

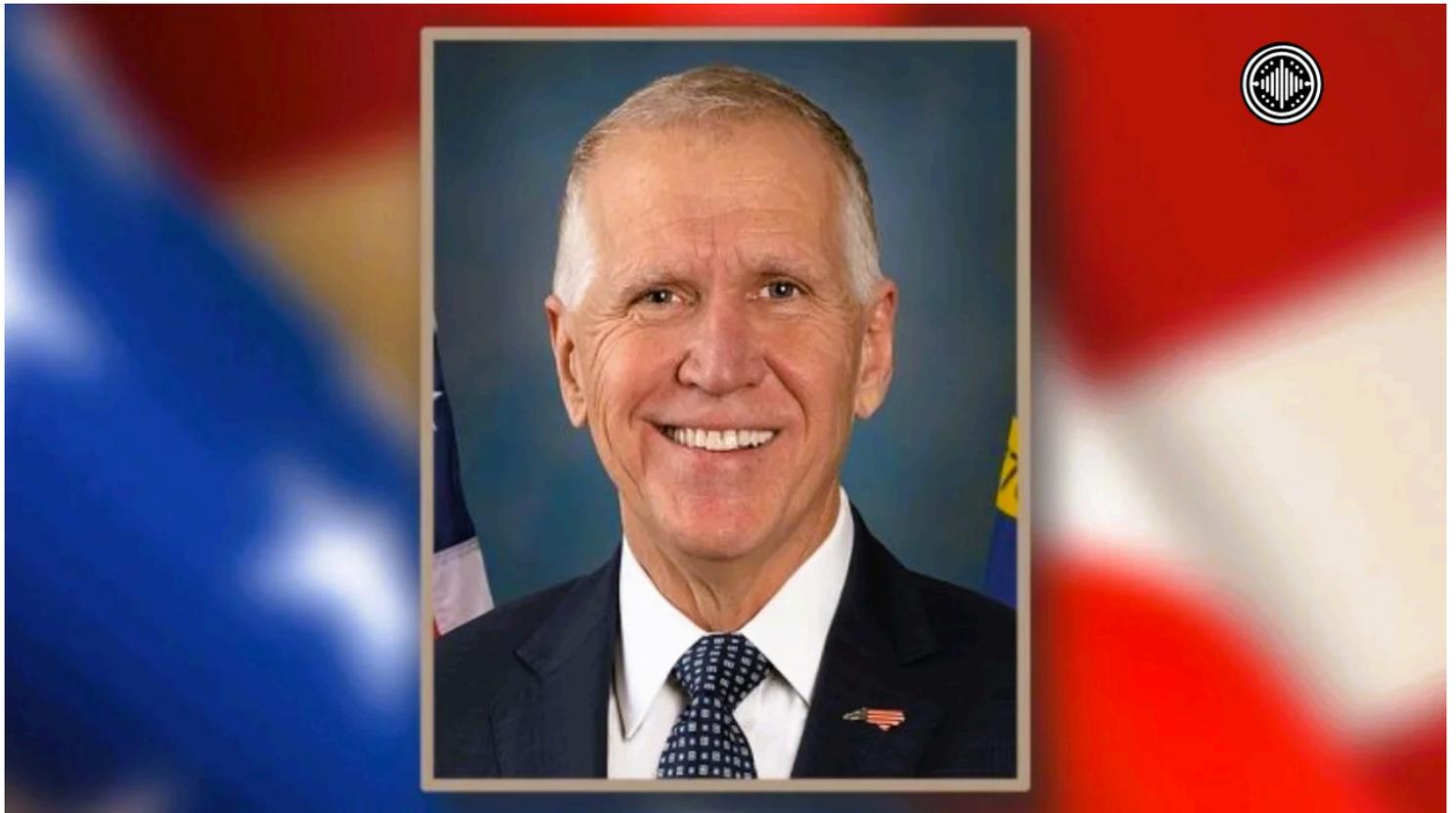
OpenVoiceNews U.S.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Thom Tillis Steps Away Closing a Defining Chapter in North Carolina Politics

June 30, 2025

– Categories: Politics & Government



RALEIGH, N.C. – U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis, a leading Republican voice from North Carolina, announced Sunday he will not run for a third term in 2026. His decision ends a long political career marked by both loyalty to his party and moments of independence.

“It is time to pass the torch,” Tillis, 64, said in a statement. “Serving the people of North Carolina has been the honor of my life.”

His announcement came just a day after he criticized former President Donald Trump's immigration proposals, highlighting a history of sometimes clashing with party leaders. While Tillis supported Trump's tax cuts and most of his policies, he occasionally took a different path. In 2019, he opposed Trump's emergency declaration to fund the border wall, arguing it violated the role of Congress. That decision angered some Republicans and nearly cost him reelection in 2020, but he managed to hold his seat.

Tillis began his political career after working in business. He was first elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives in 2006. By 2011, he had risen to speaker of the House, leading major conservative reforms in taxes, regulations, and education.

In 2014, he defeated Democratic Sen. Kay Hagan and moved to Washington. There, he became known as a practical lawmaker who could work across the aisle on issues like veterans' health care and immigration while still supporting conservative priorities.

Though many expected him to run again, rumors of retirement grew in recent months. His decision now sets up a competitive race for the open seat. Republicans will likely face a crowded primary, and Democrats see a rare chance to win a Senate seat in a state that has leaned Republican.

Photos from Tillis's time in office show the many sides of his career, from greeting voters at small-town events to leading hearings in the U.S. Senate. They tell the story of a politician who was willing to take risks, even if it meant facing criticism from his own party.

As Sen. Tillis prepares to leave public life, he leaves behind a complex legacy of conservative leadership and independent thinking that will shape North Carolina politics for years to come.