N.C. SENATE - DISTRICT 59

Jon Hardister (R) (i)



Lives in: Greensboro

Contact: jonhardister@gmail.com; www.jonhardister.com

Age: 31

Profession: Marketing

Highest degree earned: Bachelor's degree

Leadership Experience: N.C. House representative; Southeast Guilford Community Foundation board member; UNCG Board of Visitors member; Greensboro Academy, former board member.

As a minority party member, how will you be able to get things done for your constituents? My political party currently holds the legislative majority. But I do not work for my party; I work for the people. In my tenure, I have proven that I can work across party lines. As a result of hard work, several bills that I sponsored have become law.

How can the state's rivers and lakes be better protected from coal ash and other pollutants? Coal ash ponds need to be cleaned and secured according to scientific priority. We advanced legislation in the 2014 session that will help to accomplish this goal. This is an issue that we should continue to monitor closely.

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? Yes. In fact, I co-sponsored a bill that would have accomplished this goal. Our focus should be to reduce the influence of politics in the redistricting process.

Should North Carolina expand Medicaid coverage? Why or why not? It would be unwise to expand bureaucracy and put our taxpayers at risk of exorbitant costs. Instead, we should work to make our current Medicaid system as efficient and cost-effective as possible.

Are there parts of the 2013 voter reform that you would change? There are no parts of the 2013 voter reform legislation that I would change. The reforms in this legislation helped to streamline various operations of our elections system. This legislation will also enhance the integrity of our elections process.

Would you support an increase to the state minimum wage? Why or why not? We need to examine the possible unintended consequences of raising the minimum wage before doing so. Our focus should be on making the economy stronger, which will result in more, better-paying jobs. A growing economy will provide people with more opportunity to pursue their dreams and earn more money.

Scott Jones (D)



Lives in: Greensboro

Contact: electscottjones@gmail.com; www.electscottjones.com

Age: 42

Profession: Small-business owner

Highest degree earned: High school

Leadership Experience: Corporal, N.C. Army National Guard; Fire Department captain; N.C. state certified instructor; Leadership Greensboro (Chamber of Commerce) Institute of Political Leadership; 14 years as small-business owner; husband of 21 years and father of two; assistant team leader, Volunteers in Mission (Guatemala)

As a minority party member, how will you be able to get things done for your constituents? My experience and personal skill are all tools that I have learned to use over the years. As a small-business owner, you don't always get to choose who you work for and with. I don't play games or party politics; we are there to serve our constituents.

How can the state's rivers and lakes be better protected from coal ash and other pollutants? First, we must remove the pollutants in Raleigh and Washington. The establishment must be removed and term limits set; then we can pass proactive legislation to protect our environment. Our state is controlled by monopolies like Duke and other utilities. They need to be responsible for their mess

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? Sure, as long as it is fair and balanced. The end decision and vote needs to be taken by the legislature. It should be a process that is done before it is due and allow for time to rest before a vote.

Should North Carolina expand Medicaid coverage? Why or why not? This is a no brainer (YES). Why would we the people of North Carolina ever be all right with our money that is paid to the government to be allowed to be given to another state? We have way too many folks that need access to coverage now.

Are there parts of the 2013 voter reform that you would change? Yes, the whole bill, and let the people vote on it. If it passes, it passes; if it fails, it fails.

Would you support an increase to the state minimum wage? Why or why not? Yes, we need to raise the minimum wage. It was proposed and shot down recently, but we must fight to raise it at least to $8.85 or $9.

Paul Meinhart (L)



Lives in: Julian

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Age: 43

Profession: General contractor

Highest degree earned: Renewable Energy Technologies diploma, N.C. State

Leadership Experience: Board of Directors, communications chairman, United States Green Building Council, Piedmont Triad Chapter

As a minority party member, how will you be able to get things done for your constituents? As an independent, I will not have the hurdle of the Democrat vs. Republican "political war" which is rampant in N.C.'s system. I will truly be a nonpartisan politician, and hence will be able to do more than either Democratic or Republican politicians.

How can the state's rivers and lakes be better protected from coal ash and other pollutants? By moving our energy system off of nonrenewable supplies and implementing renewable energies into the grid. Also, higher fines should be placed on polluters as well as stricter regulations of coal ash and other pollutants.

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? Yes, absolutely. An independent commission is the only way to guarantee nonpartisan results in the redistricting process.

Should North Carolina expand Medicaid coverage? Why or why not? Yes. All North Carolinians deserve access to affordable health care.

Are there parts of the 2013 voter reform that you would change? No

Would you support an increase to the state minimum wage? Why or why not? Yes. I would vote to raise the minimum wage and fully support a minimum "living wage."

N.C. SENATE - DISTRICT 26

William Osborne (D)



Office Sought: N.C. Senate 26

Lives in: Eden

Contact: electwosborne@gmail.com; electwosborne.com

Age: 61

Profession: General contractor

Highest degree earned: Master's degree

Leadership experience: Own and operate a private business for over 28 years and also served as director of a youth service program for seven years.

As a minority party member, how will you be able to get things done for your constituents? I hope to introduce the idea of working across party lines to the N.C. Senate. I will bring a voice to those issues that have been silenced by current leadership. I will work for solutions to problems that affect N.C. residents without sacrificing my principals to either political party.

How can the state's rivers and lakes be better protected from coal ash and other pollutants? I will place objective scientific evidence at the forefront of policy decisions and in front of special interest groups. I will work to provide a reasonable balance between economic concerns of business with the interests of the common good. I will consult with residents in my district.

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? Yes, in so far as anyone is actually independent. There must be a joint bipartisan effort to draw lines in keeping with the state constitution. The policy should also group cities and counties based on common interests without voter dilution by larger populations.

Should North Carolina expand Medicaid coverage? Why or why not? Medicaid should have been expanded long before now. Creation of 18,000 to 25,000 jobs, providing coverage to 300,000 working individuals, reducing the financial strain on our hospitals while preserving emergency care for residents is essential. I support Medicaid expansion

Are there parts of the 2013 voter reform that you would change? The most likely place for voter fraud lies in the absentee ballot, for which the legislature did nothing to require a valid ID. We should make voting as easy for residents as possible.

Would you support an increase to the state minimum wage? Why or why not? I will support a graduated increase in the minimum wage. In other cities and states, the increase in minimum wage has increased job creation. A living wage prevents the state from having to provide services to underpaid workers, thus saving taxpayer dollars.

Should the state privatize its economic development efforts? No, at least not yet. Full accountability would be an absolute requirement, and our current system of "pay to play" politics cannot assure the taxpayer of impartial actions by a private entity. We need to ensure a geographical balance to funding that meets rural and urban needs.

North Carolina is 46th in teacher pay. What's the best way for North Carolina to improve teacher pay? It is more than obvious that N.C. needs a comprehensive study of appropriate salaries not only for teachers but for all state employees. Any given job has a value, and employees and taxpayers have a right to know and respond to that value.

Do you think any other firearm law reforms are needed? We need to remove the special interest groups and sit down with both sides to establish rational laws.