

2026 GRNC-PVF Candidate Recommendations

(Listings generally include only districts with primary races)

Candidate recommendations versus evaluations: Below are recommendations for effective voting strategies by the Grass Roots North Carolina Political Victory Fund. Candidate *recommendations*, which are more limited than blanket “endorsements,” are not made in all races, only in races where a clear pro-gun candidate stands out or where strategic voting is necessary to keep anti-gun candidates out of office. Note that in most cases, even pro-gun candidates are not included unless they have a primary election challenger.

Recommendations differ from GRNC candidate evaluations. While the evaluations are intended to provide an objective measure of where candidates stand on Second Amendment issues, GRNC–PVF recommendations are analytical and therefore subject to interpretation.

For a full listing and explanation of GRNC’s objective star evaluations, go to:

grnc.org/wp/2011/08/remember-in-november/

Important notes:

1. **Candidates who lack voting records or other history on Second Amendment issues and who fail to return GRNC’s candidate survey automatically receive a 0-star evaluation** on the assumption that they are hiding their position from gun voters. Every election year, we receive complaints about ostensibly pro-gun candidates who receive zero star evaluations due to failure to return the survey. Each candidate is mailed a survey to the address he or she registered with the State Board of Elections. **If they fail to return the survey, we cannot help candidates who will not help themselves.**
2. **GRNC-PVF candidate recommendations generally are NOT blanket endorsements.** We have analyzed roughly 250 races across the state. Unless otherwise stipulated, GRNC does not evaluate candidates on issues other than support for the Second Amendment. A GRNC-PVF recommendation does NOT reflect the candidate’s stance on other issues, and it does not reflect likelihood of winning a given race. The recommendation is merely our estimate of which candidate in a given race is most pro-gun.
3. **GRNC-PVF candidate recommendations are not given in all races.** They are given only for races in which there are clear differences between the Second Amendment stances of candidates and are generally not provided for races in which a candidate is unopposed.
4. **Candidate evaluation listings:** After each candidate’s name, his or her voting record (if applicable) or survey score is placed in parentheses along with their GRNC star evaluation (e.g. ****). “NR” indicates the candidate refused to return GRNC’s survey. Survey scores and voting records are expressed in percent (e.g. “survey: 92” is a survey score of 92%). If the candidate lacks a voting record, he or she gets a 0-star evaluation on the presumption that they are hiding their position.
5. **Recommended candidates:** Recommended candidates’ names are printed in bold, upper case font (e.g. **JOE SMITH**).
6. **Vote all races:** Although some races might appear to be unrelated to 2nd Amendment interests, you should vote against anti-2A candidates in order to stunt their political careers, regardless of the race.
7. **Improvement for 2026:** For the first time, we are including the Cook Partisan Index (for federal races) and Civitas Partisan Index (for state races). Caveat: You CANNOT decide not to vote because the partisanship of a district means a candidate will likely win (or lose). **YOU MUST VOTE ALL RACES.**

Voter deadlines and instructions:

- ☐ **Feb 6 (5 PM):** Deadline for voter registration or to update registration (e.g. for an address change). [Click here](#) for details. To check your voter registration, [click here](#). Note: If you are registered as “unaffiliated,” you may vote in either the Democrat or Republican primary election. If you miss this date, you may still register and vote on the same day using One Stop Voting described below.

- ❑ **Feb 12:** Primary election One Stop Early Voting begins. [Click here](#) for details. [Click here](#) to find your One Stop Early Voting place.
- ❑ **Feb 17 (5 PM):** Last day to submit an absentee ballot request form. [Click here](#) for information on voting by mail.
- ❑ **Feb 28 (3 PM):** In-person One Stop Early Voting ends. This is last date you can both register and vote at same time.
- ❑ **March 3, 2022 (6:30 AM – 7:30 PM): Primary Election Day:** [Click here](#) to find your polling place on Election Day.

GRNC-PVF CANDIDATE RECOMMENDATIONS

FEDERAL RACES

US SENATE (R)

Don Brown (survey: 100%, GRNC ****) is a fine candidate and might be worth a protest vote, but the only candidate that stands any chance at all of beating anti-gun former Governor Roy Cooper is Michael Whatley (survey: 100%, ****). In this seven-way race, GRNC-PVF recommends MICHAEL WHATLEY.

