

PA PAC Questionnaire for NC House and Senate - 2022

Please return the completed form along with your resume or biographical statement describing education, work history, community service, and prior political experience, as well as a high-resolution headshot of yourself as soon as possible, but by Sat Mar 19 at 5pm, at the latest.

Please e-mail your responses to PAC Coordinators at papacboard@googlegroups.com by Saturday, March 19 at 5pm.

Please note that following the Saturday, March 19 at 5pm deadline, the People's Alliance PAC may publish your responses to this questionnaire and your resume.

When answering this questionnaire, please repeat the questions in your response document with each question numbered and organized as it appears here. Type your responses in italics, bold, or a different font to distinguish your responses from the questions. Do not use colors or shading.

Please try to confine your responses to no more than 300 words unless another word limit is indicated. Do not feel obliged to exhaust the limit for each question.

If you use words or ideas from another person, please attribute your source.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire and your willingness to serve the people of Durham.

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Why Are You Running?

1. What are the three most important issues facing North Carolina? What are your top priorities in addressing these issues?

Twenty-nine times since I've been in office, the Governor's veto was *the only thing* standing between North Carolinians and legislation that would have undermined free elections, limited womens' access to health care, loosened critical gun restrictions, intimidated peaceful protestors, and pushed conspiracy-laden politics into our public education system – to name just a few. First and foremost, protecting Governor Cooper's veto is a top priority.

In addition to that, I want to continue working with Democrats and Republicans to expand access to health care, fully fund our public schools, pursue clean energy and transportation goals that serve our urban and rural communities, and create a justice system that supports our people and our values.

State Revenues, State Spending, and the Economy

2. Is the current system of state taxation fair? What changes should be made, if any? Please cite specific examples.

North Carolinians deserve a fair system of taxation that raises enough revenue to adequately fund high-quality public goods and services. Revenue should be raised equitably. Everyone should be expected to contribute their fair share. The GOP continues to relax tax burdens on corporations and the wealthy while disinvesting in our schools and health care systems. They have enacted legislation to phase out corporate taxes by 2030 (at a \$8B loss to the state), lowered the state income tax rate to 3.99%, and diverted UI tax dollars from the UI system.

I support a corporate tax rate that expects profitable corporations to contribute to the public systems (education, health safety, health, transportation). A tax system that supports our workforce and creates a strong environment for business.

I support the reinstatement of a progressive state income tax, like the one that we had and that fueled investments in, e.g., the UNC System.

There are also important opportunities to make more robust investments in our unemployment insurance system or shift transportation funding priorities using transportation tax revenue.

3. Are you in favor of reducing government spending in any specific areas? If so, please list your top three specific areas and explain your reasons. Are you in favor of increasing government spending in any specific areas? If so, please list your top three specific areas and explain your reasons.

North Carolina should consider reducing its spending on charter schools because they continue to threaten the funding and overall viability of our public school system.

We should increase spending on public education and specifically early childhood education. Last year, I co-sponsored a bill to increase pre-K funding in our public schools. In North Carolina, every child is entitled to a sound, basic education. Our schools must be funded adequately to ensure that our kids have every opportunity available to them and that we are investing in the future of the State's economy.

The tax breaks discussed above that benefit the wealthy and corporations, none of whom have asked for any tax breaks in North Carolina, should be reconsidered because they will result in a

loss of billions to the state's General Fund over the next decade to the detriment of those who rely on public services.

North Carolina should consider reducing how and how much we fund highways. The methods and formulas we currently use to prioritize highway funding and expansion are short-sighted. It is time to shift those investments to more innovative uses that prioritize transit, multi-modal options, and climate impact reduction. Last year, I filed a commuter rail study bill which was intended as a pathway toward the kinds of investments we need for the future.

We should increase spending on implementation of Governor Cooper's Clean Energy Executive Orders because climate change is real and we can achieve our clean energy goals with robust investments.

4. What is your stance on the state of North Carolina utilizing economic development incentives, such as the One NC and JDIG programs to attract and recruit corporations?

Economic development incentives, particularly those that give the Governor's Office some discretionary authority, are a net positive for the state provided that small businesses and minority businesses have ready access to these kinds of incentives or other incentives that support business creation and scaling over time.

