The 2020 Election
Where NC Candidates Stand
On Key Issues For Muslims

KNOW BEFORE YOU VOTE

Compiled by Queen City Family Advocates
About Queen City Family Advocates
Queen City Family Advocates is a grassroots initiative created by African American Muslims and others willing to interrogate and challenge attitudes, norms and policies that undercut the health and wellbeing of families in Charlotte. Its purpose is to support African American/Black and other communities of color in the Queen City by staging strategic interventions in public discourse around policies that impact our communities “one family at a time.”

“The 2020 Election: Where NC Candidates Stand On Key Issues For Muslims” is one such intervention, due to the significant role family, as a socialized structure, plays in the political process. Awareness of the impact of local and national political decisions on the stability of Muslim family life, and the obligation of American Muslims to care about “the wellbeing of the people and the land [in which we live]” leads Queen City Family Advocates to offer this guide.¹ “The 2020 Election,” perhaps the first of its kind in metropolitan Charlotte, is a tool created by NC Muslims to help NC Muslims become more politically literate, encourage further political participation, and strengthen our sense of agency. This guide also is intended, echoing the teachings of Imam W. D. Mohammed, to inspire NC Muslims to continue to visibly integrate the values Islam and democracy share by civilly engaging in the political process.

Without a doubt, we – American Muslims – can be a formidable block in all political decisions.

The choice is ours!

**Acknowledgements**
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Dr. Jill Budny, Honors College, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations), [https://www.cair.com/](https://www.cair.com/)
Engage, [https://emgageusa.org/](https://emgageusa.org/)
millionMuslimvotes, [https://millionmuslimvotes.com/](https://millionmuslimvotes.com/)
Representative Nasif Majeed, District 99, [https://www.ncleg.gov/Members/Biography/H/752](https://www.ncleg.gov/Members/Biography/H/752)
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Youcanvote, [https://www.youcanvote.org/healthcare-on-your-2020-ballot](https://www.youcanvote.org/healthcare-on-your-2020-ballot)
Ani Zonneveld, Muslims for Progressive Values, [https://www.mpvusa.org/](https://www.mpvusa.org/)
Vote.org, [https://www.vote.org/](https://www.vote.org/)

**Method of Organizing “The 2020 Election”**
In mid-August, we invited Charlotte-area Muslims to share the issues that were most concerning to them. These were reported (order does not signal value):

- Lack of city/state contracts awarded to African American Muslims
- Citizenship and immigration for immigrants
- Workplace equality and fair treatment
- Health care
- Expansion of Medicare and Medicaid
- Impact on COVID 19 testing/educational standards for middle/high schools
- Criminal justice
- Climate change
- Civil Rights
- Need for candidates to be more visible to their constituents
- Employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijab

We reviewed these responses along with “Sample Questions for Candidates and Government Officials”\(^2\) created by CAIR to develop questions for candidates in 15 North Carolina races. We received responses from candidates in nine of those races; they are featured with contact information for the candidates, beginning on page 10. Candidate responses drawn from material published elsewhere accompany footnotes to those sources. Otherwise, responses are the results of email and/or telephone communication with Queen City Family Advocates.

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Direct all inquires regarding this pamphlet to:
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980-292-1144
Are You Registered?

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE?

WHO CAN REGISTER
If you can answer yes to these questions, you can register and vote!
1. Are you a US Citizen who will be at least 18 years old on Election Day—Nov. 3, 2020?
2. Will you have lived in NC for at least 30 days as of Election Day?
3. Have you completed all terms of a felony sentence, including probation and parole?

STEP 1. CHECK/UPDATE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION
1. Visit youcanvote.org/register to see if you are registered to vote at your current address. If not, it's time to get registered! You can also update your information.

STEP 2. CHOOSE HOW YOU WANT TO REGISTER
There are 2 WAYS TO REGISTER IN NC (Choose either by paper or online and follow the steps below.)

OPTION #1-PAPER REGISTRATION
1. Complete all the sections in red of the paper Voter Registration Application.
2. Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number or your Drivers License if you are able to.
3. If you don’t get mail where you live, complete Section 5.
4. Be sure to sign and date the application.
5. Return the completed paper Voter Registration Application to your local Board of Elections. Find your BOE: youcanvote.org/boe

OPTION #2-ONLINE REGISTRATION
2. You can confirm, update, and register to vote.
3. Fill out & submit the required information for your voter registration application.
4. Only voters without an DMV ID or Drivers License will be mailed:
   - Your filled out voter application
   - A stamped envelope already addressed
5. Sign and date your application.
6. Put the application back in the envelope and then into the mailbox.

IMPORTANT NOTES
• You can register at your current residence; it does not need to match the address on your ID.
• The online platform does not allow users to make a name change.
• You can also register and vote on the same day during Early Voting.

Find Your Local Board of Elections: youcanvote.org/boe

HAVE YOU COMPLETED YOUR CENSUS?
Complete your census today to ensure billions for food & nutrition, schools, health clinics, & public transit in North Carolina!


youcanvote.org/register

To register to vote online, free to click here https://www.youcanvote.org/getregistered
Or click here https://www.ncsbe.gov/registering/how-register

Consider creating a Voting Plan by posing these questions:

• With the option to vote early, what day will you go vote?
• Will you vote by absentee ballot, and, if so, how will you submit it?
• If you vote in person, what's the best time for you to vote?
• How will you get to your polling place?
• Where is your polling place?
• Are there family or friends you could bring with you?
Voting FAQ: When, Where, How?

