

Politicizing the Judiciary

June: The Superior Court was increased from 1 judge to a panel of 3, in the hopes of different outcomes as the GOP laws were being challenged increasingly in court.

Nov: NC Supreme Court elections resulted in 3 out of 4 justices elected who did not align with conservatives.

Nov: Democrats win governorship and Supreme Court seat, tipping the balance of registered party designations to the Democrats.

Dec: #CarolinaCoup; The GOP supermajority stripped many of Governor Cooper's powers and attempted to add 2 more justices to the Supreme Court, to be appointed by outgoing Governor McCrory. Public outrage and massive media attention succeeded in ending this plan.

Sept: HB717 seeks to re-draw the judicial districts behind closed doors and without bi-partisan due process or transparency. The proposed maps show many African American judges double bunked, being forced to move or challenge each other in the next election. [The NC Bar Association opposes HB717; read their comments here.](#)

Nov: Committee for Judicial Reform & Redistricting met to discuss elimination of all judicial elections statewide, and move to legislative appointments. Because state constitution protects the election of judges by the people, this change would have to be done thru a Constitutional Amendment. This could happen as early as May 2018.

2013

June: Public financing was repealed, enabling big money from special interests into the judicial system.

2014

2014

June: NCGA passed a law requiring retention elections (simple yes or no vote) for Supreme Ct. justices with giving the governor power to appoint judges voted out. This was eventually ruled unconstitutional because our state constitution requires judges be elected by the voters, not appointed, except for vacancies.

2015

2016

2016

March: HB100 - NC became the 1st state in 100 years to add a partisan designation to the judicial ballot, even for trial judges

2017

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Mar - Aug: [Many more bills](#) taking away the power of the Governor to appoint vacancies in the courts were passed, including HB240, HB241, HB335, and HB677.

2017

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April: HB239 reduced the number of the Court of Appeals from 15 to 12 judges, to avoid the possibility of 3 future appointments by Governor Cooper due to upcoming retirements.

2017

2017

Oct: SB 656 cancels the judicial primaries, allowing anyone to run, creating a long and confusing ballot. SB 698 seeks to reduce the term of all judges to 2 years, effective Nov. 2018, instead of 4 or 8 years. This includes recently elected 8 yr Supreme Ct. Justice Mike Morgan.