

Brandon Gray

Media Report

Draft

May 16, 2022

Part I Introduction

This report reviews electronically available news stories on Brandon Gray, candidate for the NC House.

The Table of Contents in **Part II** of the report is a useful guide to the entire report and can be used as a stand-alone summary. In one section, it surveys the bulk of the news file, through the headlines we have assigned to each item.

Part III, the **Greatest Hits** section, identifies key points taken from available media articles.

Parts IV, **The News File**, contain edited copies of the most relevant electronically available stories.

We hope you find this useful.

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Part III Gray: Greatest Hits from Media Review

Overview

Gray is now 27 years old and started as a total newcomer to the political scene. Consequently there is very little media information available about him. Per his campaign website, he is an openly gay man trying to run in a red district, and is only a recent graduate of a community college.

- I'm Brandon, an unbought, unbossed, openly-gay man running in a red district breaking all the rules and barriers. I was born and raised in Guilford County. I have lived in this district my whole life, and call Oak Ridge my home. I attended Guilford County Public Schools, and graduated College from GTCC where I studied Political Science.
- I have been active in Politics since 2015. Being a 25 year old I bring a different perspective to the table. What we have now isn't working. We need someone who will actually work for their constituents, not special interest groups. I have been standing up to bullies my whole life, and now I'm ready to stand up to the ones in Raleigh. I am a fighter. I am fighting for progress, and for the people within my district. I was raised to always give back no matter how little we had, and to help in anyway I could.
- So, I am running for North Carolina House because that is how I believe I can best help our community. I am running because I know what is at stake in November. I am running for our future. We need to have a leader who is fighting for the people, and fighting for progress. No more fighting for special interest groups. (Campaign Website)

He went out of his way twice to travel to try and hear speeches by Jimmy Carter.

- "It's cool to spend Presidents Day with a president," said Brandon Gray, 23, of North Carolina. "There's not many people that could say that." He'd already had one near miss. Gray and his friend, Michael Holbrook, 19, had driven to Plains from Greensboro, N.C., in the wee hours of Sunday morning. They'd headed straight to Maranatha Baptist Church, where the former president had been scheduled to teach Sunday School. Hundreds of visitors regularly pack the small church for Carter's classes, especially now that he's announced he intends to start cutting back on his teaching schedule.
- But when the North Carolina duo pulled into the Maranatha parking lot around 5:45 a.m., "No one else was there," Holbrook laughingly recalled. "We were like u-h-h-h ..."
- Carter had canceled teaching to be with his wife, although he later made it to Maranatha in time to attend the 11 a.m. church service and take photos with visitors afterward. Gray and Holbrook were gone by then, but took no chances on Monday: They were first through the doors to claim seats in the front row of the auditorium. (AJC, 2/20/18)

Issues

In declaring his 2020 candidacy, all he offered was a declaration that John Faircloth was “out of touch” and that he could bring out the youth vote, and that he had “connections”.

- Gray, a 24-year-old student preparing to graduate from Guilford Technical Community College, is making his first bid for elected office. He told The High Point Enterprise that he wants to bring a fresh perspective to the State Legislative Building in Raleigh. “I would add that I am thankful for Rep. Faircloth’s service to our state in the N.C. House and for being a police officer. However, I have disagreements with him on policy,” Gray said.
- He argues that Faircloth has lost touch with his constituents. “We deserve a representative who represents everyone and who will actually listen to people’s concerns and take them seriously,” Gray said.....
- Gray said he has family connections across the northwestern part of the county where he lives, but also has a network of relatives and friends in High Point. If elected, Gray would become one of the youngest ever to gain a state legislative seat. Gray said he intends to tap into younger voters during next year’s campaign. “I think it’s an advantage to me because it’s going to get a lot of young people out,” Gray told The Enterprise. “I think it’s time for a new generation of leadership.” (High Point Enterprise, 12/6/19)

In a web interview, he declares Hilary Clinton to be his “political hero” and was backing Elizabeth Warren at the time for President (October 2019).

