

2024 North Carolina Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Pam Genant

Congressional District: House of Representatives District 14

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Current Occupation: Self employed

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?

Expanding early childhood education opportunities for ALL children is crucial for brain development and school readiness. Today, more parents are in the workforce than ever before. Children are missing out on crucial learning and social opportunities that can set them on the path for a brighter future.

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?

Early childhood education and childcare for the very young needs to be considered a crucial part of infrastructure and guaranteed for all children as part of their development.

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. Without additional funding, child care providers have said that they will have to reduce teacher wages, raise parent tuition, or close their programs. 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?

Bringing these critical employees under a government department would guarantee not only pay and benefits, but also oversight and continuity of care and education across the board.

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 in North Carolina?

As more parents enter the workforce, it is critical that child care and early childhood education no longer be looked at as a luxury, but as a necessity for families. We need to make early childhood education and childcare available for every child.

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

1. Ending corporate price gouging. Bringing costs down for all families. 2. Healthcare and mental healthcare initiatives, so all families have guaranteed healthcare. 3. Supporting our working families experiencing the effects of the current housing crisis. We know home ownership creates a sense of community, stable jobs for parents, and children that do better in school. 4. Increased minimum wage and bringing good paying jobs to the rural areas of North Carolina, to strengthen and grow the middle-class. 5. Taking steps to secure and strengthen the public

school system, so teachers have the resources they need, and children have an environment in which to learn. Everyone deserves a shot at the American Dream.