



REPUBLICANS HAVE MADE A REAL DIFFERENCE FOR FAMILIES. WE'VE MADE PROGRESS, AND WE'RE GOING TO DO MUCH MORE.

1. Put more money in people's pockets by encouraging job creation and higher wages

- Georgia earned national distinction as best place to do business for five years running (Site Selection Magazine).
- New business and small business creation, expansion by existing businesses, and strong relocation growth to create and provide jobs.
- More Georgians working today and wages growing faster than national average.
- Passed legislation cutting state personal and corporate income tax rates from 6% to 5.75% in 2019 and 5.5% in 2020. Provided first state income tax reduction since implemented in 1934.
- Invested in infrastructure to fuel a more prosperous future:
 - Atlanta airport ranked first worldwide in passenger volume since 2000 and continues expanding.
 - Committed funding to deepen Savannah port, ranked fourth nationally by container volume. Began deepening 39 miles of Savannah River from 42 to 47 feet with completion projected January 2022. Enlarged the Brunswick port to move 600,000 automobiles last year; ranked second in this regard nationally. Invested in inland ports to relieve roads of truck traffic and increase freight efficiency.
 - Implemented policies to support nine military installations, soldiers and their families, responsible for 130,000 jobs directly and indirectly.
 - Targeted higher funding to road and bridge improvements than ever, surpassing almost every state per capita. Increasing road safety for all Georgians, reducing congestion and helping businesses move products more efficiently.
- Broadened state's economy significantly since Great Recession through initiatives encouraging 21st century manufacturing and agribusiness, film production, high tech, data center and healthcare business expansion.
- Targeted technical college and university programs in high demand areas. Georgia offers 17 technical college programs tuition-free through HOPE grant in fields with a 99% placement rate. Also, students earn higher credit towards the HOPE scholarship GPA at 4-year colleges for STEM courses required in high demand areas.



2. Prioritized K-12 students and teachers

- Fully funded student funding formula statewide in budget this session for first time since formula implemented 33 years ago (QBE, Quality Basic Education formula).
- Increased education funding per student every year since Great Recession to highest level per capita, inflation-adjusted, in state history. Total K-12 education funding is almost \$10 billion (out of a \$26 billion state budget). Added funding for 400 more buses this year.
- Highest graduation rate ever at 80%. When Gov. Perdue took office in 2003, graduation rate stood at 67%.
- Committed to assuring more students graduate and targeting funds where it will make the greatest difference. For example, dual enrollment for high school students leads to more students graduating and moving more quickly through technical college and four-year degree programs. Expanded career academies, high schools that offer practical skills training and dual enrollment.
- Provided students with more educational options through streamlined process and increased funding for dual enrollment; state-offered online AP courses; expanded \$100 million in tax credits for students attending private schools (this year); and more equitable funding for public charter schools (this year).
- State funded \$2 billion in total teacher/professor retirement in final budget this session, which is \$360 million more than originally budgeted, to maintain actuarially-sound pensions for teachers/professors. Georgia is committed to teachers through one of most generous pension programs in nation. (FYI- \$360 million is equivalent to a 3% salary increase for ALL state employees. Teachers represent 60% of state employees).

3. Helping our most vulnerable citizens, including at-risk youth, the elderly, the abused and those with disabilities

- Georgians can be proud of their generosity towards the vulnerable and needy.
- In fact, state taxpayers provide \$3.2 billion annually in healthcare services through Medicaid to one-in-six Georgians. From covering 55% of births in Georgia, to serving as de facto long-term care insurance for many (75% in nursing homes rely on Medicaid), to providing end-of-life care in hospice, the state offers 117 categories of mandated and optional Medicaid services that range from cradle to grave.



- Our state funds another \$2 billion for services for the aged and developmentally disabled, for addictive diseases, behavioral and mental health and public health. Legislators increased foster care reimbursement and modernized adoption laws to facilitate more forever-homes for children in foster care. Increased social worker salaries (DFACS) and raised foster care reimbursement rate.
- State funds Medicaid and other safety net services for the vulnerable at a cost to Georgia citizens of \$500 each.

4. Supported affordable and more accessible healthcare for Georgians

- Making healthcare more accessible and affordable has taken many forms.
- Added medical residencies in primary care (especially in underserved areas).
- Increased Medicaid reimbursement rate for (many) primary care office visits to encourage more doctors to accept Medicaid patients.
- Increased funding for adult and children's mental health.
- Expanded number of community health centers (federally qualified health clinics) in communities to serve those without health insurance.
- Targeted funds to rural hospitals through \$60 million tax credit program, which was improved this session.
- Prioritized 2018 legislation on rural healthcare reform to facilitate innovative hospital design and support hospitals and providers serving citizens in rural areas.

5. Made Georgia safer, including our schools

- We grieve for the families' losses in the tragedies at schools recently. We grieve also for families that have lost loved ones from homicide, suicide and in accidents on our highways. Will continue working to assure our schools are secure; law enforcement is supported and responds appropriately; and mental health aid increases.
- Sensationalizing of mass shootings has created a misperception of an ever-rising tide of murder and mayhem. The facts are otherwise. And when we create law and policy for 10.3 million Georgians, we have a responsibility to channel our efforts where they can make the greatest difference.



Donna **Sheldon**

STATE HOUSE

- Homicide rates in the U.S. have decreased dramatically over the last couple of decades from 9 per 100,00 in the early 1990s to 4.5 more recently. According to a March 2018 WSJ article, mass killings at schools and colleges totaled 150 persons since 1990. That is 150 persons in almost 30 years (incidents involving 3 or more persons). As tragic as the events at Parkland school in Florida, events such as this are uncommon. In fact, according to 2016 FBI statistics, rifles accounted for 368 of the 17,250 homicides in the U.S. the year. Far more young people die from opioid overdose, suicide and automobile accidents.
- According to a New Yorker article in March 2018, American children do not “risk their lives” when they show up to school each morning — or at least, not nearly as much as they do whenever they ride in a car, swim in a pool, or put food in their mouths (an American’s lifetime odds of dying in a mass shooting committed in any location is 1 in 11,125; of dying in a car accident is 1 and 491; of drowning is 1 in 1,133; and of choking on food is 1 in 3,461). Criminal victimization in American schools has collapsed in tandem with the overall crime rate, leaving U.S. classrooms safer today than at any time in recent memory.
- Georgia has made progress in many aspects of public safety through increased mental health funds for children and adults; strengthened laws on domestic, child and elder abuse and sexual trafficking; increased state patrol officer salaries (20%) to address officer shortages; and taken steps to strengthen K-12 school security, including an additional \$16 million for this purpose in budget this session.
- Numerous policies implemented to restrict and monitor pill mills and overprescription of opioids and increase availability of overdose antidotes.
- Investing more than ever in road improvements and construction, which will result in safer travel for families and young drivers. Passed more restrictive driver licensing and training for young drivers. Became 16th state to regulate hand-held cell phone use this session to reduce highway fatalities, up sharply in recent years due to distracted driving, according to Dept. of Highway Safety (legislation effective July 1).
- Expanded education programs for detained youth to help them obtain a GED or graduate high school and for adults incarcerated in state prisons to assist them in becoming productive citizens upon release. Breaking cycle of recidivism means fewer crimes against law-abiding citizens. In this regard, Georgia established drug courts in almost every judicial circuit to encourage those with drug and alcohol-related addiction and offenses to turn their lives around, get jobs and support their families.