2020 NORTH CAROLINA VOTING GUIDE

DON'T HAVE AN ID? YOU CAN VOTE WITH OR WITHOUT ID!
Visit YOUCANVOTE.ORG/WOB to find out what's on your ballot!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October 15–31</th>
<th>EARLY VOTING</th>
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| Find an early voting site at YouCanVote.org/voting
You can register & vote at any early voting site in your county! |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November 3</th>
<th>ELECTION DAY</th>
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| Vote at your assigned polling place from 6:30am–7:30pm
YouCanVote.org/lookup |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March–September 30</th>
<th>US CENSUS 2020</th>
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</table>
| Make sure all members of your household get counted!
The quickest & easiest way to respond is online or by phone: |
| my2020census.gov
1-844-330-2020 |

Voter Hotline: 1-888-OUR-VOTE
For more information or to join us, visit YouCanVote.org

To explore the website, feel free to click here: [https://www.youcanvote.org/voter-guide](https://www.youcanvote.org/voter-guide)
For other voting resources, click here [https://www.ncsbe.gov/voting](https://www.ncsbe.gov/voting)

**Re: Voting by Mail in NC from the North Carolina State Board of Elections**

*Requesting your ballot*

**How do I submit a request for an absentee ballot?** Fill out an official State Absentee Ballot Request Form, available for download at NCSBE.gov, or pick one up at your county board of elections office. The request form comes with detailed instructions and is available in Spanish. You may also contact your county board of elections and request that one be mailed to you. By September 1, an online absentee ballot request portal will be available on the State Board of Elections’ website, NCSBE.gov. After completing the request form, you may return it to your county board of elections by fax, email, mail, or in person.

**When will I receive my absentee ballot for the 2020 general election?** Beginning September 4, 2020, ballots will be mailed by county boards of elections to voters who have returned a request form.

**Where can I check to be sure you have received and processed my absentee ballot request form for November?** Absentee ballots will be mailed to voters beginning September 4. After September 4, if you request a ballot and do not receive it within about a week, contact your county board of elections.

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3 Information excerpted from North Carolina State Board of Elections, [https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1)
What are acceptable ways to include my signature on my absentee ballot request form? A wet ink signature is not required for an absentee ballot request. However, the signature must be unique to the voter and must be readable. Voters may use a pen, or their finger, stylus, or mouse for the signature if they have the capability. Voters may not use a service such as DocuSign that inserts a typed or cursive font signature that is not made by the voter.

Do I need to include a copy of a photo ID with my absentee request form/ballot? No. NC voters are not required to provide or show ID until further order of the courts.

Can someone request an absentee ballot for me? Yes. Your near relative or legal guardian may request a ballot for you. A near relative is: your spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, or stepchild.

Can I request a ballot for my child who is away at college? Yes. A voter’s near relative may request an absentee ballot if their child is a registered voter. The request form must include all required information, including the voter’s driver’s license number or last four of their Social Security number. The near relative will sign and provide their address, daytime phone number, and relationship to the voter.

Does a faxed absentee ballot request need a cover sheet? No.

Can I pick up my ballot in person? No. The ballot must be mailed to you.

Go to https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1 for more Q&A.

Marking your ballot

How many witnesses do I need for my absentee ballot? For the 2020 general election, only one witness is required for an absentee ballot. The voter is required to mark the ballot in the presence of the witness. The witness should not observe so closely that they can see how the voter votes. Instructions will come with your absentee ballot.

I live by myself, am very susceptible to the virus and do not want contact with anyone. How do I get my absentee ballot witnessed? A voter is required to vote their ballot in the presence of a witness, but the witness may do so while socially distanced. A voter may choose to vote their ballot outside or may stand across the room from the witness. A voter could also ask their witness to observe through a window. In addition to wearing a mask and gloves, the voter and witness may wish to use separate pens and use hand sanitizer or wash their hands with soap and water before and after touching the balloting materials.
Who is not allowed to serve as a witness to an absentee ballot? Individuals prohibited from witnessing an absentee ballot include:
- A person younger than 18.
- A candidate for election, unless the candidate is the voter's near relative.
- If the voter is a patient or resident at a hospital, clinic, nursing home, or adult care home, the following individuals are also prohibited from assisting: an owner, manager, director, or employee of that facility; an individual who holds any elected federal, state or local office or precinct political party or organization office; or a campaign manager or treasurer for any candidate or political party.

Go to [https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1) for more Q&A.

Returning your ballot

How can I return my absentee ballot? Absentee ballots may be returned: (1) By mail. (2) By commercial courier service (DHL, FedEx, or UPS). (3) In person at your county board of elections office. (4) In person at an open early voting site in your county.

When is the ballot return deadline for the November 3, 2020 election? For civilian absentee voters, the container-return envelope with the voted ballot enclosed must be returned to the county board of elections no later than 5 p.m. on Election Day. Absentee ballots received after 5 p.m. on Election Day will be counted only if they are postmarked on or before Election Day and received by mail no later than 5 p.m. November 6. Ballots without a postmark must be received by Election Day.

If I've received my ballot by mail, may I still vote in person? Yes. You may still vote in person as long as you did not return your absentee ballot. Your absentee ballot will be spoiled after you vote in person.

Can I vote the ballot and return it to the county board of elections, but change my mind and cancel my ballot and vote on Election Day instead? No. Once you return your ballot, you may not change or cancel your ballot.

May I return my friends’ and neighbors’ absentee ballots? No. You may only return someone’s ballot if they are a near relative. A near relative is: your spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, or legal guardian.

May another person return my absentee ballot for me? Yes, but only if that person is your spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, or legal guardian. County boards of elections keep track of who drops off each absentee ballot.

May I hand-deliver my voted absentee ballot to my county board of elections office?
Yes. If you are delivering your voted ballot in person, it must be returned to your county board of elections office by 5 p.m. on Election Day. You may also return it to any early voting site in the county.

