



2020 Georgia Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Valencia Stovall

Background Information

Education: Alumni Southside Comprehensive High School, Fort Valley State College and Georgia State University

Where is home? Forest Park, Ga., native of Southeast Atlanta

Do you currently hold a public office? If so, how long have you held your current office? Yes, I currently hold office as State Representative District 74, since 2012

Past public offices held: None

Additional background information you'd like to share: I am have been a small business owner for over 30 years, and community advocate. I currently serve on House Committees on Education, Education Appropriation, Vice-Chair Education Sub-committee on Academic Achievement, Small Business Development, Economic Development & Tourism, and Interstate Cooperation. I am a single parent of 2 adult children.

Georgia in General

Briefly share your qualifications for the office.

As serving for 8 years in the Georgia General Assembly on over a dozens of committees, commissions and boards, it has allowed me to travel around the state to better understand how policies impact Rural and Urban areas when effective and ineffective. I worked in a bi-partisan manner to author and co-authored over a dozen bills to improve the lives of Georgians that have been signed into law. I chaired the House Study Committee on the Revitalization of the Atlanta State



Farmers Market which recommendations were accepted by Legislative and Executive bodies. As a small business owner, I understand the importance of survivorship and how small businesses affect our communities through workforce and convenience of products and/or services. As a community advocate, I understand the value of the voice of the people we serve and its importance as part of the equation. I have hosted and co-hosted a number of community oriented events to allow for this dialogue. I have served on PTA and other nonprofit boards along with being assigned to state and national committees. I am a Champion for all Georgians.

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

I am seeking office as an Independent candidate for U.S. Senate in the special election to complete the unexpired term of Sen. Johnny Isakson. It is evident that on the state and local levels we have only been placing bandages on major issues that need to be resolved on the federal level. I want to take my 8 years of proven non-partisan leadership in policies and over 30 years as a small business owner and community advocate to Washington D.C. My priorities are Economic Opportunity (transform our education system, support small business growth), Government Efficiency (stronger coordination between federal, state, and local agencies), Global Stewardship (modernize our global trade programs and international relations). I will encourage market innovations and defend unfair trade practices against Georgia businesses. It is important for the growth of workforce and quality of life to ensure affordable and quality healthcare for all Georgians.

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?



Because Agriculture is Georgia's number 1 revenue generator it is vital to the state to ensure this industry thrives. Due to the pandemic, many farmers were hit hard and still recovering from Hurricane Michael's destruction, so strengthening the safety net for all farmers whether small, medium and large will be crucial especially in the areas of technology. The investment in the infrastructure framework for internet connectivity will be key. The technology can reduce labor cost and increase productivity which will increase revenues for our farmers and speed up the time of delivery to the vital industries which depend heavily on agriculture. Investment in the creation or expansion of agricultural curriculums in middle and high schools located in not only the rural areas but also in the urban areas which will not only bring about better appreciation for agriculture but expose the students to careers related to agriculture. The creation of more co-op programs for the smaller farmers similar to Premium Peanut in Douglas, Georgia will enable them to be more competitive and move their products from the fields to the shelves.

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 purchases commitments?

I plan to make sure that my staff and I are well versed on the free trade and agricultural purchases commitments from foreign countries. It is important to the sustainability of our Georgia farmers that negotiations with the trading partners are beneficial for the farmers. My office will work with my colleagues in D.C. and the federal departments which have oversight of the imports from the trading partners like the Department of Commerce to leverage accountability on their products coming to the shores of Georgia.



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 growing seasons?

It is crucial that Georgia farmers are able to cash in on their products during the growing seasons. My office will work with the Dept. of Commerce International Trade Administration to ensure there are thorough investigations conducted on unfair dumping, countervailing and subsidies which impact competitive pricing by our farmers. If found in violation, then advocate for imposing import duties to the foreign country and provide relief to the farmers for unfairly priced goods. Just as during COVID19, identify ways the products can be distributed to those areas identified as food deserts and in return the farmers can be compensated.

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 plan to establish a Farmers' Advisory Committee to ensure my office remains up to date with the needs of the farmers and likewise being able to distribute information. The agriculture jobs are important and all opportunities to ensuring these jobs are filled will be a top priority. My office will work with the local, state and federal agencies in identifying that balance. At the same time, my office will be committed to encourage market innovations by establishing partnerships with our local technical and 4 year universities and identifying ways the high school college and career academies can assist in workforce and innovation.