

▶ DAVID PRICE - 63%

B.J. LAWSON - 37%

# Price beats Lawson to keep congressional seat

BY ROSS MALONEY  
STAFF WRITER

Despite Republican B.J. Lawson's success at attracting attention to his candidacy for North Carolina's 4th Congressional District, long-term Democratic incumbent, U.S. Rep. David Price, D-N.C. will retain his seat.

Price's final margin of victory, was almost 27 percentage points, according to unofficial tallies — not surprising for the incumbent now elected to his 11th term in the House.

"It's a nice vote of confidence; it's part of a larger victory for others: like (Kay) Hagan, Obama of course, hopefully," Price said shortly before 10 p.m.

In his concession speech, Lawson said he would continue to fight for reform.

"This isn't a battle that's going to be won overnight," he said. "So many people today look at Washington and know something's wrong."

Supporters at Lawson's election watch party acknowledged that it was a difficult year to run as a Republican.

Lawson fought hard for publicity throughout the campaign. Even Price's supporters were impressed.

"He definitely won the battle of the signs. He has more signs in his district than any other opponent of David's ever," said Price's wife, Lisa.

"He's still got his work cut out after tonight taking those signs down."

However, Price's experience proved key.

"He is just now hitting his stride," said Pat Spearman, the treasurer of the Price campaign.

"What a lot of people don't realize is you have to serve in Congress for a long time to be able to move legislation through successfully."

Daniel Wilkes, a 2008 UNC graduate who attended the N.C. Democratic Party election watch party, also said Price's years in Congress are a plus.

"Price has been a great representative in Congress for years. He'll be able to provide better leadership and press his progressive agenda in a Democratic Congress."

The candidates' philosophies were fundamentally different in several areas, especially interpretation of the U.S. Constitution and economic policy.

During the campaign, Lawson stressed his firm belief in interpreting the Constitution as it is writ-

ten — a belief which Price said will limit the federal government from providing essential services.

Lisa Price said Lawson's campaign was ineffective and overly negative.

"They made a lot of personal attacks on David, calling him a liar and other inappropriate ways to campaign."

Price said his priorities for his next term include executing the financial rescue plan, enacting another stimulus package and working on other important issues such as education, health care and infrastructure reform.

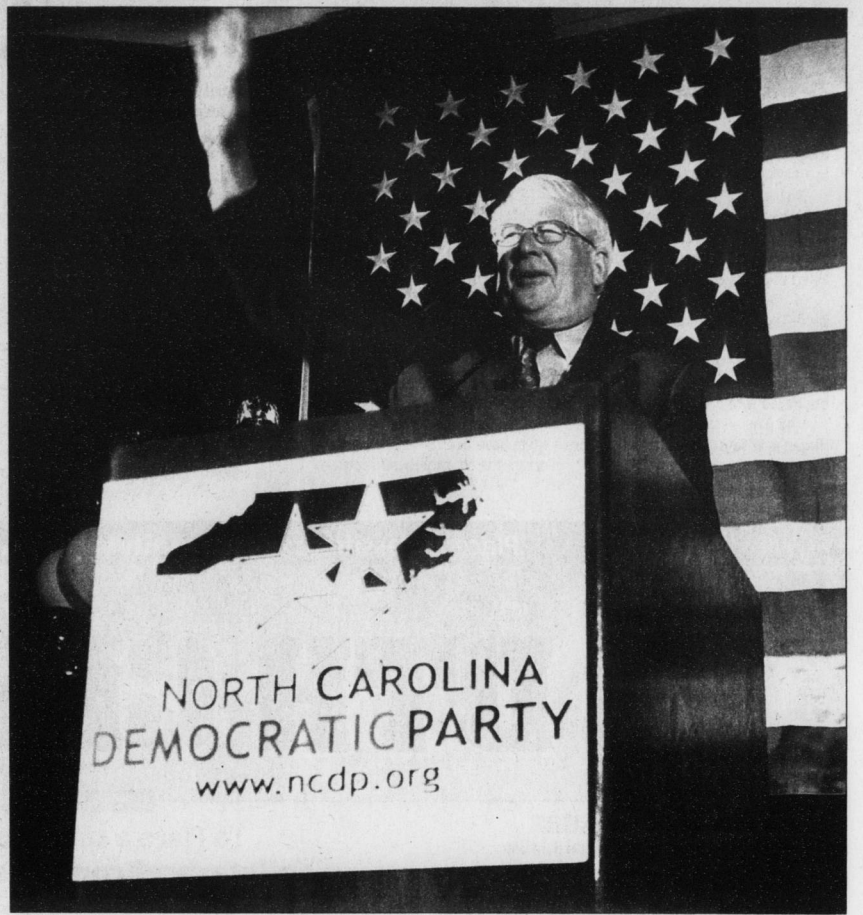
During the campaign, the two candidates presented different economic plans.