**May I hand-deliver my voted absentee ballot to the polls on Election Day?** No. You may return your ballot to any early voting site in your county during the early voting period, but not to your polling place on Election Day. One-Stop early voting ends at 3 p.m. October 31.

**If you drop off a sealed absentee ballot at an early voting site, do you have to wait in line?** Yes. If you do not want to wait in line, you can mail your ballot.

**How much does it cost to mail my ballot in?** 55 cents or one Forever Stamp.

Go to [https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/election?projector=1) for more Q&A.

**Absentee Voting Security**

**How secure is absentee by-mail voting?** Numerous safeguards are included in the absentee voting process. Absentee ballots are sent only to registered voters who request them using an official State Absentee Ballot Request Form.

**What prevents someone from voting absentee and then voting again in-person?** If someone has voted an absentee ballot and then shows up to vote in person, the check-in system will alert the poll worker that the person has already voted.

**Candidate Q&A**

*(N/R = information not available)*

**US Senate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name on Ballot</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Campaign Email</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thom Tillis</td>
<td>REP (Rep. Party)</td>
<td>via website</td>
<td>several; see website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>website: [<a href="https://www.tillis">https://www.tillis</a> senate.gov/](<a href="https://www.tillis">https://www.tillis</a> senate.gov/)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon W. Bray</td>
<td>LIB (Liberty Party)</td>
<td>via website</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>website: <a href="https://www.shannonbray.us/">https://www.shannonbray.us/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal Cunningham</td>
<td>DEM (Dem. Party)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@calfornc.com">info@calfornc.com</a></td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>website: <a href="https://www.calfornc.com/">https://www.calfornc.com/</a></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin E. Hayes</td>
<td>CST (Constitution Party)</td>
<td>via website</td>
<td>N/R</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>website: <a href="https://hayesforussenate.com/">https://hayesforussenate.com/</a></td>
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Would you vote to keep, expand or end the Affordable Care Act?
Bray: I do not believe that government should have its hands in healthcare and I’m not really sure how much damage President Trump and the Republican Party has done to the work done by President Obama.

Cunningham: Expand. I will work to strengthen and extend coverage under the Affordable Care Act, and will stand up against all attempts to roll back protections for people with pre-existing conditions and other benefits of this law. I will also build on the ACA by creating a public health insurance option, and do more to support rural hospitals and address doctor shortages. Moreover, it is long past time that North Carolina expand Medicaid, which would cover more than 600,000 North Carolinians.

**Do you support Medicare for All?**

Tillis: No.

Bray: I want affordable healthcare for all. I have been in a situation where I had to struggle with being able to pay for healthcare for my family. I feel that every person wants access to quality healthcare at an affordable price. I’m not sure that Medicare for all is the best option. As a veteran, I’ve seen the government fail to take care of the 1% of the population that serves our country. If the government fails to take care of our veterans adequately, I question their ability to handle the other 99%. I believe the best way to achieve this is by removing government interference and enabling free markets.

Government inappropriately controls our healthcare in many ways:
1. Government and a handful of insurance companies have a virtual monopoly as payers. Because of this, they make most of the decisions about what kinds of healthcare are available.
2. Government regulates where, when, and who may open new healthcare facilities.
3. Government agencies greatly slow development of and access to new medicines, devices, and technologies that may improve quality of care and reduce cost of care. Currently, the healthcare industry is virtually monopolized by the government and a handful of insurance companies. They hold the checkbook and wield it for their own benefit.

Each year, the government sets prices that they will pay providers including doctors and hospitals. Each year, these payments increase at less than the cost of inflation, while the cost of providing medical care increases by a far greater amount. This has unpleasant consequences for everyone. Providers are incentivized to do what is quick and cheap, not...

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5 Ibid.
what is in the best interest of a patient. Doctors are forced to reduce the time they spend with patients, and this reduces quality of care. Hospitals are discouraged from upgrading facilities, and this reduces quality of care. Worse yet, insurance companies often set their payments according to the government’s prices. This regular ratcheting down on payments to providers, while actual costs to provide care increases, makes providers less able to provide high quality healthcare.

Cunningham: No.7

**Do you believe humans are contributing to climate change?**

Tillis: Yes.8

Bray: Yes. In fact, we have seen evidence of improvement due to the reduced emissions with the world handling the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cunningham: Yes.9

**ONLY SHANNON BRAY SUBMITTED RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING QS**

**Would you support some form of police reform legislation?**

Bray: YES! It has become painfully obvious we need police and judicial reform.

**Would you support a Constitutional amendment relative to the fundamental right to vote?**

Bray: I believe that all persons, no matter their religion, [should] be able to vote. I believe that anyone who pays taxes should be represented in our government. Our country was founded on “no taxation without representation.”

**Would you be willing to work with the Poor People’s Campaign**

(https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PPC-Policy-Platform_7-14_v5.pdf) **to establish a guaranteed entitlement of the poor to a direct cash-assistance program that supports poor and low-income households?**

Bray: I would like to implement the UBI plan as suggested by Andrew Yang. With the recent pandemic and the talks of monthly checks keeping the economy going, I believe Andrew Yang was truly onto something that would enable low-income households to make ends meet.

7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
Would you be willing to work to ensure that SS, SSI and SSDI payments secure an adequate standard of living as measured by the new poverty measure?

Bray: I feel the government is failing us and the future of SS, SSI, and SSDI are eminent. Yang’s proposal would go above and beyond what these programs offer.

Would you be willing to impose penalties on Wall Street, real estate corporations and other institutions that have profited from the housing and financial crisis of 2008-9?

Bray: Yes! They received a bailout and their CEOs cashed out.

