

Opening Statement

Good afternoon.

My name is Jonathan Jordan.

I am your current representative in the NC General Assembly.

I've been honored by you to serve in the past, and I am reapplying once again.

When you sent me to Raleigh in 2010, our state was in a mess due to the Great Recession.

Unlike all our families, however, State government was not making the same tough choices. We were awash in debt to the federal government, red ink up and down our entire budget. We had to make difficult decisions and prioritize our spending.

Thanks to the decision you made to send me to join the new team in Raleigh, we are on a better path, a path to prosperity. Other states are still looking at making tough decisions, year after budget year.

In the meantime, North Carolina's economy has continued to improve. We are in the top five improved on any list of financial, business, economic development, or tax indicators that's out there.

I'd like your support to go back to Raleigh and continue to be your advocate. Because in my book, promises made are promises kept.

I am Jonathan Jordan and I am asking for your vote this May 8 primary and in November this fall.

God Bless America and God Bless North Carolina.

What do you feel makes you the more electable candidate?

Thank you for the question. I am the more electable candidate because I have already been chosen by you four times in the past to be your advocate in Raleigh.

And I am proud of my record of service to our district.

I am applying to you for another term in office.

When you first elected me to go to Raleigh and find out what was going wrong, we found red ink by the barrel. We owed billions (with a "B") to the federal government for unpaid unemployment bills. Billions that had been used to backfill for state revenues that had been dropping due to the Great Recession.

Unlike our families and all other hard-working North Carolinians, our State government had not been fiscally responsible.

We had to go in, make tough decisions, and prioritize our spending.

Fast forward to now. In our latest budget we have been able to increase funding for education, for healthcare, for courts and law enforcement, for transportation.

At the same time, we have cut your income taxes several percentage points and changed a progressive, 3-tier income tax system to a single, flat-percentage.

Finally, we have been adding to our savings, our rainy day reserves, preparing for the next recession around the corner.

I am proud we are at a point in our budgeting that we can provide for all of these priorities.

And now North Carolina is at the top of all the economic development lists. Whether it is lowering our tax burden on individuals and job creators, improving our standing as a place where job creators are attracted, or keeping the highest financial ratings as a place to invest, I am proud to have contributed my share to this great improvement.

I am Jonathan Jordan, and if you like these policy decisions and the economic prosperity that have come with these policies, please give me your vote this May 8 and later on in November. Thank you!

Where do you stand on smaller class sizes in public education and funding for enhancement courses such as arts, music, and physical education?

In the past it seemed that everyone could agree that smaller class sizes would benefit our students.

However, local school systems can't just build more classrooms.

A new classroom requires 17 to 20 extra students, but local systems were dealing with maybe 1 or 2 extra students per class each year.

The General Assembly had been providing extra teacher money to provide for smaller class sizes for more than 20 years. Rather than construct new classrooms that would be under-utilized, local systems typically used those funds to instead pay for their enhancement or non-core teachers, such as art and music and PE.

When the General Assembly actually moved to require smaller class sizes, many local systems complained that they were now forced to choose between smaller class sizes and these enhancement teachers.

After hearing from local systems for a year or so, we had a special session earlier this year and have now provided local schools a dedicated funding line in the budget so they could keep these enhancement teachers and at the same time, we loosened up the timeline on smaller class size requirements, pushing it out to the 2018-19 school year.

So we've taken a strong first step to addressing the issues of smaller classes.

You know, very often the legislature is accused of making local school systems make difficult choices. Unfortunately, it is often their own decisions made by those local systems, using the broad discretion that we have authorized them, that put them in tough positions.

I always stand ready to help our local schools with any needs they have, but I will not be a casual target for decisions that are out of my hands, decisions that sometimes come from our local systems.

I am Jonathan Jordan and my own kids are in our local public schools.

I am committed to improving the education of all of our children and I ask for your vote again this May 8 primary and later on in November. Thank you.

What do you see as the most pressing issues in this district and what approach would you recommend to the General Assembly?

Let me mention three issues that I think are important to our district and then expand a little bit. Those issues are school safety, the widening of Highway 221, and mental health.

The Speaker of our State House created a school safety committee that has been looking at proposals to address this crucial issue. We will hear these results and debate approaches to school safety when we convene for the short session in May. I welcome any suggestions you would like to offer on this topic.

Locally, the widening of Highway 221, is perhaps the biggest economic development project for our area.

With it will come many changes, and we need to be thinking ahead about dealing with them. It should bring more tourists but also open up access to our area by more employers. We need to continue to search for ways to use this project to help our local area.

I stand ready to work with all our local elected officials and I encourage you to contact all of us with your concerns and constructive suggestions.

Finally, I have begun exploring some ways to help improve our local mental health programs. At the same time, this would also help address and identify issues with school safety.

One proposal might be a local center where anyone with mental health concerns could meet with peers who've faced similar troubles. This type of counseling can be a very effective way of addressing mental health issues that otherwise might result in a negative encounter with law enforcement or an expensive trip to our hospital emergency room.

These are just a few of the issues that face our local district. Statewide we have many other pressing concerns.

I am Jonathan Jordan and I have the experience so many others lack to deal with a very wide variety of critical public policy issues in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner.

If you agree with my current and past record of service, I would humbly ask for your vote again this year, in the May 8 primary and later on in November.

God Bless America and God Bless North Carolina.