



2020 Georgia Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Richard Dien Winfield

*Background Information*

**Education:** BA - Yale College (1972), MA in Philosophy – University of Heidelberg, PhD in Philosophy – Yale University (1977)

**Where is home?** 160 Hampton Court, Athens, GA 30605

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

**Past public offices held:** None

***Additional background information you'd like to share:***

- a. I have been teaching philosophy at the University of Georgia in Athens since 1982, where I am currently Distinguished Research Professor (on unpaid leave as required for running for national office).
- b. I am a member of the United Campus Workers of Georgia, Communications Workers of America Local 3265, which is seeking to unionize all employees of the Georgia state university system.
- c. I am the author of 21 book of philosophy and of one book of public policy, which appeared in 2020 under the title: Democracy Unchained: How We Should Fulfill Our Social Rights and Save Self-Government.
- d. I have a weekly podcast, America Unchained, available on all the major podcast platforms.
- e. I have been married since 1983 to my one and only wife, Sujata Gupta, who grew up in India, attended the UGA Law School and has since been practicing employment discrimination law and, more recently, immigration law.
- f. We have three grown up children who all attended the public schools in Athens, while summering in India with us and my wife's extended family.



- g. In 2018 I ran in the Democratic primary for the US House of Representatives in Georgia's 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and I was identified by the Nation magazine as the first candidate to support a Federal Job Guarantee.

### *Georgia in General*

#### ***Briefly share your qualifications for the office.***

I have worked for four decades thinking and writing about all the great problems of justice that confront humanity. The results of my investigations are so far to be found in 21 books, which are available in all the great research libraries of the world. I have tried to put my ideas on justice into practice in working with the Athens-Clarke County Democratic Party, of which I am a member, and by supporting local, state, and federal candidates. In addition, I have been active in the United Campus Workers of Georgia, CWA Local 3265, since its inception in 2017, supporting its effort to unionize all the employees of the university system of Georgia. My 2018 race for the US of Representatives gave me a chance to dig deeper into the problems of the residents of Georgia's 10<sup>th</sup> District, which contains 25 largely rural counties. My subsequent public policy book Democracy Unchained (Deeds Publishing 2020) exhibits my efforts to work out concrete solutions to the blockages of opportunity that are undermining our democracy.

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

I am running for the US Senate to bring to Washington the fight to recognize and enforce our neglected social rights. Our nation has ignored these rights, leaving far too many of our people without a decent livelihood, a proper balance between work and family, a level playing field between employees and employers, health care, proper housing, access to quality education at all levels, an environmentally sound biosphere, fair legal representation in both civil and criminal cases, true reproductive freedom (including the resources to afford the children one wants), and genuine equal political opportunity.



I advocate wiping out unemployment and poverty income with a Federal Job Guarantee tied to a fair minimum wage starting at \$20/hr and keeping pace with inflation and productivity gains, and equivalent replacement income for those who cannot work. The Federal Job Guarantee will enable us to put millions of people to work providing the goods and services we need, including repairing and extending our public infrastructure, building green energy installations, expanding the cultivation of biofuels without impinging upon the supply of food crops, extending broadband to all, fixing dilapidated housing and building new units as needed, expanding medical facilities so that no region lacks sufficient health care providers, providing public child and elder care, and extending public transportation so that no one is stranded in cities, suburbs, or rural areas. To fulfill our right to medical care, I advocate a Medicare for All program covering all physical, dental, mental, and long-term health care with no copays or deductibles. To save our planet from devastating climate change, I support a Green New Deal aiming to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030. To balance work and family, I support paid family leave (including a 9 month paid parental leave when a newborn arrives), one month paid vacation for all employees, free public child and elder care, and a \$900 monthly child allowance to cover the expense of childrearing. To achieve proper balance between employees and employers, I support automatic elections for union representations in all enterprises with multiple employees and reserving half the seats on corporate boards for employees elected by their peers. To end homeless and housing insecurity, I support a permanent ban on evictions, foreclosures, and utility turnoffs with mandatory payment rescheduling, as well as national rent stabilization and using the Federal Job Guarantee to build an adequate supply of affordable housing so that everyone can have a decent home, fully equipped with all needed utilities, including broadband. To fulfill our right to education, I support equitable Federal Funding of public schools to increase the pay of teachers and staff, decrease class size, and ensure that no one's zip code determines how much is spent on their children's education. In addition, I support cancelling the crushing burden of student debt and providing both free tuition and stipends to all full-time students at public institutions of post-secondary education. To secure equal opportunity to protect our rights in the courts, I support a Legal Care for All public legal insurance program that will cover all expenses of personal criminal and civil legal counsel, as well as abolishing cash bail, for-profit prisons and probation services, and plea bargaining. Finally, I support tax reform to relieve the bottom 90% of income and wealth from all Federal taxes and to use highly graduated