US HOUSE

Note: Redistricting means that US House District 1 is more competitive for Republicans, potentially giving them a pickup. But it also means that other Republican districts are not as secure. **YOU MUST VOTE ALL RACES.**

District 1 (R): In this re-districted race, the Cook Partisan Index is now R+1, giving Republicans a potential pickup. Although they are several worthy candidates to challenge Democrat incumbent Don Davis (votes: 50%, 0-star), gun voters should go with the candidate with an established pro-gun voting record and bill sponsorship, which Bobby Hanig has demonstrated in both the NC House and Senate. GRNC-PVF recommends BOBBY HANIG (survey: 98%, votes: 100%) over Laurie Buckhout (survey: 96%, ****), Eric Rouse survey 100%, ****), and Ashley-Nicole Russell (survey: NR, 0).

District 3 (R): In this R+10 district, incumbent Greg Murphy (survey: 94%, votes: 92%, ****) has no primary opponent.

District 5 (R): In this R+9 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent VIRGINIA FOXX (survey: 100%, votes: 93%, ****) over challengers Steve Girard (survey: 88%, **), Joseph (Joey) Osborne (survey: NR, 0-star), and Roman H. (Chad) Williams II (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 6 (R): In this R+9 district, incumbent Addison McDowell (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) has no primary opponent.

District 7 (R): In this R+7 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent DAVID ROUZER (votes: 93%, ****) over David Buzzard (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 8 (R): In this R+10 district, incumbent Mark Harris (survey: 98%, votes: 100%, ****) has no primary opponent.

District 9 (R): In this R+8 district, incumbent Richard Hudson (survey: 100%, votes: 93%, ****) has no primary opponent.

District 10 (R): In this R+9 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent PAT HARRIGAN (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Matthew Sin (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 11 (R): This district was diluted to R+5 in redistricting. GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent CHUCK EDWARDS (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Adam R. Smith (survey: 97%, ****).

District 12 (R): In this D+24 district, the Republican candidate will face longtime Democrat incumbent Alma Adams. GRNC-PVF recommends ADDUL ALI (survey: 96%, ****) over Jack Codiga (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 13 (R): In this R+8 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent BRAD KNOTT (survey 100%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Sid Sharma (survey: 99%, ****).

District 14: GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent TIM MOORE (survey: 93%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Kate Barr (survey: NR, 0-star). Incidentally, Barr has been caught in a video on “X” clearly saying she is not a Republican, but instead a “progressive” (read that leftist).

STATE RACES

NC JUDICIAL RACES

[Note: Because judges generally cannot answer surveys, GRNC-PVF recommendations are typically based on other factors such as interviews, or local knowledge.]

NC Supreme Court Associate Justice Seat 1(R): Sarah Stevens (survey: 75%, votes 100%, ****), formerly of the NC House, has no primary opponent and will face leftist Democrat Anita Earls.

NC Court of Appeals Seat 1 (R): GRNC-PVF recommends MICHAEL BYRNE over Matt Smith.

NC SENATE

District 01 (R): In this open seat for an R+6 district, GRNC-PVF recommends COLE JOHNSON (survey: 100%, ****) over Dave Forsythe (survey: NR, 0-star), Jay Lane (survey: NR, 0-star), and Jerry Tillett (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 9 (R): In this R+12 district, GRNC-PVF continues to recommend BRENT JACKSON (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, **** over William W. Barbour (survey: 100%, ****) due to Jackson’s perfect voting record.

District 10 (R): In this R+9 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent BENTON SAWREY (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Caitlin Marsh (survey: 83%, ***).

District 12 (R): In this R+9 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent JIM BURGIN (survey: NR, votes: 100%, bill sponsorship: 85%, **) over Tim McNeill (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 17 (R): In this D+15 district, GRNC-PVF recommends SHIRLEY JOHNSON (survey: 95%, ****) over Sarah Al-Baghadi (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 18 (R): In this D+0 tossup district, the winner stands a chance of unseating anti-gun incumbent Democrat Terrence Everitt (votes: 4%, 0). GRNC-PVF recommends CHRIS STOCK (survey: 99%, ****) over Cheryl Caulfield (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 21 (R): In this R+10 district, GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent TOM MCINNIS (survey: 96%, votes: 100%) over Ray Daly (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 26 (R): In this R+9 district, the hotly contested Republican primary is between incumbent Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger (survey: 99%, votes: 100%, bill support: 55%, ***) and Rockingham County Sheriff Sam Page (survey: 94%, ****). Berger has been problematic at times, tanking constitutional carry in the last session by saying that the Senate had passed the purchase permit repeal and therefore didn’t “need” to take up another gun bill. That said, Berger has a long history of passing pro-gun legislation through the chamber he controls, albeit on a schedule that might not suit gun

