



2020 Georgia Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Joyce Marie Griggs

Background Information

Education: BA-Sociology, MA-Counseling, JD-Law

Where is home? Savannah, GA

Do you currently hold a public office? If so, how long have you held your current office? No.

Past public offices held: None (US Military-LTC Retired)

Additional background information you'd like to share: Mother of 2 (daughter a lawyer and son a small business owner) and 4 grandchildren, I grew up in a sharecropper family. I am one of ten children and my four brothers also served in the military.

Georgia in General

Briefly share your qualifications for the office.

I deployed to Iraq three times. I am a Retired Lieutenant Colonel Army Intelligence Officer with over 33 years of service. I was the deputy director of an Intelligence unit in Iraq and earned a Bronze Star. I am a former trial lawyer and in that capacity, I represented people from all walks of life. While deployed to Iraq I worked with the US Embassy Staff in Bagdad drafting a legally binding agreement between the US and Iraq. As an Intelligence Officer, I have interacted with local, national, and international agencies. I understand how our system functions with my background and experience.



Please indicate the reasons you are seeking election and your priorities, overarching policy interests, and any solutions for district-specific challenges.

The people of the 1st Congressional District are in need of a strong voice to articulate their needs in Washington.



Farm Bill

With commodity prices still hovering at historically low levels and so much uncertainty in the agriculture industry, the farm bill – and the safety net it provides – is as vital as it has ever been for Georgia farmers. While the current farm bill runs through 2023, what do you see as the biggest priorities for Georgia in the next reauthorization? Are there specific programs or policies that you believe should be improved?

- Without having sufficient face time with our local farmers and getting their direct input, I would like to ensure that the crop insurance part of the bill is adequate to cover the needs of our local farmers, including ensuring that the subsidized premiums that are paid to private insurance companies remain reasonably priced.
- Allowing farmers to continue to elect Price Loss Coverage or Agriculture Risk Coverage should be a permanent part of the Commodity Title.
- I also would like to add that I agree with Chuck Conner (President, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives) when he said that agriculture must be treated as a national security issue especially while dealing with COVID-19. Protecting our own food supply and our farmers must be a priority.

Trade

It is no secret that farmers have been negatively impacted by the recent trade disputes with many of our closest trading partners, though trade mitigation efforts like the Market Facilitation Program have helped many weather the tough times. With the finalization of several new trade deals, many Georgia farmers are breathing a sigh of relief. However, the deals must be enforced, and our trading partners must be held accountable for the promises they've made.



How do you plan to play a role going forward in ensuring that countries like China and Japan follow through with their free trade and agricultural purchase commitments?

- We must be able to work diplomatically with China and Japan and hold them to their promises in relation to free trade and agricultural purposes. Foreign tariffs that affect our farmers' export markets must be removed, and that can only be done by understanding why they exist.
- The assistance provided by the MFP must be the same for both specialty and non-specialty crops (to include dairy and hogs), and the adjusted gross income cap must be set fairly so that both large and small farmers could benefit.
- Farmers in the 1st Congressional District are positioned well to be able to export their goods, especially with the Port of Savannah in such close proximity; we must be able to allow the farmers to directly benefit from having that access.

The USMCA agreement was welcome news for many Georgia farmers. However, as you know, certain Georgia growers remain concerned about the lack of an enforceable remedy in the deal for seasonal and perishable products in antidumping and countervailing duty proceedings. We know that the Georgia congressional delegation worked very hard to extract a commitment from the Trump Administration to address the issue, and we are grateful for those efforts. But work remains on this issue. What is your goal moving forward to deal with the dumping of fresh fruits and vegetables during Georgia's growing seasons?

Of course, my goal would be to ensure that anti-dumping and countervailing duties remain in place to protect Georgia's crops during the growing season. I do not understand the difficulty in making sure that our trade partners are fully aware that our goods are just as important, if not more important than the products they choose to export to us. Making our own fresh fruits and vegetables a priority is mandatory, and keeping the duties in place is key.



Ag Labor

Agriculture jobs are difficult and undesired by many. The working conditions and seasonality of the jobs are not what most Georgians prefer, and agriculture relies heavily on a reliable migrant labor workforce, such as H-2A. How do you intend to



balance the enforcement of immigration laws while helping provide access to the workers' agriculture needs?

I fully support the lawful employment of immigrant workers and believe the current program could use improvement. The one aspect of employing immigrant workers that I would like to explore is streamlining the process. On face value, it seems that having to work with 3 different agencies is inefficient. While 90 days may not necessarily be a long process, I would like to explore having one agency handle the entire process instead of having DOL process the temporary labor certification, then going to USCIS for the I-129, and finally, the prospective worker going to DOS for the H-2A visa.