Secure Elections, Fair Elections, and the Right to Vote

5. What changes need to be made to NC law to protect the right of all people to vote in free and fair elections?

North Carolinians must continue to advocate for independent redistricting, and things like automatic voter registration, and an end to felony disenfranchisement.

Housing

6. What, if anything, should the NC government do to promote affordable housing and home ownership? What specific policies or programs would you use to do that? Do you support downpayment assistance for first time homebuyers? Rent control? Inclusionary zoning? Please detail your answer.

Federal funding created a critical lifeline to North Carolina renters during the pandemic. The State can and should consider long-term policy changes like eviction reform, protections for local authority in land use planning, and sustainable tax relief and financing options for low-income homeowners and investors that will support housing stability for all North Carolinians. In 2020, I filed a bill to provide relief for small landlords and protection for

vulnerable renters. I also filed bills to create affordable housing for educators and study affordable housing needs statewide.

We can pursue ideas like eviction expungement, which was included in a bill I filed in 2021, the Pandemic Eviction Protection Act. We should use General Fund dollars to create more sustainable rapid rehousing and utility assistance support through NC DHHS.

We should continue to reject additional restrictions on local authority in inspections, storm water regulation, building code policy, comprehensive plan adherence, and zoning regulation. And, consider revisions to LIHTC criteria in partnership with federal government to make the process more competitive for critical stakeholders like our housing authorities.

7. What should the NC government do, if anything, to avoid an eviction crisis following the lifting of the COVID-era moratorium on evictions?

Pass the Pandemic Eviction Protection Act that I wrote and filed in 2021.

Wealth

8. What is your stance on the minimum wage? What do you consider to be a livable wage? What role should the NC government play in regulating wages?

North Carolinians deserve an economy that works for everyone and that begins with a livable wage. Currently, a livable wage is between \$16 and \$17 per hour. North Carolina can lead the way by raising the minimum wage. Over the last two years, I have co-sponsored bills to raise the minimum wage and expand access to paid leave. I also filed multiple bills to reform our unemployment insurance system to better provide for workers who need a bridge to our economy.

9. How can we bring more progressivity to North Carolina's tax code?

See answer to question #3. We should reinstate the progressive income tax.

Guns

10. What, if anything, should be done to reduce the proliferation of firearms and reduce gun violence in NC?

Across the country, we are in urgent need of sweeping gun reform. In North Carolina, we need statewide bans on bump stocks, trigger cranks, high-capacity magazines. We also need to renew the ban on assault weapons that lapsed in 2004, support extreme risk protective orders, and accountability for legal gun owners who do not report their firearms lost or stolen.

In the House, I challenged dangerous bills that would have eliminated gun permits, reduced training requirements, and severely limited local authority to deny permits or require training for concealed carry permits.

I co-sponsored bills for the disposition of unclaimed or seized firearms, firearm safe storage awareness which was passed in a subsequent bill, as well as a bill that would require a permit for long guns.

I also worked with many of our local stakeholders as well as Republicans to fund hospital-based gun violence intervention programming in Durham County and in the Triad in this year's state budget.

Civil Rights and Race Equity

11. What should the state do to promote racial equity and diversity, such as increasing opportunities for under-represented and under-served people of color? Can you provide an example of your advocacy for race-equity and diversity?

I filed three bills – the Pandemic Eviction Protection Act, an Affordable Housing study, and a bill to support affordable housing for public school employees – to address housing concerns that disproportionately affect Black home-owners and renters.

I prioritized the legal and economic futures of our communities by pursuing reforms to address the unjust economic burdens imposed through our court system.

I also pursued a more expansive Racial Justice Act that would apply to a broad class of offenses, as well as a Second Look Act that would give folks sentenced under outdated sentencing regimes the chance to have their sentences reduced.

I have drawn direct attention to the silence and inaction of Republicans when there have been clear opportunities for them to address racial equity and bias in our policymaking.

I have also filed and co-sponsored multiple bills centered on economic opportunity for workers, including bills to improve our unemployment insurance system, support fairer wages for workers, fund minority small business development, promote teacher diversity in our schools, and address health care disparities in our communities.

The Environment

12. Addressing the climate crisis through transformative, intersectional policies will be essential to keeping NC communities safe, healthy, and vibrant. What do you see as the most critical environmental and climate justice issues facing NC and your district? If elected, how would you leverage your role to address them?

