Kay Hagan (D) (i)



Lives in: Greensboro

Contact: www.kayhagan.com; www.facebook.com/kayhaganforsenate; @KayHagan on Twitter

Age: 61

Profession: U.S. senator

Highest degree earned: Juris Doctor, Wake Forest University School of Law

Leadership experience: Vice president at North Carolina National Bank, 10 years; N.C. Senate, 10 years; elected to U.S. Senate in 2008.

What is the value of prior elected experience? If you have none, how will you overcome the lack of experience to be a successful member of Congress? I work every day to fight for North Carolina's middle class families, and my record is clear — when it comes to the best interests of North Carolinians, I will never back down. I have a strong track record of bipartisan results that shows how I put North Carolina first.

Give an example of how you have worked with someone from another political party to accomplish a goal. Or, if you haven't held elected office, how will you do this? I was proud to work with Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.) to pass a bill to restart tuition assistance for service members after it was cut off with no warning. I was also recently named the most moderate senator by the nonpartisan National Journal because I know how to work across the aisle.

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? I would be supportive of measures to take politics out of the redistricting process.

What is your plan for federal health care reform? There are common-sense fixes we can make for this law to work better for North Carolina. While I am focused on those pragmatic solutions, like co-sponsoring legislation that would allow people to keep their existing plans permanently, my opponents just want to take us back and end important consumer protections.

In the event of another debt ceiling impasse, are you willing to let the federal government shut down? I opposed the government shutdown from the start. Playing political games with the economic stability of middle class families is wrong for North Carolina, and I wasn't elected to shut down the government. We need to focus on common-sense solutions that help North Carolina families, not political grandstanding.

Should there be a federally mandated minimum wage? Why or why not? I support raising the minimum wage to $10.10, which would benefit more than 1 million North Carolina workers, nearly two-thirds of which are women. Raising the minimum wage is just one piece of the puzzle. We must improve job training programs, K-12 education and support small businesses that are growing jobs.

Do you think the federal government should promote more off-shore energy development, stricter environmental regulations, or both? I support a comprehensive energy strategy that will reduce our dependence on foreign oil and support jobs here at home. Our North Carolina coastline is a treasure and a key economic engine, and anything we do must ensure the health and safety of our environment and our people.

Should coal ash be designated as hazardous waste and regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency? We must ensure coal ash is handled and stored properly so that spills like the one in the Dan River never happen again. The EPA should move forward with regulations that ensure structural integrity of these sites and that ponds and landfills are lined.

What would you do to reduce illegal immigration? What would you do about the illegal immigrants that are currently in the country? We need to fix our broken immigration system. I voted for the bipartisan Senate immigration bill that ensures that everyone plays by the same rules. By passing common-sense immigration reform, we can secure our borders, boost our economy and reduce our deficit by $820 billion over the next two decades.

Sean Haugh (L)



Lives in: Durham

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Age: 53

Profession: Pizza delivery driver

Highest degree earned: Attended Tufts University

Leadership experience: Chairman, Libertarian Party of N.C., 1997-2000, and executive director 2000-06; political director, Libertarian National Committee, 2007-2008; executive director, Free & Equal, 2009-10

What is the value of prior elected experience? If you have none, how will you overcome the lack of experience to be a successful member of Congress? Not having prior elected experience is a huge plus. Look at the results of those who have been in office. Being a Libertarian, I am not beholden to the partisan political games that rule Washington. That gives me the opportunity to work with anyone of any party to build coalitions.

Give an example of how you have worked with someone from another political party to accomplish a goal? Or, if you haven't held elected office, how will you do this? In 1998, the local chapters of the Libertarian Party and the NAACP came together to seek justice for a victim of an errant drug raid. We gained a lot of publicity and some fundamental changes in how the local police conducted such operations going forward.

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? I would like to use Congress' constitutional authority to standardize many aspects of federal elections, including establishing independent redistricting commissions. The current system is run by politicians for the benefit of themselves and their parties, against the interests of the people, resulting in far too few contested elections for state and federal office.

What is your plan for federal health care reform? Obamacare has nothing to do with providing health care. It's simply corporate welfare for insurance companies. Federal control of healthcare only increases costs while reducing our choices. We must get the federal government out of health care, pausing only to ensure that those who are dependent upon it are not harmed.