- What is the biggest issue facing your community and how do you propose helping?
 - **The biggest issue I believe facing my community is lack of healthcare. I myself have experienced going without insurance for years because of the high costs. In our district we have people dying because they are going without medical care. If we expanded medicaid this would allow 30,000 people in our county to get coverage. I will vote to expand medicaid when I’m elected.**
- How do we fix the partisan divide in our country and start working together again?
 - This is one of the things I’m running on. We have to put the people in our district over our party and special interest groups. We need leaders willing to work together for the good of the people.
- Who is your hero?
 - Political Hero: Hillary Clinton.

- Favorite 2020 Presidential Candidate?
 - Elizabeth Warren.
(<https://demcastusa.com/2019/10/09/meet-the-candidate-brandon-gray-north-carolina/>)

In his 2022 campaign website, he only offers these generic comments.

- Healthcare
 - The policy we have seen on closing our healthcare gaps has not met its intended purpose. We have to get back to putting people first in our healthcare systems, not the insurance companies. That means reducing wait times, keeping rural hospitals open, and providing quality, affordable care to everyone who needs it.
- Schools
 - North Carolina schools have fallen behind and it's time we invest back into our school systems. The fact is our courts have ruled that education in North Carolina is no longer providing a basic education that is outlined in the constitution. We can fix this by properly funding our community schools and making sure that parents, community leaders, teachers, and administrators all work together to make our schools safe—mentally and physically for all.
- Economy
 - Cost of living has plagued our daily lives and the COVID 19 pandemic only highlighted our economic shortfalls. When looking at our newest economic ventures to uplift our middle class and small business owners, NC will need to focus on renewable energy, raising the minimum wage to a living wage, building affordable housing, and forcing corporations to pay their fair share in taxes. (<https://www.brandongraync.com/about-3>)

Profession?

It's not clear just what Gray actually does. His 2022 campaign website only says this:

- I'm Brandon Gray, a 27-year-old from Oak Ridge, NC ready to bring a new perspective to the General Assembly! I'm a small business owner, activist, First Vice-Chair of the GCDP, SEC member, and I ran for NC House in 2020. (<https://www.brandongraync.com/about-brandon>)

Exactly what his “small business” is, isn't specified in his ZOOM entry which just lists his campaign website.

- INDUSTRY-TYPE: Organizations General
CROSS-REFERENCE:
www.brandongraync.com
brandongraync.com
- Brandon Gray
brandongraync.com
Brandon

Campaigns

- His 2020 campaign saw him lose by 15 points to incumbent Joe Faircloth. There was no local coverage of the race in any depth whatsoever. (High Point Enterprise, 11/4/20)
- In 2022 he filed to run again for the seat. (High Point Enterprise, 3/1/22)

Part IV Gray: The News File, 2018-22

2018

FEB 2018 Drives to Georgia to See Jimmy Carter Speech

Jimmy Carter said Monday he was “deathly afraid” during what he described as the “very serious” operation his wife underwent this past weekend.

Rosalynn Carter, 90, had surgery at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta to remove “troubling scar tissue” from a portion of her small intestine, according to a statement the Carter Center released on Sunday. On Monday morning, her husband of 71 years described in greater detail the condition that resulted from what he said was a tumor removal she underwent half a century ago.

”For the last 25 years, she has had trouble with her intestines and bowels,” Jimmy Carter, 93, told several hundred people attending a free Presidents Day event at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains. “Saturday night they operated and found the scar tissue from the old operation about 50 years ago had strangled almost 2 feet of her small intestine.”

The surgery went well, but the former president endured some rocky hours along the way himself.

Doctors “didn’t give me a lot of hope before the operation was over,” Carter said. “I was deathly afraid. I prayed for three hours.

”Finally, the doctor came in about 5 o’clock on Sunday morning and told me she was gonna be OK,” Carter concluded as the crowd burst into applause.

