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August 17, 2026

Via email

The Honorable Francis X. De Luca
Chair, North Carolina State Board of Elections
PO Box 27255
Raleigh, NC 27611-7255

Re: Early Voting Sites on University and College Campuses

Dear Chair De Luca, Members of the Board, and Executive Director Hayes:

On behalf of the Fair Elections Center, I write to urge the Board to adopt early voting plans for Guilford, Jackson, and Pasquotank counties that would retain or include early voting locations on college campuses for the November general election. These locations are critical access points for the students, faculty and staff, and surrounding residential communities of these institutions, and have been valuable additions to early voting plans in each county in previous election cycles.

Specifically, we urge the State Board to adopt the following plans for the following counties:

- **Jackson County:** We urge you to adopt the bipartisan majority plan that includes an early voting location at Western Carolina University's Health & Human Sciences Building. Western Carolina University had an on-campus early voting site in every federal primary and general election from 2016 to 2024.[1]

- **Guilford County:** We urge you to adopt the minority (alternate) plan to include sites at the UNC Greensboro Kaplan Center for Wellness and the North Carolina A&T Dudley Building. Each of these campuses had early voting locations for the 2024 general election that served nearly 14,000 voters between the two sites.[2]

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[1] Southern Coalition for Social Justice, *Early Voting Site Changes in 2026 Plan vs. 2022 General Election*, ArcGIS Online, https://scsj.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=b5b0682bcd7e4221813b7d2e9ae6780a (last visited Aug. 17, 2026).
[2] Brandon Kingdollar, *Guilford Board of Elections Declines to Adopt 2026 Early Voting Sites at NC A&T, UNC Greensboro*, NC NEWSLINE (July 21, 2026), https://ncnewsline.com/2026/07/21/guilford-board-of-elections-declines-to-adopt-2026-early-voting-sites-at-nc-at-unc-greensboro/.

- **Pasquotank:** We urge you to adopt the minority plan with an early voting site at the Kermit E. White Center at Elizabeth City State University. The Kermit E. White Graduate Center has been used as an early voting location in every federal general election since 2020.[3]

I. On-campus Locations are Accessible, Beneficial Early Voting Sites for Students, Faculty and Staff, and Surrounding Residential Communities.

On-campus early voting locations benefit a variety of voters beyond just the student body at these institutions. Though these sites have proven to increase youth early voting turnout and mitigate many of the barriers faced by student voters in casting their ballots,[4] they also provide crucial infrastructure to accommodate voters with disabilities and offer a centralized place to vote for the hundreds of faculty, staff, and nearby residents that work on or live near these college campuses.

Importantly, student voters encounter significant barriers to casting ballots in-person and off-campus that other demographics and communities do not. College-aged people are some of the least likely to own a car, and many do not have a driver's license at all—in 2023, for example, only 60% of 18-year-olds had a driver's license compared to nearly 90% of those over 35.[5] Particularly in rural parts of North Carolina without robust public transportation, lacking a driver's license or access to a car can turn voting off campus into an extraordinarily time-consuming, burdensome task. At WCU, for example, students have reported difficulty merely accessing grocery stores on a regular basis because of a lack of transportation, let alone accessing off-campus polling places.[6]

On-campus polling locations, however, do not just benefit student voters. Campus early voting locations provide a centralized place for many residents beyond the school's student body to vote—they are an easily accessible location for university faculty and staff, as well as residents that live near campus. On-campus voting sites also often provide crucial infrastructure for accommodating voters with disabilities, such as ample parking and modern ADA-compliant facilities. The benefit of on-campus voting sites is particularly important during early voting when voters may choose any early voting location in their county to cast their ballot, allowing voters with disabilities to choose a voting location that suits their needs and university faculty

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[3] S. Coal. for Soc. Just., *supra* note 1.
[4] Chris Cooper, *Why Campus Voting Sites Matter: The Case of Western Carolina University*, Substack: ANATOMY OF A PURPLE STATE (Dec. 7, 2025), https://chriscooperwcu.substack.com/p/why-campus-voting-sites-matter-the.
[5] Fed. Hwy. Admin. *Highway Statistics Series 2023*, Table DL-20, U.S. Dep't. Of Transp. (Jan. 2025), https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2023/dl20.cfm.
[6] Evie Grey Corn, *Letter: Closing WCU voting site attacks student access*, Mountain Xpress (Dec. 7, 2025), https://mountainx.com/opinion/letters/letter-closing-wcu-voting-site-attacks-student-access/.

and staff to take advantage of a location that may fit more easily into their work and personal schedules.

II. On-Campus Voting Locations Would Better Serve the Interests of the Students, Faculty and Staff, and Broader Local Community.

