

## Issues

### Education — Read my full education plan here (<http://roycooper.com/education>)

We need to make education a priority. Governor McCrory has prioritized huge tax giveaways to big corporations and those at the top while he cut teaching assistants and failed to provide the resources our children need and to pay our teachers what they deserve.

We have to give more pay and respect to teachers, and to treat them as the professionals they are. Among the top priorities are increasing teacher pay, reversing cuts to textbooks and school buses, and stopping teacher assistant lay-offs.



(<http://www.roycooper.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/RAC-925.jpg>)

Teachers will ultimately know we respect them when our policy reflects our rhetoric. Reinstating a teaching fellows program to attract the best and brightest, providing opportunities for teachers to improve their skills as professionals, and making sure their kids are healthy and ready to learn in the classroom are vital.

North Carolina already ranks 46th in the country and last in the Southeast in per-pupil expenditures for public schools. Many good teachers are leaving for other states for better jobs, and class size has increased. That's causing parents to lose faith in public schools and undermining North Carolina's best jobs recruiting tool, our education system.

Similarly, I oppose vouchers that drain money from public schools. I support strong standards and openness for all schools, particularly charter schools. While some charters are strong, we see troubling trends, such as a re-segregation of the student population, or misuse of state funds without a way to make the wrongdoers reimburse taxpayers. We need to manage the number of charter schools to ensure we don't damage public education and we need to better measure charter schools so we can utilize good ideas in all schools.

We must support early childhood education as well as our great universities and community colleges. Our approach to quality education must be comprehensive.

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### Jobs and Economy — Read my full jobs plan here (<http://www.roycooper.com/jobs>)

I am running for Governor because it is time that North Carolina works for everyone, not just the select few. I am concerned that as unemployment begins to drop, wages are not beginning to rise. I believe we have made budget and tax decisions that have been driven more by ideology than by sound thinking on how to grow the economy and create more opportunity. I know that we can do better. We need a new set of priorities that focuses on rising incomes, putting more money in the pockets of working families, and helping small businesses start up and grow.

Small businesses are a vital component of our economy. While some of the biggest companies, including out-of-state corporations, have received tremendous giveaways, many of our small businesses and working families have seen tax increases, sometimes disguised as fees. Some believe that we should zero out the corporate tax and income tax in favor of much higher sales taxes, gas taxes, and a host of fee hikes. I think that would harm our economy and put our state at a disadvantage. Moreover, I am concerned about an economic development plan that focuses mostly on lower corporate taxes instead of having a real, holistic plan to streamline regulations, invest in our workforce, create a fair but low tax environment, and recruit, retain, and start up businesses in the biggest growth sectors of our economy.

When I speak with CEOs that run businesses in this state or who are thinking about moving here, the first question they ask me is "do you have the people to do the jobs I create?" Today, North Carolina has 59 community colleges, 23 workforce development boards, and 78 career centers across the state. We have a significant infrastructure to help us develop those employees. What I believe we are lacking is leadership. A unified, coordinated, and streamlined workforce development system can be an incredible advantage for our state and it will be an important focus during my time as Governor.

I also believe that we can do a better job of supporting the small and medium-sized businesses we already have in North Carolina. We can look to innovative ways to leverage small amounts of public money for much larger amounts of private capital. We can and should put regulations under consumer and efficiency reviews that make it less burdensome for small businesses to comply with the law while also protecting people and honest businesses from bad actors. For our start-up companies, building on the success we have had using our university system is critical.

Connecting small business incubators, our best and brightest minds, and the research capabilities of our higher education institutions has proven to be an economic winner for this state and we must create a business environment that encourages this. State government needs to learn when to help and when to stay out of the way.



Finally, the image of this state is important. We are in a war for talent, and companies that can't attract the right talent will leave, or perhaps never come to this state. Divisive politics and words of intolerance are harmful to our state and used against us by others recruiting for the same businesses and the same jobs. The fact is in 2010, an immigrant or child of an immigrant founded 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies. North Carolina women are starting businesses at a rate of 1.5 times the national average. We have arguably the nation's finest university system. But being the butt of jokes for late night comedy shows is self-sabotage when it comes to economic recruitment and development.

