

Oct. 26, 2021

Responses from Virginia campaigns for governor to CCSE questions on issues impacting low-income families

Last week, the [Center on Capital & Social Equity](https://www.inequalityink.org/), which operates from Northern Virginia, sent a short list of questions to policy and press people working on the two Virginia campaigns for governor. See:

<https://www.inequalityink.org/resources/Qs%20for%20VA%20gov%20candidates%20-%20Oct%202021%20latest.pdf>

After several attempts, we are pleased that both campaigns sent responses, but would have liked to see more specific answers to many of the questions. Our motivation in asking these questions is to help focus the next governor on the needs of low-income people who make up a large portion of Virginia's population. Their everyday challenges are often ignored by their political representatives. Attention to details and commitment will be keys to developing and implementing policies that will help improve their lives on issues including adequate wages, paid sick days, access to mental health, the cost of living, and affordable health care. We look forward to working with the next administration on these and other matters.

The statements below are presented in the order in which we received them.

Statement from McAuliffe campaign:

"Terry McAuliffe is running for governor to build a Commonwealth that lifts up all Virginians and as governor he will work tirelessly to address the needs of low-income Virginians. Terry has plans to create good-paying jobs, provide every child with a world-class education and make health care more affordable for all. He will raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2024 and ensure that every Virginian has access to paid sick, family and medical leave. As governor,

Terry will also make a record \$2 billion annual investment in education to get every Virginia student online and expand pre-k to 40,000 3 and 4-year old children in need.

"As Virginia's 72nd Governor, Terry fought tirelessly to expand access to health care, and he laid the groundwork to expand Medicaid. He expanded health care coverage to thousands, including Virginians with mental illness and substance abuse disorders, and he launched an innovative program to provide low-income pregnant women with dental care. As Virginia's next governor, Terry will work to make health care more affordable, lower prescription drug costs, and create new options for affordable health care coverage in Virginia."

Statement from Youngkin campaign:

"Glenn Youngkin will go to work for Virginians on Day One as governor to make our Commonwealth the best state to live, work, and raise a family. That means lowering the cost of living, increasing opportunities for all Virginians, and ensuring every child gets the best education.

"As governor, Glenn is going to making Virginians hard earned dollar go further by eliminating the grocery tax, suspending the most recent increase in the gas tax for one year, providing a tax rebate and doubling the standard deduction on state income taxes- totaling \$1500 in savings in year one for a family. Glenn will reinvigorate our economy and grow 400,000 new jobs and 10,000 new startups in the Commonwealth over the next four years.

"We will fund and fix our broken mental health system and ensure our schools are safe so our children can learn.

"Education is the foundation of opportunity and Glenn Youngkin is committed to empowering parents to guide their children's education, restoring academic excellence, and keeping our children safe in Virginia's public schools. Glenn

believes that a student's zip code cannot determine his or her destiny, and will launch 20 new Innovation Charter schools, which will be part of the public school system and provide specialty training and skills-based education to students at all grade levels, while benefitting from partnerships with institutions of higher education and the business community.

Glenn Youngkin will invest in our students by passing the largest education budget in Virginia's history, raising teacher pay, rebuilding our crumbling schools, and investing in special education programs."

For more information contact:

Karl Polzer, Center on Capital & Social Equity – www.equalityink.org – kpolzer1@verizon.net