Would you be willing to adopt the Medicaid expansion (As of 8/17/20, not yet adopted in NC)?

Bray: Yes, as stated above, I don’t believe government should be in the healthcare business, but I certainly wouldn’t want to limit any benefits that it offers our state if it has been adopted by other states. I want what is best for the people of our state over and above all else.

Would you work to implement a national moratorium on water and utility shut offs?

Bray: Water and utilities should not be shut off.

If elected, and the “NO Ban Act” returns to the Senate, would you support it?

Bray: I would support the No Ban Act. I would certainly restrict the President’s authority to suspend or restrict aliens from entering the United States.

Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?

Bray: Yes, without question or exception. I fully support the freedom of religion. This includes all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages. It is the cornerstone of our US Constitution and there are no exceptions.

Do you support actions taken by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice to protect the right of Muslim communities to establish or expand places of worship on the same terms as other religious communities?

Bray: Absolutely – without question or exception.

Do you agree that the U.S. Constitution and state laws are not threatened by citizens privately following their own religious codes, such as Jewish Halacha, Islamic Sharia, or Catholic Canon Law, as long as such religious codes comply with U.S. law?
Bray: I fully support religions following their codes as long as they comply with US law and as long as the practices do not inflict harm on another or impede in another’s personal choices.

**Do you plan to address the rise in white supremacy and white nationalism in the United States?**

Bray: Absolutely. I believe any organization that supports white supremacy, or their ideas sponsors domestic terrorism. No man has the right to impose their will on another. I take the words “all men are created equal” very serious.

**Do you plan to address the rise in Islamophobia and hateful rhetoric towards Muslims in the United States?**

Bray: The rise of Islamophobia and hateful rhetoric are a byproduct of fear that has been interjected by American politics. It is a shame that freedom of religion is ignored and is used to breed division and hatred.

**Do you support the right of Muslim and Jewish inmates to make religious accommodation requests for halal and kosher meals?**

Bray: Yes; if provisions are made for other inmates, Muslim and Jewish inmates should be afforded the same privilege. To take this a step further, I do not believe that anyone (Muslim, Jewish, etc.) should be imprisoned for any length of time with the exception of violent offenders who hurt, defraud, or steal from others.

**Do you support the right of Muslim inmates to make religious accommodation requests for religious headwear, like hijabs, kufis, and other head coverings?**

Bray: Yes

**Do you support the right of Muslim inmates to make religious accommodation requests for copies of the Qur’an and other religious texts, prayer mats, prayer beads, and other religious items?**

Bray: Yes. I had no idea that this was even an issue. If a Christian Bible is provided to Christians, other religions should be afforded the same privilege.

**Do you support the right of Muslim inmates to make religious accommodation requests for modified meal schedules while fasting during Ramadan?**

Bray: I would support religious accommodations; I would need more education on this though to see how it affected the system overall. I would rather see non-violent offenders be on house arrest so that they could practice and worship without persecution.
Do you support the adoption of comprehensive federal immigration reform which provides a pathway to citizenship for the nation’s 11 million undocumented immigrants?

Bray: Absolutely!!! Without question.

Recent reports have indicated that Muslim children have faced increased bullying and harassment in schools. Muslim children are targets for bullying because their name identifies them as Muslim or because they practice their religion openly by praying while at school, wearing a hijab (headscarf) or growing a beard. Do you support amending Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include religion as a protected characteristic in schools?

Bray: I certainly support Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 but I have reservations on including religion here. Not because I don’t want to restrict Muslim children from being harassed, but this may become a double edge sword that may hurt our Jewish and Muslim communities. I would actually like to speak to these communities to get a better understanding. I am for helping, but also fear that people who are anti-Muslim may use this to punish other religions.

Do you support the First Amendment right of Americans and U.S. businesses to engage in a boycott of countries that engage in human rights abuses?

Bray: Absolutely!

If elected, how do you plan to connect with and be visible to your constituents?

Bray: I am a software engineer and cyber security expert by trade. I would like to build and install tools that would allow me to connect with all of my constituents and be able to respond in a timely matter. This is something that is lacking in our current government.
Would you support some form of police reform legislation?

DiFiore: Our criminal justice system needs both more accountability and a re-alignment of incentives so that the interests of the people in our justice and police system are in better alignment with the common good of the people of North Carolina. In particular I favor the following seven essential criminal justice and policing reforms:

I. Demilitarize the police.
II. Decriminalize marijuana at the state level.
III. End occupational licensing and the fees associated with them.
IV. Ban no-knock raids.
V. End Qualified Immunity.
VI. End using taxpayer funds to pay victims of police brutality. Tie said payouts directly to the offending police department.
VII. End North Carolina Law-Enforcement participation that skirts around our state's protections against civil asset forfeiture.

Would you support a Constitutional amendment relative to the fundamental right to vote?

DiFiore: The North Carolina constitution, Section 1, Who may vote, already has a provision for citizens over the age of eighteen years to vote. I may support amending Sec.2, Clause (3), depending on verbiage, to fully restore rights automatically after a felony sentence has been completed and statutory law pursuant to Sec.2, clause (4) listing the “free” voter registration card provided to all voters as an acceptable substitution in lieu of a photographic identification.

Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?

DiFiore: Yes. I do.

Do you support actions taken by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice to protect the right of Muslim communities to establish or expand places of worship on the same terms as other religious communities?

DiFiore: I am unfamiliar with specific actions taken by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice as it pertains to Mosque construction in North Carolina. However, I believe that the wall of separation between church and state, as enumerated in the Constitution, would necessitate all religions to be on the same footing and treated equally.