Ultimately, I believe we now lack leadership and vision. Many of our recruitment efforts of companies out of state have failed, partly because we don't match the incentives of other states, but even more so because our approach to economic development is too ad hoc. What we need is a leader with a laser focus on creating good paying jobs and lifting wages. A leader who understands the tools of economic development, the needs of business, the competitive advantage our state has in a global economy, and the role education plays in creating critical talent for a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. That is the type of leader I was as a small business owner, as Senate Majority Leader, and now as Attorney General. And I am ready to bring that strong leadership to this state as Governor.

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### Health Care

North Carolinians should be able to get a doctor's help when they need it without breaking the bank. I am appalled by North Carolina's failure to expand Medicaid to its neediest residents, especially when our tax dollars are already going to pay for it in other states. Republican governors nationwide have said yes to health care for the working poor, why not North Carolina?

I remain concerned about the rising cost of health care and the consolidation of health care providers across our state, especially in underserved areas. Expanding Medicaid would give us more providers and an economic boost from jobs.



But what we shouldn't do is walk away from successful provider groups like NC Community Cares, which economizes and prioritizes care for Medicaid eligible recipients. Turning to MCOs is a risky move, which has had questionable results in other states, and I have concerns about their safeguards for patients and taxpayers.

While North Carolina alone can't solve the problem of rising healthcare costs, I worked with legislators to restore some fairness for consumers in 2013. The ideas include multiple reforms to hospital collection practices that help consumers, giving patients more time to request an itemized health care bill, requiring that bills be written in easy-to-understand language, requiring providers to verify whether they are in a patient's insurance network, requiring health care facilities to give refunds for billing errors within 60 days, and prohibiting hospitals from charging patients for services that would have been covered by an insurance plan if the hospital submitted paperwork on time.

### Environment

A strong economy and a healthy environment go hand-in-hand. I am glad North Carolina has become a leader in renewable energy technology and that energy companies are shifting toward more sustainable power supplies than coal.

As Attorney General, I have disagreed with the state environmental regulators who were focused on scoring political points rather than protecting our water, air and other natural resources. North Carolina solutions, with input from citizens, are the best ways to create jobs and pursue sound environmental policy that preserves natural resources and public health.

As a legislator and as Attorney General, I have supported successful efforts like North Carolina's Clean Smokestacks Act, which I used to limit TVA's pollution in our mountains, and the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard. Pursuing alternative energy production has benefited our environment and our economy. It has been a growth industry in North Carolina, creating multiple wins for our state.

Meanwhile, I have opposed the efforts of utilities to raise rates on customers to benefit shareholders unnecessarily, and continue to oppose the efforts of utilities to pass on to ratepayers the costs of expenditures like coal ash cleanup. Unfortunately, environmental damage has left some residents of our state unsure about the quality of their drinking water, and some are still drinking bottled water due to questionable water test

results. What happened to the Dan River during the Governor's watch should not happen again to any of the state's rivers and streams. The coal ash cleanup should move forward quickly and effectively in line with what the science and public health officials recommend to ensure the integrity of our water supply and waterways.

As Attorney General, I have awarded over \$25 million in grants to groups across North Carolina including land trusts, soil and water conservation districts, and other environmental and conservation groups with a focus on acquiring, restoring and protecting lands to protect the state's waterways and water quality. With the Albermarle-Pamlico Natural Estuary comprising one of the nation's largest estuaries, these funds have played a critical role in enhancing an environment with incredible natural diversity that is also the source for many North Carolinians' livelihoods as well as their recreation.



## Voting Rights

As Governor, I will fight to:

- Reinstatement same-day voter registration
- Extend early voting from 10 to 17 days
- Allow for online voter registration
- Rollback voter ID and pass laws that encourage voting

Governor McCrory is making it harder for people to register and vote when we should be making it easier. I will work to expand voter opportunities and create a non-partisan Redistricting Commission to make voting districts fair and competitive.



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