

2022 North Carolina Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Cheri Beasley

District: U.S. Senate

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Current Occupation: N/A

1. What are your views on the needs of young children (prenatal to age 5) and what specific steps would you take to address these needs?

As I travel the state, I talk to families who are working so hard to make sure their children have a better future than they did. They're struggling to afford child care, housing, and healthcare – and are working two to three jobs to put food on the table. Our families deserve jobs that let us take care of our families, health care we can afford, and affordable child care and schools where our kids can thrive. In the Senate, I would invest in affordable early child care. I would make the expanded Child Tax Credit permanent. And I would implement paid family leave, like I did for court employees as Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court.

2. What steps would you take to ensure that children birth to age five have access to high-quality and affordable early learning programs?

In North Carolina, the average cost of child care is more than in-state college tuition – that can't continue. I have heard from parents all across our state who are struggling with unaffordable child care and child care deserts. Folks are taking their babies to work with them or staying at home entirely because child care is just too expensive or hard to find. Child care workers are critically underpaid, leading to perpetual staff shortages and turnover. In the Senate, I will fight for education funding from cradle to career for all our kids. The Senate must invest to expand child care facilities, support child care workers, and ensure that families can afford care.

3. What steps would you take to stabilize and sustain North Carolina's early education system and child care workforce as we approach the end of the federal child care relief funding?

As a U.S. Senator, I pledge to stand up for our babies and young children by championing investments in early childhood education. These investments must address the critical shortage of child care workers and failures in the child care market. The average child care worker in North Carolina makes under \$12 an hour. Nationally, child care workers are twice as likely to live in poverty as other working families. They deserve more. We must recruit and retain skilled child care workers and ensure they are paid fairly and encouraged to stay in the field. This should include federal investments to raise the wages of child care workers and reforms to help more North Carolinians gain the skills needed to enter the early childhood education field.