Do you agree that the U.S. Constitution and state laws are not threatened by citizens privately following their own religious codes, such as Jewish Halacha, Islamic Sharia, or Catholic Canon Law, as long as such religious codes comply with U.S. law?
DiFiore: As a person who was raised in a Catholic household, I am well aware of what it may mean to practice a religion that is in the minority in North Carolina. Some practices of the faith, going about one's day with ashes on the forehead on Ash Wednesday, for example could earn a fair bit of teasing or even umbrage from those unfamiliar with the practice. Whether a believer or not, the faith of each individual citizen is important and must be respected by law so long as it does not conflict with the Constitution or long-standing precedents of our Common Law System.

**Do you plan to address the rise in white supremacy and white nationalism in the United States?**

DiFiore: Ensuring equal justice under the law, promoting broad economic opportunity, and greater access to educational choice will help continue the trend of equality of opportunity for all in our state.

**Do you plan to address the rise in Islamophobia and hateful rhetoric towards Muslims in the United States?**

DiFiore: As a governor, my primary concern will be with ALL the people of our state. Fostering an environment of opportunity and understanding for all will naturally bring out the better angels of our nature. Should bigotry toward any group of our fellow countrymen become an issue I will use the stature of my office to ameliorate the situation to the best of my abilities.

**Do you support the right of Muslim and Jewish inmates to make religious accommodation requests for halal and kosher meals?**

DiFiore: Yes. While the situation in each prison may differ regarding the practicalities of such requests I am in favor of reasonable accommodations being made for inmates with dietary restrictions, whether physical or religious.

**Do you support the right of Muslim inmates to make religious accommodation requests for religious headwear, like hijabs, kufis, and other head coverings?**

DiFiore: Yes. These items are already allowed under current law and I would oppose any measure to restrict access to them.

**Do you support the right of Muslim inmates to make religious accommodation requests for copies of the Qur'an and other religious texts, prayer mats, prayer beads, and other religious items?**

DiFiore: Yes. These items are already allowed under current law and I would oppose any measure to restrict access to them.
Do you support the right of Muslim inmates to make religious accommodation requests for modified meal schedules while fasting during Ramadan?

DiFiore: Yes. I support the right of religious inmates for meal schedule accommodation during fasting holidays such as Ramadan, Lent, Tisha B'Av, and Yom Kippur.

Recent reports have indicated that Muslim children have faced increased bullying and harassment in schools. Muslim children are targets for bullying because their name identifies them as Muslim or because they practice their religion openly by praying while at school, wearing a hijab (headscarf) or growing a beard. Do you support amending Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include religion as a protected characteristic in schools?

DiFiore: At this time there are already anti-bullying curriculum in our public school system. While Title VI does not explicitly cover religion it does cover national origin. I would support measures to improve current anti-bullying measures at the state level. As a Libertarian I don't favor further intrusion into our lives by the Federal government.

Do you support the adoption of comprehensive federal immigration reform which provides a pathway to citizenship for the nation’s 11 million undocumented immigrants?

DiFiore: Yes.

If elected, how do you plan to connect with and be visible to your constituents?

DiFiore: As governor, staying in touch with the people of North Carolina is a high priority. Regular press conferences, a presence on social media, and frequent public meet and greets will be a fixture of my term as governor.

NC Commissioner of Agriculture

Campaign Email           Telephone

Jenna Wadsworth  DEM Jenna@JennaWadsworth.com  919-438-3701 website: https://www.jennawadsworth.com/meet-jenna.html

ONLY JENNA WADSWORTH RETURN RESPONSES

Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?
Wadsworth: Yes. Having respect for different religions and beliefs is a vital trait for anyone who chooses to offer themselves to public service and elected office. I will make sure that as Commissioner, my office is a welcoming environment for all.

**Do you support the adoption of comprehensive federal immigration reform which provides a pathway to citizenship for the nation’s 11 million undocumented immigrants?**

Wadsworth: Yes. I firmly believe that our nations undocumented immigrants should have a moral pathway to citizenship. One that is straightforward, fair, and offers a viable pathway forward for the 11 million folks who live here in a current state of limbo.

**How would you support Muslim businesses and individuals in their attempts to provide halal (slaughtered in a spiritually permissive manner) products?**

Wadsworth: I would support the attempts of these individuals to provide halal products.

**Do you believe humans are contributing to climate change?**

Wadsworth: Yes. We, as a population, are negatively impacting the environment and causing climate change. It is vital that we care for the Earth and exercise practices to fight climate change head on. The current Commissioner does not believe that climate change is real and because of that, he is putting NC farmers at risk.

**Do you believe a natural conflict exists between Islam and democracy?**

Wadsworth: No. There is simply no reason that Islam could be considered a barrier or point of conflict with democracy.

**How would you address employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijab (head-covering)?**

Wadsworth: Employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijabs would have no place in my department. I would ensure that hiring managers were aware of this.

**How would you respond to department heads that prohibit Muslim workers from praying while at work (even during breaks)?**

Wadsworth: Department heads would not be allowed to prohibit Muslim workers from prayer under my administration. If a department head decided to not make this accommodation, they would be reprimanded.

**If elected, what would you do to ensure that vendors who are Muslim and/or Muslim-sounding names are not discriminated in the awarding of business contracts?**
Wadsworth: No favoritism or discrimination would exist with the rewarding of contracts under my administration. I would reward the contracts to those who offered the best possible goods and services for the department.

**If elected, what would you do to guard against fraud and preferential treatment or access in the direction of programs under your leadership?**

Wadsworth: Having a department that works for the people of North Carolina would be a vital part of my administration. The current Commissioner takes campaign contributions from large special interest groups and corporate PACs. He has been bought and paid for by these same groups. It is time that we have a leader in the department who is not beholden to special interests and campaign contributions. I would proudly be that person with this office.

