



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on November 7, 2012

N.C. Win Gives GOP 30 Governors

While Democrats won the war for the White House, Republicans claimed victory in the battles for the State Houses in Tuesday's elections. Former Charlotte Mayor Pat McGrory's win over Lieutenant Governor Walter Dalton in North Carolina will give the GOP the governorships of at least 30 of the 50 states.

"That's the highest number of governorships held by either party in 12 years, and 2013 will mark just the 10th year since the end of the Great Depression that the GOP has held 30 or more governor's offices," the Republican Governors Association (RGA) said in a post-election statement. The GOP held 29 of the governorships going into this year's elections. "There's no doubt that the Republican Party's strength comes from the states, and the RGA's ability to expand our majority provides optimism for the future," said Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, chairman of the RGA.

McGrory, who captured nearly 55 percent of the vote, will become the first Republican governor in the Tar Heel State in 20 years and the first in modern history to enter the office with a Republican-led General Assembly, the *Charlotte (N.C.) Observer* [reported](#). His victory strengthens the GOP's near-total control of governorships in the South, leaving Arkansas as the only Southern state with a Democratic governor. The former Charlotte mayor lost in a close election to current Gov. Bev Perdue four years ago. Perdue, who suggested in a Rotary Club [speech](#) last year that the 2012 congressional elections should be cancelled, chose to cancel her own opportunity to seek a second term, deciding at the end of last year she would not seek reelection. North Carolina Democrats were also plagued by a scandal late last year over allegations that the party's former executive director had sexually harassed a staff member.

The GOP failed to make gains elsewhere, however, as both parties managed to either reelect incumbents or hold onto governors' chairs in states where the incumbents are retiring. In the former Republican stronghold of New Hampshire, Democrats won the corner office for the eighth time in the last nine elections, as former state Senate Majority Leader Maggie Hassan won by a wide margin over Manchester attorney and former state School Board Chairman Ovide Lamontagne. With 59 percent of the vote counted, Hassan held a 55 to 42 percent lead over her Republican opponent, the *New Hampshire Union Leader* [reported](#).

Hassan will succeed John Lynch, the Democratic governor who won four two-year terms and chose not to run again this year. Hassan will be the state's second woman governor, following Jeanne Shaheen,





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who served three terms (1997-2003) as the state's chief executive and is now the state's senior U.S. senator. Democrats also won both U.S. House seats in the Granite State with former Rep. Carol Shea-Porter winning the First District seat back from former Manchester Mayor Frank Guinta, while in the Second District Ann McLane Kuster defeated seven-term Congressman Charles Bass, the son of a former congressman and grandson of a New Hampshire governor. The win gives the Democrats three of New Hampshire's four congressional seats, with junior U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte the only Republican member of the state's congressional delegation. New Hampshire's will also be the first all-female congressional delegation from any state.

In the battle to succeed retiring Democratic Governor Christine Gregoire in the state of Washington, Republicans hoped to elect a GOP governor for the first tie in 30 years. With roughly 60 percent of the vote counted, however, Democratic Congressman Jay Inslee held a narrow lead over Attorney General Rob McKenna in a race still undecided this morning. Washington voting is done exclusively by mail and the outcome may not be known for several days, Reuters [reported](#). Also undetermined this morning was the contest in Montana. In the fight to succeed to two-term Democratic Governor Brian Schweitzer, Attorney General Steve Bullock, a Democrat, led Republican Rick Hill, a former congressman, in the early returns.

Republicans held onto the governor's office in Indiana, where GOP Congressman Mike Pence defeated Democrat John Gregg to take the seat being vacated by term-limited Mitch Daniels. Incumbent Democratic governors held off Republican challengers in Missouri, West Virginia, Vermont, and Delaware. Republican governors won reelection in North Dakota and Utah.

With President Obama reelected, Republicans holding on to their majority in the U.S. House and Democrats keeping control of the Senate, all of the time, energy, and billions of dollars spent on the 2012 campaigns appeared to change very little in Washington and in the state houses around the country. With the pickup of at least one state, however, the Republican governors were determined to make the most of the modest gain.

"In the states, Republican governors are providing the type of results-oriented leadership that is absent in Washington, D.C.," chairman McDonnell said in the RGA statement. "They've eliminated massive budget deficits while reducing the tax burden, reformed entitlements and long-term fiscal liabilities and enacted the most comprehensive education reforms in a generation."

Photo: Governor-elect Pat McGrory and the North Carolina Executive Mansion



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