

[Elect 2012: Watt files for re-election in 12th Congressional District](#) (Salisbury Post – February 21, 2012)

By Mark Wineka

U.S. Rep. Mel Watt, D-N.C., filed Monday for re-election in North Carolina's 12th Congressional District.

"The residents of the 12th District know that I will fight for them in challenging times and in good times and that I will work with anyone who will work with me to help make their lives better," Watt said in a statement. He said in the current challenging economy, "it is especially important to have elected officials who have experience and a proven track record of getting results for citizens who want better education and skills, health care, jobs and real prospects for a better future." Watt was first elected in 1992 and is seeking his 11th consecutive term. With redistricting, the 12th District's lines have been adjusted somewhat, but it still extends from Mecklenburg to Guilford counties, generally along the Interstate 85 corridor. It also extends northwest to pick up parts of Forsyth County. In all, the 12th District includes parts of Rowan, Mecklenburg, Guilford, Forsyth, Cabarrus and Davidson counties. As the 12th District is redrawn, 42,641 people in Rowan County live in the 12th, or 30.8 percent of the county's population. Rowan represents 5.8 percent of the 12th District's total population, while Mecklenburg and Guilford counties combine for more than 75 percent. The 12th District remains what is called a "majority-minority district" in which blacks make up 50.54 percent of the total population and where Democrats have a 64 percent registration advantage over a 16 percent Republican registration. Watt noted in his press statement that the congressional districts as drawn up by the Republican-controlled General Assembly are being challenged in court. "This has already led some experienced members of our congressional delegation to announce that they will not seek re-election," Watt said. "We need experience and seniority to maintain the influence of our delegation, and we need representatives who will continue to work for progress, not return to the same old rhetoric and policies that led to the mess we're trying to dig our country out of." The new congressional district lines divide Rowan County among three congressional districts — the 5th, 8th and 12th. Watt, 65, has served on the House Judiciary Committee and House Financial Services Committee since 1993. He is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Intellectual Property, Competition and the Internet. He also is on the Subcommittee on Courts, Commercial and Administrative Law; the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit; and the Subcommittee on Insurance, Housing and Community Opportunity. Watt served a term in the N.C. Senate (1985-86) and was manager for Harvey Gantt's campaigns for Charlotte City Council, Charlotte mayor and the U.S. Senate. He has honorary degrees from N.C. A&T University, Johnson C. Smith University, Bennett College and Fisk University.