

Mark-Anthony Middleton

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### **Government and the Public Good**

1. Of all the issues confronting city government, which single issue is most important to you and why? What would you do about it if elected?

***The belief that all citizens stand equal in the eyes of their government is the absolute bedrock of our democracy. All other issues hinge on this belief. The appearance of “establish justice” before “insure domestic tranquility” in the preamble of the US Constitution is not a haphazard array, it is formulaic. Even slaveowners understood the cry no justice, no peace. The issue of justice is most important to me. Perhaps the most dramatic and immediate representation of living in a just society is the way in which agents of our government, namely the police, treat citizens. Discussions of economic equity, employment opportunities, and affordable housing will be subordinated to the concern for one’s very life and liberty. If elected I will engage my council colleagues to revive and renew the belief that all Durham residents live in a just society through the adoption of ordinances that a.) heavily incentivize and encourage DPD officers to live within Durham city limits b.) require racial bias training (not just implicit bias training) for our police force. c.) make non-enforcement community engagements a part of the review process for promotion within the police department.***

2. What can the city do to lift the wages of the lowest paid workers in Durham and reduce growing income inequality in our community? Where in our community do you see opportunities for city government to address the racial wealth gap?

***As a member of the Durham City Council I will use my mini bully pulpit to encourage our lowest paid workers to pursue education and training that will ready them for participation in Durham's growing and dynamic economy. I will challenge my council colleagues to consider a "Ready Durham" initiative in which the city partners with Durham Technical Community College, identified vocational training programs, and exceptional corporate and not for profit citizens. The Ready Durham initiative will incentivize low paid and unemployed citizens to ready themselves for higher paying jobs through participation in the initiative. If elected I will push to ensure Durham is and remains a living wage city, starting with our own municipal workforce, through the machinations of the contract granting process as well as moral suasion. I will challenge my council colleagues to pursue partnerships with the significant educational and medical (eds and meds) apparatus in the Triangle to make a deliberate commitment to hiring returning, low income, and educationally challenged citizens who have been screened and trained. This is a concept I have seen in action through my work with Durham CAN.***

3. Describe your interest in and commitment to public amenities such as playing fields, open space, street trees, traffic calming, and walking and biking facilities. Are you willing to raise property taxes to provide for and maintain these amenities? Are public amenities allocated to neighborhoods of different wealth and income levels equitably? Please explain and cite examples.

*As a product of an American inner city I experienced firsthand the effects of congestion, dilapidated or non-existent park equipment, and the surrender of public spaces to unintended purposes. The time-honored tradition in the African-American urban culture of sending young people “down south” for the summer was one way of combatting the lack of safe open spaces. My innocence about the benign and equitable planning and placement of parks and open spaces was stolen upon reading Robert Caro’s award-winning biography on urban planner Robert Moses entitled *The Power Broker*. The reality of urban planning is that amenities and traffic calming often are correlative to the wealth and/or influence and racial makeup of the area in question. We have a poignant historical reference point in Durham’s history with regard to the impact of planning on the Hayti community. There is an abundance of anecdotal and scholarly data that extol the physical and psychological benefits of greenspace, open spaces, biking trails, and traffic calming. I subscribe to all of it. Therefore, in short, I am philosophically, intellectually, and through the impact of personal experience open to raising property taxes to provide for and maintain these amenities. I am also open, before crossing the tax increase threshold, to the reallocation of existent funding to underserved areas if I see the “Robert Moses Effect” at play be it intentional or accidental. I am also open to voting against tax increases if the proposed usage for additional funding furthers environmental benefits for some in our city while other areas remain in need of attention. One of the most powerful lessons my years of community organizing and activism has taught me is that if you don’t make any noise then it is assumed that you’re ok. The squeaky wheel truly does get the oil. One of the principles taught in community organizing is that power comes in two forms – organized people and/or organized money. The reality is that public amenities nor anything else are allocated to neighborhoods of different wealth and income levels equitably. To further color the problem wealth and income tend to cut along racial lines. Where the “power” is perceived to be is where the amenities and attention flow by default if there is no interrupting agent. This allocation of*

***amenities by default does not require the presence of conscious racial animus to have a racial impact. Over the years I have sat through many city council proceedings dealing with the allocation of amenities and witnessed the benign neglect poor communities often experience. One example that stays with me and that I will pursue regardless of any election outcome is the condition of the playing field at the Oxford Manor housing development.***

4. How should the city measure the benefits and costs of incentives to promote development especially as those benefits and costs affect low-income residents of Durham? How would you use these measurements when deciding to vote for or against a proposed incentive?