Lawson favored deregulating the banking system and opposed the recently passed \$700 billion bailout plan.

Bob Whitehurst from Wake Forest approved of Lawson's candidacy.

"I think at the very least we'll put some pressure on David Price to listen to his constituents."

Staff Writer Caroline Dye contributed reporting. Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).



U.S. Rep. David Price handily beat Republican challenger B.J. Lawson to keep his seat in Congress. "It's a nice vote of confidence," Price said shortly before 10 p.m. after the win for his 11th term was evident.

## Third parties have minimal effect

### Nader cites lack of media coverage

FROM WIRE REPORTS

WASHINGTON (MCT) — In a year that offered a stark choice between the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates, third-party candidates were left on the sidelines.

Independent Ralph Nader and Libertarian Bob Barr found themselves without the needed media coverage to make a splash.

In Massachusetts, which Nader said was his best state, he won just 0.9 percent of the vote to Democrat Barack Obama's 61.6 percent and Republican Sen. John McCain's 36.7 percent. Barr won 0.4 percent.

Nader had his moment in 2000, when his showing in Florida as the Green Party candidate effectively tipped the election to Republican George W. Bush. Democrat Al Gore lost the state — and the presidency — by 537 votes. Many Democrats tagged Nader, who drew more than 97,000 Florida votes, a "spoiler."

There were no spoilers this time.

"It would be a three-way race if I'd been in the debates," Nader said Tuesday in an interview.

If the networks and newspapers had covered him, he said, his poll numbers would have

gone up and the Commission on Presidential Debates would have had to include him.

The commission requires that candidates have a 15 percent showing in the polls to be invited.

Still, Nader doesn't think that his third presidential run was in vain.

"We documented the two-party dictatorship, we've won ballot access and we've educated a lot of people about what politics should be about," he said.

Nader was on the ballot in 45 states and the District of Columbia.

"Nobody wanted to talk about the poor, except Edwards," he said of former Democratic candidate

John Edwards of North Carolina. "No one opposed nuclear power, except us."

The Bush administration's \$700 billion Wall Street bailout gave Nader a bully pulpit.

He complained, however, that no one took up his call to fund the rescue with a one-tenth of 1 percent tax on the complex financial instruments called derivatives.

"Make them pay for their own mistakes," he said.

Nader said that his purpose now is to build a "third political force," not a party.

Libertarian N.C. gubernatorial candidate Mike Munger also ended on the sidelines in a close two-party race between Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue and Charlotte Mayor Pat McCrory.

## Democrats lay claim to broad authority

FROM WIRE REPORTS

After the presidential victory of Barack Obama, the Democrats Tuesday night were heading toward the ultimate prize for an American political party: closing in on the White House and seizing both chambers of Congress with majorities not seen in years.

If they succeed, party leaders could immediately look to claim a broad mandate.

Democratic priorities of enacting universal health care, consumer protections and sweeping environmental laws have been downplayed and often ridiculed for years, and they are eager to plunge ahead.

The danger for Democrats is that they might overreach, interpreting what is largely a public disenchantment with the Republicans as a green light to charge forward with controversial ideas, and they could quickly dissipate the power that seemed within their grasp.

"There will be a lot of pressure on ... Obama to try to fulfill some of that more liberal agenda," said Leon Panetta, who was White House chief of staff to President Clinton.

"I think that when Americans voted for change, they did not vote

for change from one extreme to the other. They voted for working together to solve problems," he added.

The apparently decisive vote, coupled with a climate favorable for change, could provide Democrats with a rare opportunity to enact a wide-ranging agenda.

Congress is anxious to flex its muscles after eight years of under President Bush, who expanded his own authority at Congress' expense.

On top of that, the crisis in the financial system has created a public climate that is friendlier to regulation and government action than at any time in the past three decades.

Democrats, for their part, argue that the times call for dramatic action.

"There is going to be a sense of urgency, not just because we won, but because two million homes are about to go into foreclosure," Rep. Phil Hare, D-Ill., said Tuesday night.

"We have to move fairly quickly. When you are losing your home and your 401(k), there is a sense of urgency on the part of the American people."

## PERDUE WINS

FROM PAGE 1

said Don Davis, in attendance at the N.C. Democratic Party celebration Tuesday night.

During the campaign, the candidates provided voters with a choice between an upheaval of the status quo and seasoned experience.

McCrory, who was re-elected as Charlotte mayor a record of seven consecutive times, billed himself as an agent of change.

McCrory frequently chastised Gov. Mike Easley's administration for its lack of transparency and highlighted corruption in the Democrat-led legislature, where Perdue presided over the Senate as lieutenant governor.

But critics used McCrory's self-proclaimed "outsider's perspective" to declare him unqualified to run the state.