**NC Commissioner of Insurance**

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**Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?**

Causey: Yes; I believe in the American creed that our country is open for all people regardless of age, race, sex or religion and that each citizen has equal justice under the law. I embrace a mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions and heritages in our state and country. I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed.

Goodwin: Yes.

**Do you believe humans are contributing to climate change?**

Causey: Climate change is the result of numerous factors, including animal and human contributions. It is a clear threat and one that we must address.

Goodwin: Yes.

**Do you believe a natural conflict exists between Islam and democracy?**

Causey: No; I do not believe there is a natural conflict between Islam and democracy.
Goodwin: No, not to the best of my knowledge.

**How would you address employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijab (head-covering)?**

Causey: The North Carolina Department of Insurance is an equal opportunity employer. We hire candidates based on their education, experience and what service they can provide to the people of North Carolina.

Goodwin: I would OPPOSE employment discrimination that is against Muslim women who wear hijab and would prohibit my State agency from such discrimination. To the extent needed, I support legislation and court decisions that prohibit such employment discrimination. Further, as NC Insurance Commissioner I would actively insist that private entities and businesses regulated by the Department of Insurance not discriminate against Muslim women who wear hijab and I would hold accountable those regulated entities and businesses that unlawfully discriminate.

**How would you respond to department heads that prohibit Muslim workers from praying while at work (even during breaks)?**

Causey: We must protect the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution. As Commissioner of Insurance I have sworn an oath to uphold our federal and state constitutions and the rule of law. Muslim workers should be allowed to pray without interference or workplace sanction, period.

Goodwin: First, I would call the Department heads to my office and require them to explain to me and my Department attorney why they acted that way. Then I would direct those department heads to apologize to the affected workers and tell those supervisors to allow the workers to pray unimpeded. If the Department heads further prohibit the Muslim workers from praying then I would formally and swiftly reprimand those Department heads. And if the Department heads discriminated again then I would prepare for very swift dismissal of noncompliant Department heads from their jobs, subject to the state personnel act. As an attorney and as an American myself, I believe in justice for all, equal protection under the law for all, due process for all, and the First Amendment’s protection for freedom to worship. Neither state government nor federal government should condone religious persecution or discrimination.

**If elected, what would you do to guard against preferential treatment in the regulation of insurance companies doing business in NC?**

Causey: I have a proven record of standing up to the big insurance companies on behalf of North Carolina’s consumers and patients. I will continue to be an advocate for consumers and will crack down on insurance fraud. I will also continue to work with our first
responders to help improve their equipment and services so that homeowners can get the best possible rates for their property & casualty insurance coverage.

Goodwin: If re-elected to a 3rd, nonconsecutive term as Insurance Commissioner, I would guard against preferential treatment in the regulation of Insurance companies by requiring certain types of Department approvals and examinations to be co-reviewed by an independent internal expert and, in many instances, one of the Department attorneys. In many instances I will require dual approvals up the chain of command. I would also require regular reports on the above be made to me as Insurance Commissioner and the Chief Deputy Commissioner.

Moreover, upon resumption of office I will require an audit of all internal processes and procedures - including a representative sample of Department decisions - in order to discern if any decisions appeared inappropriate or unlawfully preferential. Such an audit will occur every 6 to 12 months. (For the record, as Commissioner I hired an internal Department of Insurance auditor to conduct reviews similar to this for years. He reported regularly to me and other senior officials at the Department.) Additionally, I will require employees and supervisors - and myself - to be mindful of and actively adhere to the Conflict of Interest policy of the Department. Further, I will institute a policy for all Department employees that if they see any official or preliminary decision that appears inappropriate, unjustified by facts and law, or unlawful then they are to report it to me and the agency attorney.

If elected, what would you do to ensure the continuation of Medicare and Medicaid?

Causey: My office does not have a role in the administration of either program. Personally, I support both important healthcare insurance programs and will continue to do so.

Goodwin: As a statewide-elected official I will aggressively advocate to the state legislature for Medicaid expansion for working families and to our Members of Congress the continuation of Medicare programs for our senior citizen population and others who rely on that program. Most folks do not realize that lack of Medicaid expansion raises the cost of private health insurance and the cost of healthcare for everyone. Further, lack of Medicaid expansion directly results in a ballooning of our uninsured population, which is bad for insurance rates, medical costs, and public health/public policy. These impacts or any one of them make it the business of the NC Insurance Commissioner. As for Medicare, there is a statutory role for the NC Insurance Commissioner to educate senior citizens about Medicare and Medicare Part D options, as well as Medicare supplemental insurance products. Cuts to or elimination of Medicare causes a further ballooning in uninsured citizens and harms public health and the cost of private medical care and private medical insurance for non-seniors. These impacts or any one of them make it the business of the NC Insurance Commissioner.

If elected, what would you do to guard against fraud and preferential treatment or access in the direction of programs under your leadership?
Causey: During my tenure, I have doubled the number of sworn law enforcement officers within the Department of Insurance to focus on insurance fraud and corruption cases. We are working with district attorneys and special prosecutors making sure those who commit insurance fraud are caught and punished. Insurance fraud is a $300 million + industry – so it’s important that we work every single day to make sure fraud is rooted out of the system – that way we can help save consumers money on their insurance policies.

Goodwin: If re-elected to a 3rd, nonconsecutive term as Insurance Commissioner, I would guard against fraud and potential preferential treatment in the regulation of Insurance companies by requiring certain types of Department approvals and examinations to be co-reviewed by an independent internal expert and, in many instances, one of the Department attorneys. As was my practice in terms past, I would require subject matter experts inside the Department to weigh in on regulatory matters and, where appropriate, seek input from state insurance regulators in other States and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, etc. In many instances I will require dual approvals up the chain of command.