***Over the years I have participated in literally hundreds of panels and forums on strategies to improve our community. Usually the conversation came down to one word – jobs. I once asked an audience of college students “where are you gonna work?” “where do the jobs come from?” Some of the respondents extolled the virtues of entrepreneurialism while the majority echoed the need for companies to hire with an emphasis on diversity. I begin with the belief that low income residents of Durham do not have to permanently remain low income. Incentives for developers to make millions should be held in tension with how many Durham residents could potentially make a living wage by that developer. How many Durham entrepreneurs will an incentivized developer patronize and aid in becoming more profitable? If elected I will subject every vote I am called to cast for incentivizing development to the following litmus tests: will this development add or detract to Durham’s brand as an open, welcoming, and inclusive city?; what net job growth will occur from the development and does the developer/employer have a history and commitment to hiring locally with an emphasis on diversity?; In light of any tax revenue deferments are there any immediate benefits that will accrue to the city during the deferment?; Is there significant***

***opposition from citizens based upon a transparent and well publicized deliberative process by the council?; Does the developer have training and apprenticeship programs aimed at tapping the local employment pool of Durham?; How will this development impact existing Durham interests and businesses?; Is there a demonstrated commitment to affordable housing on the part of the developer?***

5. What actions should the city take to expand job creation and job quality? In your answer, please comment on the city's potential involvement in entrepreneurship, worker-owned cooperatives, and union organizing.

***Job creation by definition implies a commitment to sensible and principled development. If elected I will advocate and seek to broker partnerships with corporate citizens that will train and hire locally in Durham. I should reiterate my firm belief however that a part of Durham's commitment to job creation must also be a steadfast commitment to job readiness. (See my earlier response regarding my Ready Durham initiative). Durham has a vibrant and growing economy. I am bullish on the future job market prospects for the Triangle as a whole. What I will not participate in is the paternalistic trope we progressives sometimes intone that talks about the need for jobs without honesty about the evolving nature of the modern work environment and the requisite preparation for participation. I am firmly committed to the city's push for encouraging and facilitating entrepreneurialism, worker-owned cooperatives, and union organizing. The latter is of course impacted by the machinations of the state legislature but is within my political comfort zone.***

**Housing, City Planning, and Neighborhoods**

6. What does “gentrification” mean to you? What, if anything, should be done about it? How, if at all, is the issue of gentrification implicated in the Planning Department’s current review of zoning in East Durham, the proposed creation of an Alston Avenue Design District, and the redevelopment of the former Fayette Place property?

***Gentrification to me denotes the standard and utterly predictable outcome of a capitalistic profit driven economy. In the hip hop culture in which I grew up the phrase “big bank take little bank” would be appropriate. In short you can afford your mortgage, or may have even paid your mortgage off, but you wake up one morning and your property taxes are creeping up because someone decided that your neighborhood was now “desirable” and/or a candidate for “revitalization”. As an elected official, I will not have the luxury of pretending that the gentrification phenomenon is some exotic unexplainable evil. It is 100 level Adam Smith. Either the city can totally cease and desist on approving the zoning for projects that fuel and satiate the epicurean tastes of gentrifiers, or the city can summons the political will to do what is necessary to stabilize existing and oft times historic neighborhoods with our municipal treasure. If elected I am prepared to engage my council colleagues on a codified and long-term neighborhood stabilization initiative aimed at keeping homeowners in their homes. Municipal governments are legally prohibited from altering taxation. However, we can choose to view neighborhoods and the people which comprise them with the same veneration with which some of us view the facades of buildings that have captured our imagination. The clock was ticking on the Fayette place property being available for the Campus Apartments company to do whatever it desired with it. The property was originally purposed for affordable housing for NCCU students. The company reneged on that agreement but would still have the ability to use the property for whatever it desired if the city did not exercise its right of first refusal. The clock was ticking and no one was paying attention. I worked alongside community leaders like Bishop Clarence Laney, and Reverend William Lucas for over two years culminating in a press***

***conference on the Fayette place site that started the ball rolling to an over 4-million-dollar commitment on our city's part to regain control of the Fayette place property. As a city councilman, I will bring the same focus to the discussion on what now becomes of Fayette Place as well as East Durham, and Alston Avenue.***

7. What should the city seek to accomplish through its power to stimulate and regulate growth? What principles and considerations will guide your decisions in zoning cases and other development issues? Illustrate your answer with a recent controversial zoning case. Did the city decide the case correctly?