Perdue campaigned on the basis of her experience, selling herself as better equipped to handle the legislature in North Carolina.

Perdue is a Raleigh veteran who was elected to the N.C. General Assembly in 1986, first as a representative then as a senator. She served until 2000, when she was elected lieutenant governor.

*"I thought (McCrory) ran a great campaign, really thought he would come through."*

CRYSTAL LASATER, GOP VOLUNTEER

Carl Wilkins, an engineer from Raleigh whose wife works for the N.C. GOP, said Tuesday night that a McCrory victory would have been a welcome change.

"He is very different from Gov. Easley," Wilkins said. "McCrory is very open, inclusive and ready to serve the people."

Perdue supporters in Raleigh on Tuesday night called attempts to tie Perdue to corruption cheap shots.

"McCrory's attempt to pin corruption on Perdue is a typical political ploy to scare and persuade voters who don't know her personally," said Raleigh supporter Elmo Vance.

Staff Writer Meghan Cooke contributed reporting. Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

## HAGAN WINS

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Salisbury rally.

In a speech that summarized her long-lasting political career, Dole said she has worked hard to serve the people of North Carolina.

"I have done my level best to make you proud," Dole said. "I've worn the mantle of my responsibility to North Carolina with deep delight."

Hagan won with about 52 percent to Dole's 44 percent, up even from Monday's polls. Libertarian Christopher Cole captured about 3 percent.

Some noted backlash from Dole's unpopular "Promises" ad accusing Hagan of accepting money from an atheist political action committee.

"The timing and misdirection were rather transparent. It went over like a lead balloon," said Greg Sanders, who canvassed for the Obama campaign.

"But that doesn't account for all of it," added Sanders' wife Laurel. "Her reputation makes up for a lot of why she's winning."

Hagan's vote percentage marked a huge jump from the summer, when she trailed by 14 percentage points.

Last spring, it seemed doubtful that Hagan, not even well-known across the whole state, could be a legitimate challenger for Dole, who had an established reputation and a long career in Washington.

Dole tried to sell herself as the candidate with the experience

and clout necessary to work in Washington, but Hagan likely benefited from a nationwide desire for change that has trickled down to the state level.

"She has the intellect, integrity and level of energy. She will make a name for herself in the Senate within the first year," said Mike Solomon of Greensboro, who worked with Hagan twice to elect former N.C. Gov. Jim Hunt.

Hagan made gains by portraying Dole as entrenched in Washington and out of touch with the state.

And the Greensboro resident's ample funding allowed her to wage an aggressive campaign that cast doubt on Dole.

"Kay ran a great race — she spoke about the economy, jobs and issues people really care about," said Dave Hoffman, spokesman for the Hagan campaign.

Hagan promised Tuesday night to bring fresh ideas to the Senate.

"To the North Carolinians who didn't vote for me, I am going to be working hard for the next six years to earn your vote," Hagan said.

"Because Democrats, Republicans or Independent, the ideas we need to create good paying jobs and turn our economy around won't have a party label."

Staff Writer Greg Smith contributed reporting from Salisbury. Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

## OBAMA WINS

FROM PAGE 1

UNC who also was at Top of the Hill, where the Young Democrats celebrated.

Despite Obama's early leads, McCain's supporters kept their hopes up for a while.

"I wish it wasn't happening," said Linda Daves, chairwoman of the N.C. Republican Party.

"We had some good moments and some sad moments tonight."

Prior to final results, she said there was still a chance North Carolina might prevail for McCain.

Some Republicans went into Election Day predicting the nationwide result because of the last several weeks' polling.

"I came into this expecting to lose," said first-year physics major Anthony Dent.

"What is shocking to me is until today McCain had a shot."

The victory caps off weeks of a steady lead on Republican opponent McCain. Before that, the candidates traded the frontrunner spot for months.

North Carolina was privy to the back-and-forth as a potential swing state. Obama made serious inroads here, but the state still was too close to call at midnight.

"It's kind of special for me to be able to vote for someone who has been a hero for the past four years then to vote in a state where my vote matters," Michael Fatum, a first-year student from Chicago who saw Obama's work in Illinois, too.

A grueling campaign may now be behind Obama, but he will have to immediately confront some monumental obstacles — a struggling economy and the war in Iraq, among others.

"We may look back on this as the most important election of our lifetimes," said U.S. Rep. David Price, D-N.C.

Obama now has to pull together a country that has been divided by almost two years of contentious campaigning.

"You fight hard and then the election happens and you come together to govern the country," said Chapel Hill Town Manager Roger Stancil, also at Top of the Hill, surrounded by students.

"That's what this country is all about."

Staff writers Rachel Glover, Kevin Kiley, Kate Sullivan, Meghan Cooke and Tarini Parti contributed reporting. Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

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