



2020 Georgia Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Name: **Senator Kelly Loeffler**

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1) Education:
 - a. DePaul University, Kellstadt Graduate School of Business
 - i. MBA, International Finance and Marketing
 - b. University of Illinois, College of Commerce and Business Administration
 - i. B.S., Marketing
- 2) Where is home?
 - a. Atlanta, Georgia.
- 3) Do you currently hold a public office? If so, how long have you held your current office?
 - a. Yes; 7 months.
- 4) Past public offices held:
 - a. None. I have spent my life in the private sector as a businesswoman and job creator.
- 5) Additional background information you'd like to share:
 - a. I was raised as the 4th generation on our family soybean farm, where I learned the importance of faith, family, and hard work. I grew up working in the fields, then waitressed my way through school. I was the first in my family to graduate from college. And after college, I worked my way up – living paycheck to paycheck – until I got my foot in the door in business. Over the last 25 years, I have built a successful career – growing a small startup company into a Fortune 500 company that employs over 6,000 people today. With a little hard work and a lot of faith in God, I have been blessed to live the American Dream. And as United States Senator, I am working to protect that American Dream from the radical left and career politicians – who seek to attack our conservative values and disrupt our way of life.

Georgia in General

- 1) Briefly share your qualifications for the office.
 - a. After spending my life in the private sector, I know how to deliver results and get things done. But I also know how big government and the radical left choke off innovation, crush growth, and end any path to the American Dream. As a proud conservative, I am passionate about defending these and other conservative values. And as a political outsider, I know how to get things done to make sure we move our conservative agenda forward.



- 2) Please indicate the reasons you are seeking election and your priorities, overarching policy interests, and any solutions for district-specific challenges.
 - a. I knew I wanted to come to Washington to protect the American Dream for future generations. Too many in Washington have stood by and let Democrats erode the foundations of our country. That is why we need leaders in Washington who won't back down—who will stand up for Georgians, support our President, and who will urgently protect the American Dream. As a conservative businesswoman, I'm standing strong with President Trump to protect our faith, our families, our borders, our jobs, the Second Amendment, our law enforcement officers, and the sanctity of life. I'm proud to be the only candidate in my race with a clear record of fighting the left and defending conservative values every single day in the U.S. Senate.

Farm Bill

- 1) 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?

The Farm Bill is the single most important piece of agricultural legislation regularly considered in Congress. The programs funded through the Farm Bill's five-year authorization provide essential support for both new and established farms and help ensure that our agricultural economies are sound and productive.

Our top priorities with the Farm Bill should be twofold. First, we need to ensure that our farmers have an appropriate safety net to protect against the uncertainties of the industry. Second, we need to bolster support for farmers given the unfavorable economic conditions that the industry faces today.

Georgia has a very diverse agriculture footprint, and our state-grown commodities don't fit neatly into categories like other states. Producers of cotton, peanuts, poultry, eggs, blueberries, pecans, timber, peaches, corn, soybeans, beef, dairy, and an emerging citrus industry all contribute to the strongest agricultural economy in the country - but specialty farmers face an array of unique challenges. While crop insurance is critical for farmers across our state, they also need unique protections against low commodity prices, unfair trade, and the devastation caused by multiple natural disasters.

The bottom line is it's never been harder to be a Georgia farmer. That's why it's critical for any future Farm Bill to include crop insurance, disaster relief, marketing expansion and trade mitigation programs to prepare for an uncertain future. As your U.S. Senator and a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I'm at the table fighting to deliver these provisions for Georgia farmers and working hard to support and protect the federal programs and safety nets provided through the Farm Bill.



Trade

- 2) 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?

The tireless efforts of President Trump and other trade officials have yielded major results for Georgia's farmers. In the last few years, trade negotiations with the Chinese Government have reopened China's markets for Georgia poultry, cotton, and peanuts, among others. While this progress has been welcome news for Georgia farmers fighting against depressed market prices, natural disasters, and a generally unfair trade environment, these trade deals are only as strong as their enforceability and our consequences for defection.

The Trump Administration had the foresight to include strong enforcement mechanisms in the China Phase One Deal. However, China will continue to evade fair trade practices and must be policed strictly. The federal government must ensure increased investment from non-government entities and induce the Chinese government to resume its large-scale agriculture purchases from Georgia producers.

The Trump Administration was also successful in securing a trade deal with Japan - which has shown good faith in its commitment to fair trade with our nation. Once fully implemented, the deal will provide tariff and duty-free access for Georgia products like blueberries, poultry, and eggs - and will further open the Asian market for our farmers. Japan has been a beneficial trading partner of ours for decades and I am thrilled that our economic relationship is growing ever stronger.

But if either Japan or China continues to advance unfair trade practices that take advantage of Georgia producers, or defects on their commitment to purchase American goods, our nation must cease to provide a reciprocally fair-trade climate. As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I will continue to use my power to hold China and others accountable on these trade deals. The bottom line is, foreign governments - especially the Communist Party of China - will do anything to grow its economy at the expense of the American worker and farmer. We cannot take compliance at face value.

- 3) 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?

The USMCA is a major trade accomplishment for American manufacturers, agri-businesses, and farmers. And while it served as a meaningful update to NAFTA, the final deal lacked crucial language dealing with the biggest threat to Georgia fruit and vegetable producers.

Year after year, Georgia fruit and vegetable farmers are forced to compete with inexplicably cheap imports from Mexico that are dumped weeks before our local products enter the market. There is no doubt that these foreign operations are both subsidized and supported by the Mexican government. And while our state is capable of competing in any agriculture market as long as the environment is fair, the current situation is far from fair. And I've been taking concrete action to end illegal dumping and restore a fair commercial environment for Georgia's farmers.

Seasonal dumping from Mexico was one of the first issues brought up in my first conversations with Georgia farmers after I was sworn in. Early in my term, I was notified that USTR was ready to prioritize this issue when Ambassador Lighthizer wrote me to announce a field hearing in Valdosta for officials to hear testimony from Georgia farmers on the matter. Although the USTR field hearing was postponed due to COVID-19, I sent a letter to USTR's Chief Agriculture Negotiator, Gregg Doud, reiterating the untenable environment for Georgia's fruit and vegetable farmers and requesting that the field hearing be rescheduled as soon as safety allowed. (USTR has now scheduled a virtual hearing for August.)

Regardless of the future of our current health crisis, the federal government promised Georgia that it would move on this issue 60 days after USMCA entered into force, which means USTR will begin the official investigation necessary to legally address seasonal dumping in federal trade courts in September. Rest assured, I will stay on top of this problem until Georgians are once again able to compete in a fair environment.

Ag Labor

- 4) 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?

It has never been more difficult to be a farmer. Recent natural disasters, low market prices, and unfair trade have all contributed to an environment where Georgia farmers are fighting daily for survival. On top of all that, Georgia farmers are forced to work around an incredibly unreliable labor market. We need to continue to ensure Georgia farmers have the fair and legal American workforce they need to succeed.