***I am not anti-development nor anti-growth. In my assessment when the economy is flat or stagnant people of color tend to fair worse than the majority. Pride and excitement in the boom that Durham is experiencing coupled with concern and vigilance against inequities in participation aren't mutually exclusive. As a Durham city councilman, I will consider myself and each of my council colleagues a de facto brand ambassador for the city. I will use every platform afforded me to trumpet Durham as America's premiere city to relocate or start a business, further education, raise a family, work, play, and retire. I will also use the power and influence of my office to brand and actually shape Durham as a city characterized by openness, inclusion, diversity, and an affirmative commitment to doing all reasonably within our capabilities to provide a municipal safety net for the poor and disadvantaged. These are the principles that will be personal touchstones as I weigh consequential decisions on zoning and development. I will also take seriously the bedrock democratic principle of representative government. My campaign moniker is Our Voice Our Durham. I will become a consummate student of the "voice" of Durham as echoed through public hearings, direct constituent communications, op ed pieces and letters to the editor, barbershop and coffee shop gaggles, unsolicited lectures and cursing outs, and my own Middleton 4 Durham listening sessions conducted as a***

***councilman-elect and after my swearing in. The voice of Durham along with the principles I have articulated will guide my decisions on development. I do not subscribe to the notion that just because a developer checked all of the requisite boxes of the planning commission that an affirmative vote is inevitable. I sat all night at the City Council meeting in which the decision to rezone or not rezone to allow for the building of a Publix store in Northern Durham was on the docket. I listened to the public comments and watched various council people wrestle with the tenets of our city's strategic plan and their own understanding of the pros and cons of granting approval. Here was an example of a developer that by most accounts enjoys a reputation for sterling corporate citizenship and laudable treatment of its employees. However, there were significant questions about sensible land usage, traffic patterns, and the quality of life for residents. The council ultimately did not approve the rezoning. It was a decision that I believe, all things considered, was the right one and I most likely would have been numbered with the majority on that vote.***

8. Does the city adequately fund its affordable housing plan? If no, what funding are you willing to fight for in the next budget for affordable homes for lower income Durham renters, homebuyers and homeowners? Where will the money come from?

***One of the greatest sources of pride in my life is the work that I did over several years along with other dedicated community leaders to push for affordable housing specifically in the booming downtown Durham area, around proposed light rail transit stops, and the aforementioned Fayette Place property. I worked in the public square as part of the leadership team of Durham CAN to usher these issues to the forefront of political discussion and activity. This includes the city owned Jackson Street property for which I participated in negotiations for an 80/20 split between market rate and affordably priced residential units. To be sure the city's commitment to affordable***



***housing did not begin with these efforts. The city's Penny for Housing initiative and developments such as Rolling Hills and Southside deserve recognition and commendation. However, there is much more work to be done. To date I believe the city has demonstrated an admirable and reasonable commitment to the funding of affordable housing. My sentiment is in part informed by my intimate involvement in the campaign which led to a 4 million dollar plus expenditure to reacquire the Fayette Place property. However, I want to temper and contextualize my positive grade. I will be extremely vigilant and engaged concerning the ultimate disposition of the Fayette Place property. I also will watch the rate and pattern of Durham's growth (population, density per square mile, fund balances, job growth, etc.) and will propose and advocate for ordinances and budgetary adjustments that calibrate our financial commitment to affordable housing in a reasonable, responsible, and democratically mediated fashion.***

9. Under what circumstances would you vote to approve a rezoning that does not include commitments to meet the city's affordable housing goals? If you answered yes, how would you ensure that the city meet its goal? Please illustrate your answer with a recent case.

***I believe this question invites a treatment of the larger context in which I view affordable housing. It is similar to my views on the link between job creation and actual job readiness. To put it simply, housing becomes more affordable as your ability to afford it increases. I am not solely interested in creating affordable housing inventory for a static percentage of our population. I want to see Durham citizens of every stripe experience upward mobility that swells and surpasses the ranks of those deemed qualified for affordable housing based upon some arbitrary AMI ratio. In light of this there may be a scenario in which I may consider an affirmative vote for a rezoning that does not include commitments to affordable housing but offers extraordinary opportunities in the areas of training***

***and employment that may move an appreciable number of Durham residents from the low-income housing strata into the discussion of affordable housing due to higher earnings. There may be a scenario in which I may consider an affirmative vote for a rezoning that does not include commitments to affordable housing but through magnanimous corporate citizenship may impact the achievement gap in our school system, or provide an augmentation to public amenities that improve the quality of life for disadvantaged citizens. To put it bluntly I don't believe that mathematically our city's long-term commitment to affordable housing necessitates that 100% of rezoning approvals be wed to some type of affordable housing commitment. Moreover, I would respectfully submit that any suggestion on the part of a candidate that ALL zoning decisions (particularly non-light rail transit stop related ones) would turn on an affordable housing litmus test is driven more by politics rather than the intricacies and nuances of governance. And one more thing – it's illegal to predicate or condition zoning decisions on the inclusion of affordable housing.***

### **City Finances, Capital Improvements, Transportation, and City Services**

10. If the city needs more revenue for a basic public service, do you, in general, favor a new or increased user fee or a property tax increase? Residential trash pickup is an example of a basic service.

