STATE GUBERNATORIAL

Keisha Lance Bottoms
Democratic

Rick Jackson
Republican

This candidate has not yet responded to the ACS CAN questionnaire.

TOBACCO TAX

Commercial tobacco use is the single leading cause of cancer and preventable death, taking the lives of more than 11,700 Georgians each year and costing our state $3.69 billion in health care costs directly caused by smoking. Smoking also causes about 30% of all cancer deaths in Georgia. Increasing the cigarette tax by $1.50 per pack would decrease youth smoking by 10.3%, help 28,500 people who smoke quit, and bring in $328.6 million in new revenue in the first 12 months. Georgia hasn't raised the tax on cigarettes since 2003. If elected, will you support a $1.50 per pack cigarette tax increase with a parallel tax on all other tobacco products including e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches and dedicating a portion of the tax revenue to fund youth tobacco prevention programs and services to help people quit?

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Yes

Georgia's cigarette tax has remained at just 37 cents per pack since 2003, while tobacco-related health care costs have continued to rise. This is also an issue that has drawn bipartisan support, with both Democratic and Republican lawmakers in the General Assembly backing tobacco tax increases. As Governor, I will support an increase in the cigarette tax, along with a parallel increase on other tobacco and nicotine products, including e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches. I will dedicate a portion of that revenue to youth tobacco prevention and helping Georgians quit, while also investing additional revenue in critical health priorities including Medicaid, rural hospitals, and maternal and child health. Increasing the tobacco tax will reduce tobacco use, particularly among young people, and reinvest tobacco-generated revenue in the health of Georgians.

TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CESSATION FUNDING

Evidence-based prevention and cessation programs are vital tools in helping Georgians quit tobacco for good and prevent youth from ever starting to use any tobacco products. Currently, the legislature has allocated $2.1 million for the state's tobacco control program, far below the public health recommendation of $106 million annually. If elected, will you support increasing funding for fact-based, statewide tobacco prevention and cessation programs to at least $5.2 million?

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Yes

ACS CAN, the nonprofit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices headed. For more information, visit fightcancer.org.

As Governor, I will ensure that more of the revenue Georgia already receives from tobacco products is invested in preventing tobacco use, helping Georgians quit, protecting young people from nicotine addiction, and reducing the healthcare costs associated with tobacco-related disease. I will strengthen Georgia's investment in tobacco prevention and cessation as federal support for state tobacco-control efforts is uncertain. Georgia should not simply collect revenue from tobacco products while taxpayers continue to bear the cost of the illnesses they cause. We should invest in prevention, cessation, and healthier communities—and make every tobacco dollar work harder to protect the health of Georgians.

ACCESS TO NO-COST CANCER SCREENINGS

Early detection of cancer through screening reduces deaths from cancer, improving patient outcomes, and lowering health care costs. However, not all Georgians have consistent access to no-cost cancer screenings, including the follow-up testing required, where appropriate. If elected, will you support policies that eliminate out-of-pocket costs for proven cancer screenings as well as follow-up tests needed to rule out a cancer diagnosis? Will you support adequate funding for state programs that provide free cancer screenings to uninsured individuals?

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Yes

As Governor, I will support policies that eliminate out-of-pocket costs for proven cancer screenings, follow-up tests and adequate funding for state programs that provide free cancer screenings to uninsured individuals. I will also support full funding of Georgia's Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, which currently provides free mammograms and pap smears to uninsured and underinsured women. Too often, people get an abnormal result and then hit a wall of out-of-pocket costs right at the moment they need answers most, and that delay can be the difference between an early, treatable diagnosis and late-stage diagnosis.

AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE

States, including Georgia, are grappling with how to manage their Medicaid programs in light of budget pressures including cuts to the federal share of Medicaid spending made by Congress in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA) passed in July 2025. Medicaid is essential in supporting access to health insurance for individuals who would otherwise have no coverage options, ultimately improving health outcomes and reducing the burden of cancer on loved ones and health care systems. If elected, will you commit to protecting Georgians' access to affordable, comprehensive health care by preserving funding and access to Medicaid for low-income parents and adults while advocating for full Medicaid expansion that includes increased eligibility up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level?

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Yes

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As Governor, I will support full Medicaid expansion to cover hundreds of thousands of Georgians, bring billions in federal dollars back to Georgia, and reduce uncompensated care, helping bring down health care costs for everyone. Medicaid expansion is the fastest, most proven way to strengthen rural health care, help families avoid medical debt, and bring Georgia's own federal tax dollars back home to support working families and struggling hospitals.

Disclaimer: This questionnaire is for informational and educational purposes only and is intended to educate voters on candidates' stances on issues relevant to our organization's mission. ACS CAN is strictly nonpartisan and does not support or oppose any candidate for public office. Any views expressed in these responses are solely those of the candidates and do not reflect the views or positions of ACS CAN.