

NORTH CAROLINA

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SECRETARY OF STATE

A Message from the North Carolina Secretary of State

For over a century, the *North Carolina Manual* has served as a thorough historical reference source for North Carolina state government and politics. In fact, I cannot think of another source for these topics as comprehensive as this one.

Americans in general and North Carolinians in particular have always emphasized the importance of an informed citizenry in maintaining the health of our democracy. The *North Carolina Manual* informs us about what our government does and who has made the decisions that affect us. The Manual helps the state's various executive branch agencies, universities and colleges and other institutions educate the people of North Carolina about their respective missions. In turn, I think, the Manual reminds us that state government — and the political process — is not some faceless machine, but a human creation that functions only as well as the wisdom and sound judgment of the people who lead it.

The *North Carolina Manual* also helps put a face on North Carolina itself for the many people outside our state who may wonder what kind of place North Carolina is and what its residents are like. Our state, as all of us know, enjoys a combination of scenic beauty, diversity of natural resources and quality of living that is unmatched by any other state in the United States. It is also a place where people accomplish great things without undue or excessive public pride or boastfulness. North Carolina's

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greatest resource throughout its four centuries of existence has been its people. Our state has provided more than its fair share of regional and national leaders in politics, journalism, science, technology, business, industry, national defense, education and the arts. Our state, in many respects, is a very humble, unpretentious giant.

If this edition of the North Carolina Manual is your first exposure to our state, I would like to thank you for taking an interest in North Carolina. As any of our residents can tell you, it is an interest that will repay you many times over. Enjoy!

Elaine F. Marshall

Elaine F. Marshall
N.C. Secretary of State

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