In the event of another debt ceiling impasse, are you willing to let the federal government shut down? I will vote against any increase in the debt ceiling. How that vote was conducted last time was shameful, with the administration acting as an extortionist, shutting down government services used by people regardless of cost savings. Meanwhile, the flow of corporate welfare was unabated. We must stop piling up debt immediately.

Should there be a federally mandated minimum wage? Why or why not? No. Politicians aren't terribly good economists. Instead of continually raising wages to keep up with inflation, we need to end the monetary policies that cause inflation and weaken our purchasing power.

Do you think the federal government should promote more off-shore energy development, stricter environmental regulations, or both? Government needs to stop picking winners and losers in industry. Federal control of energy freezes out innovators and keeps us tied to our dwindling supplies of fossil fuels. Beyond making energy companies take full responsibility for ... pollution they may cause, I support complete deregulation.

Should coal ash be designated as hazardous waste and regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency? In the current system that makes sense. I would rather replace this entire regulatory system with insurance that would cover the full costs of events like Duke Energy's coal ash spills.

What would you do to reduce illegal immigration? What would you do about the illegal immigrants that are currently in the country? We must stop our war on drugs and stop interfering in the affairs of our neighbors. Once we stop our warlike policies and bring peace to the region, countries such as Mexico and Honduras will become more stable and prosperous, giving people incentive to stay home to build something for themselves.

Thom Tillis (R)



Office Sought: U.S. Senate

Lives in: Raleigh

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Age: 54

Profession: Partner at IBM and PricewaterhouseCoopers

Highest degree earned: Bachelor of science, technology management

Leadership Experience: Speaker of the N.C. House of Representatives; partner at IBM and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

What is the value of prior elected experience? If you have none, how will you overcome the lack of experience to be a successful member of Congress? As speaker, I've helped enact policies that have created opportunities for North Carolinians. My background defines my approach to elected office. I came from a working-class family and couldn't afford college after graduating high school. I worked my way up in the business world, becoming a partner at IBM and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Give an example of how you have worked with someone from another political party to accomplish a goal. Or, if you haven't held elected office, how will you do this? In 2011, then-Gov. Ben Perdue vetoed a fiscally responsible budget that cut the state's sales tax at a time many families were struggling to make ends meet. I worked closely with my Democratic colleagues to gather the votes necessary to overturn the veto and implement much-needed tax relief.

Would you support an independent commission for redistricting? Why or why not? I have been a longtime advocate for a nonpartisan redistricting process. The redistricting process should leave out partisan politics.

What is your plan for federal health care reform? Obamacare hasn't worked like Kay Hagan promised it would, causing 473,000 North Carolinians to receive cancellation notices and causing premiums to skyrocket. I support repealing Obamacare and implementing market-based reforms that stop the rising costs of health care.

In the event of another debt ceiling impasse, are you willing to let the federal government shut down? The constant call to raise the debt limit is a clear sign that spending is out of control. We can eliminate the need to raise the debt limit by getting spending under control and making sure Washington lives within its means.

Should there be a federally mandated minimum wage? Why or why not ? The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office finds that raising the federal minimum wage now would destroy 500,000 jobs. With a stagnant economy, it's not a risk we should be taking right now. My focus in the Senate will be on growing our economy and creating jobs.

Do you think the federal government should promote more off-shore energy development, stricter environmental regulations, or both? I have strongly supported offshore energy development as speaker and will continue to do so as North Carolina's senator. Kay Hagan broke her 2008 campaign promise to support offshore drilling, and gas prices have doubled since she took office.

Should coal ash be designated as hazardous waste and regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency? The General Assembly passed a bipartisan bill that gives North Carolina the toughest coal ash regulations in the nation and helps prevent future spills, and I hope other states follow our lead. Kay Hagan voted to specifically exempt coal ash from environmental regulations during her tenure in the state Senate.

What would you do to reduce illegal immigration? What would you do about the illegal immigrants that are currently in the country? I strongly oppose amnesty and believe we must secure the border before pursuing immigration reform. Kay Hagan has voted for amnesty and repeatedly voted against efforts that would have helped secure our southern border.