I would also require regular reports on the above be made both to me as Insurance Commissioner and the Chief Deputy Commissioner. Moreover, upon resumption of office I will require an audit of all internal processes and procedures - including a representative sample of Department decisions - in order to discern if any decisions appeared inappropriate or unlawfully preferential. Such an audit will occur every 6 to 12 months. (For the record, as Commissioner I hired an internal Department of Insurance auditor to conduct reviews similar to this for years. He reported regularly to me and other senior officials at the Department.) Additionally, I will require employees and supervisors - and myself - to be mindful of and adhere to the Conflict of Interest policy of the Department.

NC Commissioner of Labor

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ONLY JESSICA HOLMES RETURNED RESPONSES

Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?

Holmes: Yes. Our country once prided itself on being a melting pot, we need to get back to being the welcoming and inclusive country that celebrates and embraces our differences.
Do you believe humans are contributing to climate change?

Holmes: Yes. Humans are primarily responsible for the current implications of climate change.

How would you address employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijab (head-covering)?

Holmes: I will use my office to either help address such complaints directly or by referring workers to the appropriate agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

How would you respond to work sites that prohibit Muslim workers from praying while at work (even during breaks)?

Holmes: I support Muslim workers having the ability to pray at work, and do not understand why there would be a prohibition during breaks. My department would either provide guidance and or refer the complaint to the appropriate agency.

Do you support public school systems with significant Muslim populations in your congressional district and/or state closing for the Muslim holidays of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, when many students or faculty would otherwise be absent?

Holmes: Yes, but please note that the Department of Labor does not have any decision-making authority regarding school openings or closures.

If elected, what would you do to ensure the continuation of Medicare and Medicaid?

Holmes: I support Medicaid Expansion and will use my voice to advocate for this issue and influence law-makers to support it.

If elected, what would you do to guard against fraud and preferential treatment or access in the direction of programs under your leadership?

Holmes: The Commissioner of Labor is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of workers in the workplace. I will fulfill that responsibility with a focus on fairness and equity.

If elected, how do you plan to connect with and be visible to your constituents?

Holmes: I plan to engage in Town Halls and make myself available to business and community leaders, groups, organizations, etc. My department should be seen as a resource for all North Carolinians with worker related concerns.
Would you support some form of police reform legislation?

Marshall: I am a law enforcement administrator. There are several areas of law enforcement that need reform – for instance choke holds should be banned, officers need to be trained in de-escalation techniques including intervention training, greater training on human behavior and cultural differences that can be misinterpreted (e.g., in some cultures a “come ahead” gesture is easily misinterpreted to be “the finger”). Additionally, training in implicit bias is needed. Mental health issues sadly play an outsized role in policing. Mental health workers need to be imbedded in police response teams.

Do you support Medicare for All?

Marshall: The first step to improving our system is to fix the existing ACA. There are six or more bills currently pending in Congress on Medicare for All and all are different versions. Given the serious divide in Congress, it is highly unlikely any version could passed.

Do you believe humans are contributing to climate change?

Marshall: Humans have made some unwise choices that contribute to climate change.

If elected, how would you ensure that regions throughout NC have a sufficient number of polling places and election staff to accommodate all registered voters?

Marshall: Elections are not run by the Secretary of State in North Carolina. Our only function is to prepare certain documents after the election and convene the Electoral College. Decisions regarding polling places are made by local county Boards of Elections and North Carolina State Board of Elections. There are serious concerns in recruiting poll workers and the General Assembly has recently appropriated money for bonus pay for poll workers and enhanced recruiting efforts.

Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?
Marshall: Yes

Do you believe a natural conflict exists between Islam and democracy?

Marshall: While Islam has some concepts that are similar to democratic ideals, such as consultation (shura), justice etc. there are many that are inconsistent and conflict with democracy. The inconsistencies include religious authority, leadership succession, and other governance structures. Laws regarding women are incompatible with democratic norms as well.

How would you address employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijab (head-covering)?

Marshall: There should be no employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear the hijab, likewise, there should be no employment discrimination against Muslim women do not wear the hijab.

How would you respond to businesses that prohibit Muslim workers from praying while at work (even during breaks)?

Marshall: A few years ago, we employed a Muslim woman who wore the hijab and prayed during the day in a space provided for her that was formerly an unoccupied office. Similar to accommodations being made for disabled employees, accommodations should be made for religious observance.

If elected, what would you do to ensure that vendors who are Muslim and/or Muslim-sounding names are not discriminated in the awarding of business contracts?

Marshall: Thousands of businesses are registered with the office of the Secretary of State and thusly people think I regulate them. We have no legal authority to do so. To those vendors, I would suggest they protest bid awards where possible and to get certified as a minority owned business in order to qualify for certain preferential lists.

If elected, what would you do to guard against fraud and preferential treatment or access in the direction of programs under your leadership?

Marshall: I have no “programs” under leadership as that term in commonly understood. All Secretary of States functions are spelled out in the state law. We are mostly a fee for service provider. All of our customers come to register to become a business of some sort, file financial liens with us, stockbrokers and financial advisors register with us, etc.

If elected, how do you plan to connect with and be visible to your constituents?
Marshall: I have a reputation for being visible and approachable. If re-elected and once COVID abates, I will resume an active schedule that includes visiting with or speaking with various groups as a representative for North Carolina. My engagement has included contact with Representatives of countries with significant Muslim populations such as Turkey and Nigeria. I have also attended candidate forums sponsored by the Raleigh area Muslim organizations.

**NC Superintendent of Public Instruction**

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ONLY CATHERINE TRUITT RETURNED RESPONSES

**Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?**

Truitt: Yes; the First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees everyone in the United States the right to practice his or her own religion. The Establishment Clause of the Amendment prevents the government from promoting one religion over another.

