



July 12, 2023

Dear Legislator:

The Election Boards Association of North Carolina will be meeting in August to elect new officers, but given the urgency of legislation moving in the General Assembly, we are reaching out to you now as the 7 incumbent executive committee members along with 25 of our state's longest serving county board members. We are an equal number of Republicans and Democrats who together have decades of practical experience in administering elections. Like you, we are committed to ensure that North Carolina voters can have confidence in the security and fairness of our elections.

We encourage each of you to contact your county elections board members and staff to hear their concerns about how legislation would affect the voting process in our state. Some of the current proposals, if implemented, may have unintended consequences that can harm rather than protect the integrity of our elections. For example, House Bill 772 would permit up to 12 partisan observers to “move freely around the voting enclosure” at any time, as well as audio or video record their conversations with poll workers, voter intake paperwork and ballot machines – without capturing images of voters or ballots. As a practical matter, that level of activity would be disruptive, impossible to supervise, and increase rather than reduce voters' concerns about secure and secret balloting.

Another provision in HB-772 says, “Any election official who restricts or denies observer access” to move around freely and record “is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.” We encourage you to contact your county election staff about the consequences of that provision for recruiting poll workers. Similarly, you may wish to talk with staff about parts of Senate Bill 747 that will significantly increase the number of provisional ballots and require substantial new funding to implement.

Finally, regardless of how the structure of county boards of elections may change under Senate Bill 749, we are committed to fulfill our oaths of office and ensure that our professional staff members administer elections according to the law. Rather than the staff director being hired by county commissioners (whose election the staff must administer), we suggest it's better for the county board of elections to hire the director we supervise – or, if we are unable to agree on a candidate within 90 days, then allow the county commission to appoint an interim director until we reach a decision.

We greatly appreciate your hard work and public service. We are also both hopeful and thankful for indications that the final budget will include significant funds to modernize SEIMS (the state's election software infrastructure) and support the technical staff who provide vital assistance to county boards across the state. Working together, we can help North Carolinians have confidence and pride in our election system.

Respectfully,

John Shallcross (R-Johnston County), President, EBA-NC

**Also signing: The 6 other incumbent EBA-NC executive board members and
25 of the longest serving members of county boards of elections**

Alan Carpenter (D-Iredell County), first appointed 1993
Alice Malesky (R-Currituck County), first appointed 2013
Allen Langley (R-Cleveland County), Executive Board Member, EBA-NC
Angela Mainor (D-Duplin County), Executive Board Member, EBA-NC
Barry Cheney (D-Catawba County), first appointed 2009
Carlton Hawkins (D-Richmond County), first appointed 2008
Chip Futrell (D-Wilson County), Executive Board Member, EBA-NC
Courtney Patterson (D-Lenoir County), Executive Board Member, EBA-NC
David Hood (R-Catawba County), first appointed 1998
Florence Armstrong (D-Edgecombe County), Executive Board Member, EBA-NC
Hal Culberson (R-Scotland County), first appointed 2008
Inetta Knight (D-Tyrrell County), first appointed 1993
Jeffrey Smith (R-Yadkin County), first appointed 2013
Jonas Buff (D-McDowell County), first appointed 2013
Juanita Colvard (D-Graham County), first appointed 2007
Kelly Shore (D-Nash County), first appointed 2011
Laurie Heise (D-Chatham County), first appointed 2007
Lucinda Minges (R-Lenoir County), first appointed 2013
Luther Potts (R-Davie County), first appointed 2003
Lynn Day (R-Wilkes County), first appointed 2013
Martha Schronce (R-Alexander), first appointed 2013
Michele Aydlett (D-Pasquotank), first appointed 1993
Nancy Sharpe (R-Alexander County), first appointed 2005
Sheena Amos (R-Gaston County), first appointed 2013
Stuart Smith (R-Brunswick County), first appointed 2003
Tim Joines (R-Wilkes County), first appointed 2013
Tommy Pharo (R-Lenoir County), Executive Board Member, EBA-NC
Vivian Branch (D-Northampton County), first appointed 2012
William Newsome (D-Martin County), first appointed 1988
Yvonne Saul (R-Caswell County), first appointed 2001
Zeda Trice (D-Craven County), first appointed 2010