rights advocates. Page, on the other hand, is a largely unknown quantity, despite having submitted a reasonable but not exceptional 94% GRNC survey. With reservations and understanding that some may disagree, **GRNC-PVF continues to recommend PHIL BERGER.**

District 30 (R): In this R+22 district, voters face a tough choice between two pro-gun candidates, both of whom have 100% voting records and a history of sponsoring pro-gun legislation. In the interest of rewarding support for the Second Amendment by incumbents, **GRNC-PVF recommends STEVE JARVIS** (survey: 97%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over Eddie Gallimore (survey: 98%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****).

District 34 (R): In this R+2 district, recently appointed Chris Measmer (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) faces former NC House member Kevin Crutchfield (survey: 90%, votes: 100%, ****). **GRNC-PVF recommends CHRIS MEASMER.**

NC HOUSE

District 1 (R): In this R+13 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent EDWARD C. GOODWIN** (survey: 93%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over John C. Spruill (GRNC survey: 100%, ****) due to priority of voting record over survey scores.

District 4 (R): In this R+10 district, incumbent Jimmy Dixon has spoken out against constitutional carry, saying he will not vote to override Governor Josh Stein's veto. **GRNC-PVF recommends MARCELLA BARBOUR** (survey: 100%, ****) over Jimmy Dixon (survey: 100%, votes: 97%, ****).

District 6 (R): In this R+9 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent JOE PIKE** (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger W. H. (Bill) Morris (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 16 (R): In this R+18 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent CARSON SMITH** (survey: 84%, votes: 100%, bill support 100%, ****) over challenger Joshua Patti (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 17 (R): In this R+10 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent FRANK ILER** (survey: 91%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger Nia Moore (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 26 (R): In this R+4 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent DONNA MCDOWELL WHITE** (survey: 88%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger Margie Beth Riedel (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 28 (R): In this R+4 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent LARRY STRICKLAND** (survey: 99%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Eric Bowles, Sr. (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 32 (R): In this D+2 district and race for an open seat, challenger Pamela M. Ayscue (survey: NR, 0-star) is one of several phony "Republicans" – Democrats disguising themselves as Republicans to primary conservatives. **GRNC-PVF strongly recommends former NC House Rep. FRANK SASSAMON** (votes: 100%, ****).

District 35 (R): In this R+0 district, challenger Michele Joyner-Dinwiddie (survey: 96%, ****) is one of several phony "Republicans" – Democrats disguising themselves as Republicans to primary conservatives. In all likelihood, she lied on her GRNC survey to further camouflage her leftist positions. By contrast, incumbent Rep. Mike Schietzelt is an established gun rights leader. **GRNC-PVF strongly recommends MIKE SCHIETZELT** (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****).

District 43 (R): In this R+4 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent DIANE WHEATLEY** (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Clarence Goins, Jr. (survey: 96%, ****).

District 51 (R): In this R+11 seat left open by retiring John Sauls, both Charles M. Taylor (survey: 100%, ****) and Sherry Lynn Womack (survey: 100%, ****) submitted perfect 100% GRNC surveys. Based on local information, **GRNC-PVF recommends SHERRY LYNN WOMACK.**

District 53 (R): In this R+11 seat left open by retiring Mark Hollo, all three candidates submitted 4-star GRNC surveys but have no Second Amendment platform on their sites. They are Clancy Baucom (survey: 100%, ****), Richard T. Miller (survey: 96%, ****), and John Powell (survey: 99%, ****). Based solely on survey scores, **GRNC-PVF recommends CLANCY BAUCOM.**

District 65 (R): In this R+16 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent L. REECE PRYTLE JR** (survey: 97%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challengers Joseph A. Gibson III (survey: 96%, ****) and Seth Woodall (survey: 100%, ****).

District 78 (R): In this R+24 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent NEAL JACKSON** (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger Mark Dutton (survey: 100%, ****).