While this was the fourth consecutive year that Carter had appeared at the Presidents Day event held in the old Plains high school, it was also “the first time my wife has not been here,” he pointed out. And indeed, the former first lady of Georgia and the United States was much in visitors’ thoughts.

”How is Rosalynn?” Nancy Clark of Nevada City, California, wondered aloud to several people as she waited with dozens of others for the doors to open to the auditorium an hour before the program’s scheduled 11 a.m. start.

True to form, ex-Navy officer Jimmy Carter strode in six minutes early, at 10:54 a.m., and lost no time in answering the question that was on everyone’s mind. Then, he spent close to an hour sharing his thoughts on three topics he said he’d been asked to discuss this Presidents Day: The vision for the Department of Education when it was created during his one term as president; reflections on the women’s movement and the status of women; and how the role of the president has been affected by technological advancement in information dissemination such as social media.

”I can’t wait to hear what he thinks of social media,” Cindy Hollingsworth chuckled knowingly beforehand. Along with her husband, Bill, and a 12-year-old family friend, she’d driven all the way from

Rock Springs, near the Tennessee border, to spend Presidents Day with the man whose hand she'd shaken as a youngster in 1976 when he was newly elected to the presidency. "That alone will be worth the drive."

Carter didn't disappoint on that count, although he may have surprised anyone who expected him to kick social media when it's down these days.

"I know that recently there's been a lot of abuse by social media, but I have to say it's opened up an unprecedented avenue between U.S. citizens and citizens around the world," said Carter, whose Carter Center fights disease and poverty in some of the most remote parts of the world. "When I go places, everyone I meet has a cellphone and can communicate and stay in touch."

For many in the audience, meanwhile, tiny Plains was the best -- if not the only -- place they could imagine being on this very American holiday weekend.

"It's cool to spend Presidents Day with a president," said Brandon Gray, 23, of North Carolina. "There's not many people that could say that."

He'd already had one near miss. Gray and his friend, Michael Holbrook, 19, had driven to Plains from Greensboro, N.C., in the wee hours of Sunday morning. They'd headed straight to Maranatha Baptist Church, where the former president had been scheduled to teach Sunday School. Hundreds of visitors regularly pack the small church for Carter's classes, especially now that he's announced he intends to start cutting back on his teaching schedule.

But when the North Carolina duo pulled into the Maranatha parking lot around 5:45 a.m., "No one else was there," Holbrook laughingly recalled. "We were like u-h-h-h ..."

Carter had canceled teaching to be with his wife, although he later made it to Maranatha in time to attend the 11 a.m. church service and take photos with visitors afterward. Gray and Holbrook were gone by then, but took no chances on Monday: They were first through the doors to claim seats in the front row of the auditorium.

In response to one question -- "What is cooler, winning the presidency or winning the Nobel Peace Prize?" -- Carter basically said both made him very happy.

But he wasn't done counting his blessings yet.

"The only other time I remember when I was that happy," he said, "is when the doctor came in Sunday morning and told me that my wife was alive." (Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2/20/18)

2019

OCT 2019 Interview on Running for State House

What office are you running for?

North Carolina House District 62

With which party are you running for office?

Democratic Party

Election Date

November 3, 2020

Why are you running for office?

I'm running for office because I believe this is the best way I can help my community.

What is the biggest issue facing your community and how do you propose helping?

The biggest issue I believe facing my community is lack of healthcare. I myself have experienced going without insurance for years because of the high costs. In our district we have people dying because they are going without medical care. If we expanded medicaid this would allow 30,000 people in our county to get coverage. I will vote to expand medicaid when I'm elected.

How do we fix the partisan divide in our country and start working together again?

This is one of the things I'm running on. We have to put the people in our district over our party and special interest groups. We need leaders willing to work together for the good of the people.

Who is your hero?

Personal Hero: My Grammy. Political Hero: Hillary Clinton.

What are your hobbies?

My hobbies are trying new food places, going to used book stores/reading, listening to music, seeing different politicians in person.

What is the most recent book you read?

'This Fight is our Fight' by Elizabeth Warren.

Do you have any kids/pets/talking houseplants?