Jackson, Guilford, and Pasquotank counties all have proposed plans that would fail to appropriately serve the communities that study, work, and live on the college campuses at issue. We urge the Board to adopt plans that include early voting locations at Western Carolina University, UNC Greensboro, NC A&T, and Elizabeth City State University in Jackson, Guilford, and Pasquotank counties, respectively.

A. Jackson County

On December 9, 2025, the Jackson County Board of Elections adopted a majority plan for the March 3, 2026, primary that stripped WCU's campus of an early voting location that had, up until this year, been an early voting location in every federal primary and general election in both midterm and presidential election cycles alike since its initial adoption in 2016.[7] While a bipartisan majority of the Jackson County Board of Elections agreed that a site should be restored to WCU's campus, the minority plan—endorsed by just one member of the Jackson County Board of Elections[8]—proposes to cut the WCU site for the second election in a row.

The alternative site proposed in the minority plan is an extraordinarily inaccessible location for student voters that is a nearly 1.5 mile walk from campus along a busy highway with no sidewalks or crosswalks. This kind of location can turn voting for campus community members who lack access to a car or public transportation into an incredibly arduous, even dangerous task. Importantly, the 11,000 undergraduate and graduate students, as well as the hundreds of faculty and staff, make up over a quarter of Jackson County's population. While it is certainly true that not all these individuals are North Carolina or Jackson County voters, removing this early voting site makes early voting substantially less accessible for what is likely the single largest voting-eligible population center in the county.

Additionally, the WCU site has proven to be a valuable, highly used early voting site. Across primary and general elections since 2016, it has served on average 8,417 voters, with an average age of 32 years old among the voters served.[9] Approving this site would restore consistency in early voting site locations across election cycles and would protect an important, accessible

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[7] S. Coal. for Soc. Just., *supra* note 1.
[8] Lynn Bonner, *NC Auditor's Office Liaison Invoked State GOP Wishes in Some County Early Voting Plans*, NC NEWSLINE (Aug. 13, 2026), https://ncnewsline.com/2026/08/13/nc-auditors-office-liaison-invoked-state-gop-wishes-in-some-county-early-voting-plans/.
[9] Cooper*, supra* note 4.

voting location for the students, faculty and staff, and surrounding residential communities of Jackson County.

B. Guilford County

On July 21, 2026, the Guilford County Board of Elections majority refused numerous calls from their community for the second election in a row to host early voting sites at North Carolina A&T University and UNC-Greensboro.[10] These schools combined serve 34,000 students, as well as hundreds of faculty and staff. Though the majority plan included a site at 124 E Gate City Blvd., Greensboro, NC 27406, that location is still a mile-and-a-half walk from NC A&T's campus and anywhere between an 18-30 minute commute each way on public transportation depending on a student's class, study, or extracurricular schedule.

Sites on each of these campuses would not be without precedent—both UNC Greensboro and North Carolina A&T had early voting locations during the 2024 Presidential election. These voting locations served 6,800 and 6,487 voters respectively, making them the 16th and 17th most-used site out of 28 early voting sites in Guilford County during that election cycle.[11] Approving voting locations at these institutions will better serve the campus and surrounding communities, making voting more accessible for thousands of Guilford County voters.

C. Pasquotank County

The majority plan from the Pasquotank County Board of Elections would get rid of the early voting site at Elizabeth City State University that Pasquotank voters have used in general elections in 2020, 2022, and 2024,[12] instead moving the county's only early voting site to the County BOE office building. Importantly, the small county board of elections office is currently being renovated, with no guarantee that the renovations to the building or parking lot will be completed prior to election day this November.[13] We urge the State Board to consider all factors when finalizing early voting plans for Pasquotank County, including accessibility for voters with disabilities, space for needed elections infrastructure in the polling location, sufficient parking to serve voters and administer curbside voting, and continuity of previous general election early voting locations. Based on those factors, the Kermit E. White Graduate Center is a preferrable voting site for Pasquotank voters.

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[10] Kingdollar, *supra* note 2.
[11] *Id*.
[12] S. Coal. for Soc. Just., *supra* note 1.
[13] J. Sailor Jones, Editorial, *Bolick's Contentious Elections Boards Make Proposed Rules Less Democratic*, NC NEWSLINE (July 24, 2026), https://ncnewsline.com/2026/07/24/bolieks-contentious-elections-boards-make-proposed-rules-less-democratic/.

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We urge the State Board of Elections to protect and expand on-campus early voting opportunities in Jackson, Guilford, and Pasquotank Counties. These early voting sites are critical access points for large swaths of the communities they serve, and they have been valuable additions to previous early voting plans in each of these counties. For additional information on this issue, please contact Patrick Williamson, Counsel at Fair Elections Center, at pwilliamson@fairelectionscenter.org.

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