District 79 (R): In this R+12 district, RINO Jimmy Dixon (Duplin, Wayne), who has said he will not support the override vote on permitless carry, recruited a candidate to run against the most pro-gun member of the NC General Assembly, Keith Kidwell, who has sponsored numerous pro-gun bills including permitless carry. **GRNC-PVF STRONGLY recommends KEITH KIDWELL** (survey: 99%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger Darren Armstrong (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 80 (R): In this R+23 district, Joseph Byrne (survey: 100%, ****) seeks to unseat incumbent Sam Watford (survey 79%, votes: 76% with 100% recent, ***). Watford had a somewhat checkered past, causing GRNC-PVF to oppose him in previous races. That said, however, after a “meeting of the minds,” Watford has voted pro-gun each time it was presented. In the interest of rewarding legislators who “see the light,” **GRNC-PVF recommends SAM WATFORD.**

District 81 (R): In this R+20 district and, challenger Pamela Zanni (survey: NR, 0-star) is one of several phony “Republicans” – Democrats disguising themselves as Republicans to primary conservatives. **GRNC-PVF strongly recommends incumbent LARRY W. POTTS** (survey: 97%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****).

District 89 (R): In this R+23 district and, challenger Lisa Deaton Koperski (survey: NR, 0-star) is one of several phony “Republicans” – Democrats disguising themselves as Republicans to primary conservatives. **GRNC-PVF strongly recommends incumbent MITCH SETZER** (survey: 98%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****).

District 90 (R): In this R+26 race for the open seat left by Sarah Stevens as she runs for NC Supreme Court, **GRNC-PVF recommends PAUL BARKER** (survey: 98%, ****) over A.J. Daoud (survey: 88%, ***) and Dan Kiger (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 95 (R): In this R+13 district, **GRNC recommends incumbent RICHARD (TODD) CARVER** (votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger Mike Kubiniec (survey: 90%, ****).

District 105 (R): In this R+0 tossup district, there is a clear choice which might not be obvious. Incumbent Tricia Ann Cotham switched parties from Democrat to Republican in the last session after “walking” (not voting) on the purchase permit repeal override of then-Gov. Roy Cooper’s veto caused her to get death threats from her own “party of inclusion.” Prior to the switch, she had a 0% voting record, but has been voting pro-gun since changing parties. Challenger Kelly VanHorn (survey: NR, 0-star) is one of the phony “Republicans” – Democrats who registered as Republicans to primary incumbents. **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent TRICIA COTHAM** (votes: 71%, 0-star).

District 110 (R): In this R+14 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent KELLY E. HASTINGS** (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) over challenger Caroline Eason (survey: NR, 0-star).

District 113 (R): In this R+15 district pro-gun voters face a conundrum. Former NC House Rep. Mike Hager (survey: 95%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****) resigned his seat in 2016 but is now challenging incumbent Republican Jake Johnson (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, bill support: 100%, ****). With some regret because Hager is a good candidate, we find we must follow our reward structure for pro-gun incumbents. **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent JAKE JOHNSON.**

District 117 (R): In this R+6 district, **GRNC-PVF strongly recommends incumbent JENNIFER CAPPS BALKCOM** (survey: 100%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Christopher Lamar Wilson (survey: NR, 0-star). Wilson is one of the phony “Republicans” – Democrats who registered as Republicans to primary incumbents.

District 118 (R): In this R+9 district, **GRNC-PVF recommends incumbent MARK PLESS** (votes: 94%, ****) over challenger James M. (Jimmy) Rogers (survey: NR, 0-star). Given that Pless dropped a vote, if Rogers had chosen to return GRNC’s survey, our recommendation might have been different.

District 119 (R): In this R+3 district, **GRNC recommends incumbent MIKE CLAMPITT** (survey: 99%, votes: 100%, ****) over challenger Anna Ferguson (survey: NR, 0-star).

NC COUNTY SHERIFF

GRNC-PVF normally does not cover sheriff’s races because they are too numerous and often subject to local factors. In this case, we have a sheriff candidate who supports constitutional carry versus one who failed to answer GRNC’s survey.

Person County: **GRNC-PVF recommends challenger TOD DUNN** (survey: 100%, ****) over incumbent Jason (Skeet) Wilborn (survey: NR, 0-star).

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