

2024 North Carolina State Office Candidate Questionnaire

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District or Office: NC House 82

Party Affiliation: Republican

Current Occupation: Advisor

Questions for 2024 Candidates for State Office in North Carolina

1. The most rapid period of brain development happens in the first five years of life, laying the foundation for all future learning, health, and success in school and life. What are your views on the needs of young children (prenatal to age 5) and what steps would you take to address these needs?

More than anything they need the love of their families. By allowing families to keep more of the money they earn, they will be able to choose the best avenues of development during those foundational years. By funding the opportunity scholarship, parents will be able to direct their school aged children to the educational opportunity that positions them best to succeed.

2. Every county in North Carolina is considered a "child care desert" with not enough supply to meet the demand. When parents do find child care, the average cost is nearly \$10,000/year, which is higher than the cost of public college tuition. What steps would you take to ensure that families have access to high-quality and affordable early learning programs for their children?

Fewer regulations on childcare businesses. Some nonprofits, like churches, have fewer regulations, and the children are safe and learning during those foundational years.

3. Currently, child care teachers in North Carolina earn an average of \$14/hour, less than most retail or service workers. Since 2021, federally-funded Child Care Compensation Grants have provided higher wages and bonuses to more than 40,000 North Carolina early educators, but that funding has expired. This summer, the NC General Assembly appropriated funds to extend the grants for a short time, while also recognizing the need to explore long-term solutions to attract and retain a qualified early childhood workforce. 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 Compensation Grant funding?

Fewer regulations will allow those businesses more financial breathing room to improve salaries, hire more employees, and expand.

4. Working parents depend on child care, and businesses in nearly every sector have identified child care as a critical factor in their workforce challenges. A new study from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation found that insufficient child care is costing North Carolina about \$5.65 billion each year. What are your views on how the issues facing our state's child care system impact the state's economy? What specific steps would you take to ensure that our child care system can keep up with the demand as more working families need child care?

With the high demand for childcare and less regulation, entrepreneurs will be inspired to start businesses that supply the childcare services people are looking for.

5. North Carolina currently spends approximately 1% of the annual state budget on early childhood programs, including Smart Start, NC Pre-K, and Child Care Subsidy Assistance. Nearly all early childhood programs in every county of the state have waiting lists and only serve a fraction of eligible children and families. What are your goals for overall early childhood funding and/or what types of early childhood programs would you support making an investment in at the state level?

As a representative, I will look at everything that helps our state. Without seeing those programs and proposals, it would be reckless to discuss the programs and their funding.

6. If elected, what would be your top 5 priorities for 2025?

Protection from aggressive property tax increases on primary residences. Funding the opportunity scholarship and strengthening public schools. Reducing certain business regulations. Eliminating needless harassment like vehicle inspections and individual fishing licenses. Helping 100% disabled veterans get a 100% property tax exclusion on their primary residence.