**Would you support a Constitutional amendment relative to the fundamental right to vote?**

Truitt: I absolutely believe in the right of every citizen (other than felons) to vote and am gratified that in recent elections the participation rates of many minority groups have exceeded those of others. The First, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments to the Constitution, and a host of federal laws, already protect the fundamental right to vote, which certain activist federal judges have cited to strike down common sense state voting laws--such as the requirement for a person to identify themselves before he or she casts a ballot. I would be in favor of a Constitutional amendment that confirms the fundamental right of citizens to vote and for government to maintain safeguards that ensure people do not vote more than once.

**Would you support some form of police reform legislation?**

Truitt: I would support police reform that focuses on anti-bias training provided it is vetted and approved by the law enforcement community and funding is provided to ensure the training is high-quality and equitable.

**Children are still forced into marriage with "parental consent" especially in cases of rape and for 'dishonoring' the family, and there's no federal law in place. Would you support legislation that would raise the marriage age for boys and girls to 18?**
Truitt: Yes

The federal law that proposed to outlaw FGM/C (female genital mutilation and cutting) was thrown out as unconstitutional in a case that involved two girls from Detroit and two from MN. Would support legislation to pass such a law?

Truitt: Yes

Recent reports have indicated that Muslim children have faced increased bullying and harassment in schools. Do you support amending Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include religion as a protected characteristic in schools?

Truitt: Yes

How would you address employment discrimination against Muslim women who wear hijab (head-covering)?

Truitt: I will ensure that my agency aggressively enforces all equal opportunity laws.

How would you respond to department heads that prohibit Muslim workers from praying while at work (even during breaks)?

Truitt: Prayer breaks can almost always be accommodated and should be allowed.

If elected, how do you plan to connect with and be visible to your constituents?

Truitt: Email communication, visible public events calendar, open door policy for local superintendents, regular travel throughout the state to K-12 schools.

NC Treasurer

Ronnie Chatterji       DEM       Campaign Email: Greg@RonnieChatterji.com       Telephone: N/R
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ONLY RONNIE CHATTERJI RETURNED RESPONSES

Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?

Chatterji: Yes, this is a core value in American society and important to me.
Would you support a Constitutional amendment relative to the fundamental right to vote?

Chatterji: I believe that the right to vote is a Constitutional right for all citizens.

Would you support some form of police reform legislation?

Chatterji: While the Treasurer cannot introduce and vote on legislation, I support efforts to provide police officers with increased training on de-escalation and implicit bias as well as increase resources to address mental and behavioral health challenges.

Do you support Medicare for All?

Chatterji: I worked for President Obama in the White House and support the Affordable Care Act. Furthermore, I believe North Carolina should expand Medicaid and cover the over 600,000 North Carolinians who would benefit from it.

Do you believe humans are contributing to climate change?

Chatterji: Yes. As an economist, I have written extensively on how business can work with governments to reduce the impact of climate change. As Treasurer, I will use my role as the sole fiduciary of our $100 billion pension fund to work with companies to ensure they are acting as good stewards of our environment and our money.

Do you believe a natural conflict exists between Islam and democracy?

Chatterji: I have seen firsthand the contributions of Muslim Americans to our great democracy so I do not see a natural conflict between faith and our political system.

How would you respond to department heads that prohibit Muslim workers from praying while at work (even during breaks)?

Chatterji: All people should be able to practice their religion as they see fit, so long as it does not infringe on the rights of others. Any person should be able to pray during their work day, especially during breaks.

If elected, what would you do to guard against fraud and preferential treatment or access in the oversight of pension and healthcare plans?

Chatterji: As Treasurer, I will hire a permanent Chief Investment Officer, which we currently do not have despite a long tradition of having non-partisan experts making key decisions in the Department. I will also make sure we follow our stated investment policy, which the current Treasurer has also deviated from. This irregularity has led to billions of dollars of losses for North Carolina.
In both the State Health Plan and The North Carolina Retirement Systems, we will return to relying on facts and the best available evidence, not political ideology, in how we operate.

**If elected, how do you plan to connect with and be visible to your constituents?**

Chatterji: When elected I will continue to have an open door policy and strive to reach constituents across our state. I believe that transparency and open communication is how we will ensure the best outcomes for our state employees and retirees.

**NC Supreme Court Justice**

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**ONLY JUSTICE NEWBY RETURNED RESPONSES**

**Do you support a welcoming environment that fosters mutual respect for all religious beliefs, traditions, and heritages in the United States?**

Newby: Religious liberty is foundational to our State and nation. Since 1776 the N.C. Constitution has protected religious freedom by declaring that everyone has a fundamental right to worship God “according to the dictates of their own consciences.” In 1868 we added to this constitutional provision that “no human authority shall, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience.” Of course the U.S. Constitution also protects religious liberty.

**Would you support a Constitutional amendment relative to the fundamental right to vote?**

Newby: As a judge, I cannot comment on issues that could come before the court. Judges decide cases. They should not express public policy positions.

**In addition to engaging local judges, educators and law enforcement, what outreach would you make to religious communities to reduce the number of children who come before you in court?**

Newby: The evidence shows that people involved in religious communities are much less likely to enter the justice system. The input from religious communities is vital in addressing the societal problems which lead to crime.
In what ways does your mentorship of law clerks, students, and other justices reflect your outlook on diversity and inclusion?

Newby: Over the last 16 years as a justice, I have had a lot of interaction with young people. I have a very active internship program, and I teach at Campbell Law School. I have mentored a very diverse group of clerks and interns. As the first attorney in my family, I have intentionally provided these opportunities for these young people.