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Q1 About Candidates

Candidate Name	Natasha Marcus
District	Senate District 41
Party Affiliation	Democrat
Campaign Website	www.NatashaMarcus.com

Q2 What has been your personal experience with nonprofits as a board member, employee, volunteer, or donor? How do these experiences shape your policy positions? (Limit: 300 words)

I have been a volunteer at my favorite nonprofit, the Ada Jenkins Center, for more than 10 years and last September, I joined the staff as the assistant development director. My experiences at the AJC have deeply influenced my perspective on policy. I've interacted with uninsured working families, who are often facing serious illness and have no way to pay for care, which has inspired me to be an advocate for universal health insurance. I've listened as our social workers share stories of single moms learning how to provide for their children on poverty-level wages, which has inspired me to support raising the minimum wage and affordable housing. I've studied the "benefits cliff" and the impacts of prejudice and privilege on intergenerational poverty, and seen how long-term investments in people are the only way to break the cycle of poverty. I know that many poor children, especially children of color, are not getting a quality education and must rely on the AJC after-school enrichment program to try to catch up to their peers, which inspires me to advocate for better funding for public schools in order to lower class sizes, provide classroom resources and recruit and retain quality teachers.

I have also been a volunteer foster parent with the Lake Norman Humane, which has inspired me to be an advocate for animal-rights legislation and laws to encourage neuter/spay efforts.

I've been a donor to and volunteer for many other nonprofits, locally and nationwide, in order to support their missions to improve our society -- such as Eliminate the Digital Divide, Equality NC, the Davidson Community Players, Habitat for Humanity, the Davidson Housing Coalition, The Catawba Riverkeeper, NPR/WFAE, and so many more. I believe that we should put our time and funds into the causes that matter.

Four Questions for Candidates for Office in 2018

Q3 If elected, what would be your top three policy priorities? (Limit: 250 words)

It's hard to choose just three priorities because there are many important changes we need to make.

That said, public education, from pre-K through university, is my first concern. Too many students are falling behind, dropping out or otherwise not meeting their potential due to lack of access to pre-K, overcrowded classrooms, outdated textbooks and classroom materials, unprecedented teacher turnover, lack of resources to address issues which distract students from learning, the increasing cost of college, and so much more. We need quality public education for all kids, so they are prepared to be good citizens and ready for the workplace.

Second, we need to make healthcare more affordable and accessible to everyone, by setting up a state insurance marketplace to encourage competition among providers and by covering more than 500,000 North Carolinians by expanding Medicaid.

Third, we need to protect our water sources from polluters who seek to avoid responsibility for their damage and to pass the costs of clean up on to ratepayers.

Q4 What is your position on these tax issues that affect charitable nonprofits?

Preserving or expanding tax exemption for charitable nonprofits

5 (strongly support)

Encouraging individuals and businesses to give generously to nonprofits serving their communities

5 (strongly support)

Please add any comments about tax policies that affect nonprofits. (Limit: 250 words):

Tax exemptions encourage donors to give generously and should be supported by the state. Especially as the state cuts benefits to the clients and causes nonprofits serve, nonprofits need the incentive of tax-exemption to encourage donations. Nonprofits pick up a lot of the extra work that the State will not do or cannot afford, and that work is critical to our quality of life. Tax policy should encourage charitable giving so that nonprofits can continue to do their important work.

Q5 What policies would you propose to promote continued job growth for private employers, including both nonprofit and for-profit business employers? (Limit: 250 words)

Small businesses are the main job creators in our state. Also, 1 of every 10 jobs in NC are at nonprofits, making nonprofits a major source of employment as well. Recent changes to tax policy, such as the elimination of the small business tax credit, have hurt small businesses and should be reversed. When we have a strong middle class that can afford to be consumers, it spurs economic growth. The policies I have outlined above all help bolster a strong middle class. And we need to revamp our state tax policies so that working families and small businesses pay less and the wealthiest pay their fair share.