My house is kind of a zoo, we have 4 dogs, 2 cats, 1 mini pig, and a turtle.

How can our readers get involved in your campaign?

This is a grassroots campaign so we need all the help we can get, they can volunteer to knock doors, make phone calls, write post cards, share our campaign on social media by posting and following us, or donating money to our campaign. I'm grateful for any support I get.

What question do you wish we'd asked, and what is your answer?

Q: Favorite 2020 Presidential Candidate?

A: Elizabeth Warren.

(<https://demcastusa.com/2019/10/09/meet-the-candidate-brandon-gray-north-carolina/>)

DEC 2019 Files For House Race

A Democratic challenger has filed to run against state Rep. John Faircloth, R-Guilford, in a House district covering parts of High Point.

Brandon Gray of Oak Ridge filed this week to take on Faircloth in the 62nd State House District. Faircloth filed to seek his sixth term on the opening day of candidate filing this past Monday.

Gray, a 24-year-old student preparing to graduate from Guilford Technical Community College, is making his first bid for elected office. He told The High Point Enterprise that he wants to bring a fresh perspective to the State Legislative Building in Raleigh.

"I would add that I am thankful for Rep. Faircloth's service to our state in the N.C. House and for being a police officer. However, I have disagreements with him on policy," Gray said.

He argues that Faircloth has lost touch with his constituents.

"We deserve a representative who represents everyone and who will actually listen to people's concerns and take them seriously," Gray said.

Faircloth is a co-chairman of the powerful House Appropriations Committee and serves as part of the Republican leadership in the N.C. General Assembly. He's worked to secure state money for local requests such as the High Point Market and the new plaza at the High Point Public Library.

Faircloth told The Enterprise earlier this week that he's seeking another term to address ongoing issues such as the needs of the city and Guilford County and criminal justice and law enforcement. He's a retired chief of the High Point Police Department and former city councilman.

The 62nd State House District covers parts of High Point, Greensboro and northern and western Guilford County.

Gray said he has family connections across the northwestern part of the county where he lives, but also has a network of relatives and friends in High Point.

If elected, Gray would become one of the youngest ever to gain a state legislative seat. Gray said he intends to tap into younger voters during next year's campaign.

"I think it's an advantage to me because it's going to get a lot of young people out," Gray told The Enterprise. "I think it's time for a new generation of leadership." (High Point Enterprise, 12/6/19)

DEC 2019 Address

John Faircloth (R), High Point (i)

Brandon Gray (D), 6705 Brookbank Road, Oak Ridge (Greensboro News and Record, 12/22/19)

2020**NOV 2020 Loses By Fifteen Points**

In the 62nd House District, longtime state Rep. John Faircloth, R-Guilford, of High Point defeated Democratic challenger Brandon Gray. With partial returns reporting, Faircloth had 25,852 votes, or 55.5%, to Gray's 20,563, or 45.5%.

Faircloth told The Enterprise that he attributes his victory to his attention to his constituents and the cities and towns in Guilford County.

"I've been able to do a lot for the county," said Faircloth, a co-chairman of the powerful House Appropriations Committee. "It's a matter that we've got good credibility and business backing from the folks at home."

The district covers parts of High Point and northwestern Guilford County. (High Point Enterprise, 11/4/20)

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Precincts reported: 29 of 30

» John Faircloth (R) (i) 57.3

Brandon Gray (D) 42.7 (Greensboro News and Record, 11/4/20)

2022

MAR 2022 **Running Again**

Democratic challenger Brandon Gray of Oak Ridge filed last Friday for the 62nd House District, a seat held by Republican John Faircloth of High Point. Faircloth, who filed in December, defeated Gray in 2020 in the district covering western and northern Guilford County. (High Point Enterprise, 3/1/22)

MAR 2022 **ZOOM Entry**

Brandon Gray

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United States

Communications

Website: www.brandongraync.com

Company Information

INDUSTRY-TYPE: Organizations General

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Market And Industry

SIC Codes:

86

865

