TO THE EDITOR:

The VoteCarolina Executive Board, on which I serve, has worked diligently to keep partisan views out of official on-campus activities. Our presidential candidates and "unaffiliated" 527s, however, are resorting to shameful deception and politics.

I'm tired of hearing about the candidates' plans to cut in half a deficit projected by the Congressional Budget Office to soar to \$1.4 trillion in 10 years. These numbers are fabricated — Goldman Sachs projects the deficit to reach \$5.5 trillion.

I'm tired of trying to decide whether I should vote for a man who voted for a war, then voted for the funding for our troops and then voted against it. I'm also quite sure that I'm not voting for a man who started a war with Iraq that was based on shoddy intelligence.

I'm looking for a candidate that supports equal rights for all sexual orientations, but I can't find one in the Democratic Party. My hopes for a Republican who trusts the free market enough not to pass a \$136 billion corporate welfare bill have been dashed. I'm still waiting for "small-government"

Bush to veto one single bill.

A time comes when pragmatism is replaced by partisan bickering and misinformation, rhetoric and invective, mistrust and hatred. And when that time comes, we need to remember the principle behind our pragmatism.

This year I'll be voting for the representative of the "Party of Principle," Libertarian Michael Badnarik. Like many libertarian-minded people, I've tried to find the more small-government candidate among the two major parties. Like many libertarian-minded people, I've failed to find one in this election.

Every vote for Badnarik in this year's razor-thin presidential election will serve as a reminder to the two major parties that if they had only tried, they could have had our vote.

Jeremy Spivey
Junior
Psychology

Choosing Kerry, Bowles would be avoiding more of the same

TO THE EDITOR:

I write today to endorse enthusiastically John Kerry for president and Erskine Bowles for U.S. Senate.

I first became aware of Kerry about three years ago, when, happening upon an interview on cable TV, I immediately thought, "That man should be president," because of his eloquence, demeanor, intelligence and command of foreign policy issues. I found that I agreed with him on almost every issue and admired his bravery both in combat and in helping to end an unjust war.

Not long after I became a Kerry fan, I first met Erskine Bowles. Having now volunteered for both the 2002 and 2004 Bowles for Senate campaigns and having met him about eight times, I can attest to his charisma, good humor and, above all, the passion he holds for North Carolina and for America. Also clear is his experience and success in forging bipartisan solutions to our challenges.

So why not Bush or Burr? As James Carville once put it, "Change versus more of the same."

Choosing Bush would be choosing to make this nation endure four more years of failed policies and ignorance of our domestic ills. He has flip-flopped on his profession to be a "uniter, not a divider" and a "compassionate conservative." Rather, he is the most divisive, ideological and politically driven president ever.

Burr would follow in Bush's footsteps. He has also followed Bush in putting big companies over our consumers, workers and farmers.

Kerry and Bowles are moderate, proven leaders who have committed their lives to advocating for the people, for fiscal responsibility and for foreign sanity. I urge all students to think of their future and to voice their opinion with a vote for John Kerry and Erskine Bowles.

Dustin Ingalls
Sophomore
Political science

Burr has served the state and worked to protect the country

TO THE EDITOR:

The election of 2004 presents Chapel Hill voters with pivotal decisions regarding the future of our county, state and nation. Today, voters should choose Richard Burr to be our next senator.

Having served in the U.S. House since 1995, Burr has accumulated indispensable experience that will be essential to the implementation of future policies aimed at bettering our state and nation.

Serving on the House Intelligence Committee, Richard Burr has played a leading role in crafting policies to defend our homeland, to secure our borders and ports and to wage war on terror while steadfastly supporting our courageous troops. Burr has remained loyal to the state of North Carolina by supporting actions to improve our economy: pushing for a tobacco quota buyout, advocating lower taxes for all citizens and sustaining free trade that is executed fairly.

Furthermore, Richard Burr understands the proper role of the judicial system. He will work to confirm strict constructionists to the bench, ensuring that the U.S. Constitution is upheld and that the task of making laws remains with the elected legislature. Perhaps his most endearing quality, Burr maintains a true devotion to the people of North Carolina.

Republicans, Democrats and independents alike should elect Richard Burr. He will stand firm to defend the values of North Carolinians and to guarantee that our state has dependable representation in Washington, D.C. Help him put people before politics by electing him to the U.S. Senate.

Matthew Bowles
Sophomore
Business

Atkinson supports education that the state's students need

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing to encourage students to vote for June Atkinson for state superintendent of public instruction.

What is truly at stake in this election is the lives of North Carolina's young people. Atkinson, in addition to having more than 30 years of experience as a teacher and administrator in North Carolina, will work to restore responsible, "abstinence-plus" sexual health education to our public schools. More than 50 percent of new HIV infections occur in people under the age of 25 — they are disproportionately women, disproportionately women of color and disproportionately in the South.

This election is about giving the young people of this state the information they need to keep themselves safe. Please vote for June Atkinson today.

Sara Joseph
Sophomore
International studies

Troxler, a farmer, knows what the agriculture industry needs

TO THE EDITOR:

Steve Troxler, a Republican, is a man who has dedicated his life to agriculture, and he deserves your vote for N.C. commissioner of agriculture.

Troxler, 52, has farmed his land in Guilford County for almost 30 years. During this time, he has more than proven his qualified leadership that makes him an outstanding candidate and advocate of agriculture in North Carolina. For instance, Troxler played an instrumental role in getting the tobacco buyout legislation passed through Congress, and he has been the leader of many agricultural and conservation boards across the state.

You might remember Troxler's name — he almost pulled off a monumental upset when he lost to the now infamous Meg Scott Phipps in the 2000 race. If not for the state's three major urban counties, Troxler would have easily won in 2000, as he won many of the agrarian and predominantly Democratic counties in Eastern North Carolina.

What makes Troxler so appealing, with bipartisan support, is the fact that he is a farmer running for the position. As a Browns Summit farmer who still gets his hands dirty, Troxler knows first-hand the day-to-day challenges of the state's agriculture industry, especially the needs of family farms.

So today, vote Steve Troxler for N.C. commissioner of agriculture — a man who, as witnessed during the 2000 election, is agriculture's choice without a doubt. After all, wouldn't it just make sense to have a farmer as commissioner of agriculture?

David Adkins
3rd year
School of Law

Voters should consider certain judges in nonpartisan contests

TO THE EDITOR:

North Carolina will be electing its judges in a nonpartisan fashion for the first time Tuesday. The new law was intended to make the race more fair to candidates who are supposed to keep their impartiality.

But there are still some good Democrats for whom I would encourage you to cast a ballot. Re-elect Sarah Parker to the N.C. Supreme Court and vote for James Wynn for the second Supreme Court seat. Wynn sits on the N.C. Court of Appeals, where he has 14 years of experience. His election will also bring back a needed African-American voice to the state's highest court.

I also encourage you to re-elect Linda McGee, Alan Thornburg and Wanda Bryant to the Court of Appeals, where they can continue their excellent service to our state.

Justin Guillory
Senior
Political science