income and wealth taxes to put the entire federal tax burden on those who can most easily shoulder the burden, the top 10% and especially the top 1% of income and wealth. All these measures will fundamentally transform our rural districts by providing the public investment and economic security and independence that has been lacking. In face of the Coronavirus pandemic and the accompanying global Great Depression, these measures are more crucial than ever.

### *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?***

Any farm bill must address the following needs:

- 1) We must provide fair wages and benefits, as well as union representation, to all farm and agriculture industry employees.
- 2) We must ensure that independent farmers are protected from the predations of agribusiness food processing monopolies that have been squeezing them without mercy.
- 3) We must ensure that public policy fosters the expansion of biofuel production without conflicting with our food production needs.
- 4) We must ensure that farms big and small do not overuse antibiotics and chemicals that degrade our environment.
- 5) We must not subsidize agribusiness monopolies at the expense of small farmers, farm employees, and consumers.
- 6) In face of the COVID19 pandemic and global economic crisis, we must keep all farm businesses, agricultural supply enterprises, and agriculture employees solvent by providing payroll support and replacement income as needed and rescheduling all rent, mortgage, utility, and debt payments while suspending evictions, foreclosures, utility turnoffs, and repossessions.



- 7) We must not support tariff policies that raise consumer prices and invite foreign retaliation without guaranteeing any increase of domestic production and employment.

## *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?***

We must end the unilateral trade moves perpetrated by the Trump administration that have raised consumer prices, invited retaliation by foreign trade partners, and wasted huge sums of taxpayer money in covering the damage that could have been avoided. Instead, we must enter negotiations with our trading partners and find solutions that are to the advantage of all sides. Free trade is no panacea, but neither are unilateral impositions of tariffs and quotas. With the world being ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic and advancing climate change, we must enlist more international cooperation than ever before. Any trade agreement we pursue must promote the economic welfare of employees and consumers in every country, as well as climate change mitigation.

***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?***



We cannot expect to bar other nations from “dumping” fresh fruits and vegetables during Georgia growing seasons if we do the same in “dumping” our agriculture produce in foreign markets to the detriment of those countries’ domestic farmers. We must negotiate multilateral agreements that regulate “dumping” on all sides, as well as countervailing duties. Meanwhile, we must fulfill the job guarantee social rights agenda that will provide economic security to all residents of our nation, including all rural residents. Our trade policy should be committed to maintaining agricultural employment with high wages and proper benefits.

### *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?***

We need to give legal status to all undocumented residents who have been in our country for one year or more, including DACA and TPS beneficiaries. In addition, we need to increase our visa quotas for unskilled as well as skilled workers. We must extend all rights and benefits to agricultural employees, including a fair minimum wage and access to Medicare for All, Legal Care for All, Social Security, public education at all levels, and full union rights. If we have comprehensive immigration reform and if farms and agribusiness pay proper wages, they will have less difficulty attracting the needed workforce. The Federal Job Guarantee will ensure that no US residents will have their livelihood endangered by immigration. Moreover, when immigrants are paid fair wages, starting at \$20/hr, with proper employee empowerment, immigrant labor will not depress wages. When all farm enterprises are required to do the right thing and pay fair wages, none will be at a competitive disadvantage in so doing. This is the genuine American Way.