



ASK THE CANDIDATES

What will you do to make smart public investments that strengthen and enrich our communities?

- What will you do to reverse the decade-long trend in underinvestments in public education, environmental protection, and early childhood education?
- I want to know that my hard-earned tax dollars are put to good use. How will you receive community input from your constituents and ensure the state passes a final budget?
- What steps have you taken to drive support for public investments? What would you like to see done differently?

Our elected leaders must ensure priorities like good schools, healthy neighbors, and safe communities are reflected in a state budget that values well-being, equity, and transparency.

FACTS YOU CAN USE

- The 2019 legislative budget proposed spending \$24.7 billion while the 2008 budget invested \$25.3 billion (in today's dollars). Over the same period, the population has grown by over 9 percent. Underinvestment resulted in a long economic recovery from the Great Recession – many communities are still worse off today than they were before the recession.
- On average, over 60 percent of funding for North Carolina public schools comes from the state. When we underinvest in schools, classrooms fall short on supplies, teachers continue to be underpaid, and schools persist in disrepair.
- The choice to continually cut taxes since 2013 has meant fewer resources for community priorities. State revenues are at least \$3.6 billion less than would have been collected under the pre-2013 tax code.
- Passing a good, comprehensive state budget is the most important job of a state legislature. Yet for years our lawmakers have underinvested in public education, public health, the environment, early childhood education, environmental protection and monitoring, and community resiliency in the face of climate change.
- The 2019 budget proposed spending only 4.86 percent of the state's economy, well below the 45-year average investment of 5.9 percent. If leaders invested at that level today, there would be \$5.8 billion more to support communities rather than corporations and the wealthy.

DID YOU GET A REAL, MEANINGFUL ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION?

If not, here are some follow-up questions that might help you get a more specific answer:

- Please be more specific about the actions you will take to implement your plan.
- You have mentioned ways individuals might take action to benefit themselves. Please focus your response on how you will ensure North Carolina institutions and public policies can better support those affected.
- Can you tell me about what principles or values will guide your decisions on this issue?

VISIT WWW.NCJUSTICE.ORG/ELECTION2020 TO SHARE THE ANSWERS YOU RECEIVED.