We must reform our transportation priorities because transportation remains the larger contributor to carbon emissions. My district and region play an important role in leading North Carolina down the path toward clean transportation and clean energy because of our growth. I plan to keep transportation reform at the front and center of my policy priorities.

The impacts of climate change on low-income communities is a major issue statewide but also in Durham County. Low-income housing communities often suffer disproportionate flooding, less effective building materials which lead to higher monthly energy costs, and health impacts that result from things like poor air quality.

I plan to continue to use my role to create opportunities for compromise on energy policy, like we accomplished in 2021 with the Duke Energy bill debate. I also plan to support and help fund the implementation of the Governor's Clean Energy Executive Orders to achieve our clean energy and carbon neutrality goals, reduce State energy consumption, facilitate regulatory change in the energy sector, and reduce the state's dependency on fossil fuels.

13. Duke Energy's monopoly on our utilities has severely curbed the expansion of clean energy across North Carolina and locked us into the expansion of harmful gas plants – with disproportionate pollution and cost burdens falling on Black and Brown communities. What creative ideas will you bring to the Legislature to push back against Duke energy to create a more safe, affordable, and resilient electricity sector?

See answer to question #12 above. I plan to prioritize implementation of the Executive Orders 80 and 246, and specifically, prioritizing things like variable rates for low-income rate payers, targeted clean energy programs and energy efficiency efforts in underserved communities, and the creation of living wage jobs in the energy sector will help address disproportionate pollution and cost burdens experienced by Black and Brown communities.

14. Other states like California and Colorado have rolled out "Climate Corps" programs that create thousands of good jobs increasing community resilience to climate change, reducing pollution, and building out renewable energy. What ideas do you have for how North Carolina can promote green jobs and workforce development, while addressing the climate crisis and reducing pollution in our most-impacted neighborhoods?

See above.

State and Local Government Relations

15. In what ways should NC preempt local governments? In what ways in which it currently does so should it not?

Preemption is a complex issue. It benefits North Carolinians to have uniform criminal laws and for local jurisdictions to be preempted, in most instances, from enacting unique criminal laws. That kind of preemption allows for consistent notice to individuals and creates efficiencies for law enforcement agencies. In an area like housing and zoning regulation, however, there are areas where local governments are preempted in ways that stifle local development opportunities, restrict local actors from acting in the best interests of their communities or using local expertise where it's most efficient.

Education

16. What is your record of support for community colleges and what do you see as the role of community college in increasing access to economic mobility and higher education for those who want it?

Community colleges are a vital resource for education and workforce development. They also frequently make higher education accessible to those who cannot afford four-year institutions and/or have other obligations, like family and work.

I have voted for the following bills related to community college programming and funding:

Community Colleges Funds/Cooperative Innovative High Schools Funds

Community Colleges Fire Training

Isothermal Community College Board of Trustee changes

High School Adjunct Instructors/Community College Preparation

17. What policies would you pursue to increase access to four-year college, community college, training programs, and workforce development initiatives?

I would support increased and sustained funding for our HBCUs and our community colleges. I would support increasing pathways to apprenticeships, occupational licensure, and funding for training programs.

18. What, if anything, should the NC government do to promote the education of youth in the history of civil rights, racial inequality, and the legacy of racial discrimination in the United States and NC?

Our government should expressly support truthful education about racial inequality, civil rights, and our country's history.

Party Politics

19. If you find your party in the minority in your elected body, what do you see as the role of the minority party? Please detail the role of deal making with members of the opposing party, especially on issues on which deep divisions exist. Please give specific examples from your past.

The minority party can and should collaborate on legislation, pursue compromise with legislators in the majority, ensure accountability, and promote transparency about the direction and impact of policy making. At all times, the minority party should reflect its values and advocate for the voters and constituents who share those values.

Campaign Funding

20. Does your campaign have specific policies regarding from whom it accepts donations? Please specifically detail any contributions from corporations to your current and prior campaigns. How do you see the influence of donors on policy, both for yourself and for others?

My campaign and my policy work are guided by Democratic values, the needs of constituents in District 29, and what's best for the state of North Carolina.

Your Politics

21. For whom did you vote in the 2020 United States Senate and presidential elections?

Voting is a fundamental and increasingly fragile part of our democracy. No one should be compelled to reveal who they voted for in an election. We should all be free to vote based on our conscience, not on the potential reaction of a political PAC. That said, I voted for Democrats in the 2020 presidential and U.S. Senate elections.