***Fee and tax increases are arrows that are always in the quiver of a governing entity. Like most citizens, I'm sure, I am tax and fee averse. However, the uninterrupted and efficient delivery of basic public services is a managerial and moral obligation of a municipal government. Therefore, I will not dismiss out of hand the possibility of approving increases in user fees or taxes. However, as a council person it would be my practice to have an exhaustive conversation with the city manager and staff about the forces driving any requested increase before approving it. Are there innovations,***

***efficiencies, or technology boosts that we can implement using fund balances rather than raising fees or taxes? Is population growth or business activity increasing the burden on city service delivery? If so should we be looking at assessing businesses rather than raising taxes in general and are our new arrivals adequately contributing to service delivery?***

11. Do you support or oppose Durham's plans for rail-based transit? If federal funding for the project is denied, what must Durham do about transportation, urban planning, housing, taxes, and infrastructure?

***One of the thresholds America had to cross in order to become an economic superpower, (bracketing out slavery and the appropriation of land from natives), was the connecting of our coasts via the railway and interstate highway system. The ability to move people and products within your own territory is what allows you to project and acquire economic power beyond your territory. I grew up on public transportation. My early life was shaped by the egalitarian nature of the buses and trains of the NYC public transportation system. It was not uncommon during my commutes to be sandwiched in between a homeless person and a millionaire stockbroker. An affordable, accessible, wide reaching public transportation matrix is the nervous system of a thriving metropolis. I believe Durham is a growing world class city deserving of an integrated public transportation system befitting its ascendancy. My support of rail-based transit is a matter of public record. I have been involved for several years through my work with Durham CAN in public advocacy for a system that serves the economically disadvantaged, provides employment opportunities to Durham residents, and has significant clusters of affordable housing within close proximity to proposed station sights. During a public hearing on light-rail before the Durham County Commissioners some time ago I delivered remarks that alluded to former Secretary of Transportation's Anthony Fox's expressed view that (paraphrasing) "public transportation connects us to the opportunities that the civil***

***rights movement created.” My initial support of light-rail was muted because of uncertainty as to what populations would be served by virtue of proposed station locations. For example, in the original iteration of the plan there was no stop that served NCCU or Alston Avenue. I want a light-rail system only if it succeeds in connecting all people to opportunities. If federal funding for the project is denied then Durham should explore the possibility of a regional partnership (e.g. the Port Authority of NY and NJ) to fund and execute a rail system. The impact of the growth of our region absolutely necessitates our planning for a rail system now or we must radically rethink the expansion of our traditional surface transportation system. This could possibly involve dedicated HOV lanes for a significantly larger bus fleet and ride sharing in private vehicles.***

12. Has the city’s investment in bus transportation reached the population which needs it most? What else can be done to improve bus transportation access and affordability?

***A significant percentage of the members of the organization I lead use bus service regularly. Anecdotally they tell me that things have gotten better over the past several years. I know that Go Durham has had resources dedicated to fleet modernization, and upgrades to bus stop shelters. However, it is clear that Go Durham is a service aimed at meeting the needs of a specific population rather than an attempt to achieve market saturation. Durham is still very much a car centric city and without one it is difficult to negotiate the entire city if totally dependent on Go Durham routes. As I stated in an earlier response public transportation by both rail and bus were staples in my life and I know how impactful it can be on an individual both financially and culturally. I believe Durham is to be commended on its efforts to maintain affordable, reliable, and safe bus service for our citizens. As a councilman, I would be committed to exploring the feasibility of route expansion with an eye towards diversifying the profile of ridership. This is consistent with my belief that current growth pattern***

***forecasting necessitates a strategic plan for an integrated surface transportation network consisting of both rail and bus that is accessible and affordable for all citizens.***

13. Would you support a property tax relief program, for example, a circuit breaker, to reduce the tax burden on homeowners with limited resources and help them stay in their homes? If your answer is yes, please describe the program or programs you would support. If your answer is no, please explain.

***Yes. I would like to refer to a previous response for this question. I believe that the council should view neighborhood stabilization as a matter of historic preservation akin to the veneration of physical structures. Instead of enshrining brick and mortar, I want us to enshrine families. The city council can't legally vote to excuse taxes but I support efforts to creatively assist homeowners to stay in their homes even as they face unaffordable property tax increases. While I have shared some very specific policy proposals in other areas this is one in which I know where I am philosophically but am eager to engage in more debate and consideration of what the best policy would look like. I have heard cogent articles for a circuit breaker in the form of interest free loans, and in the form of unrecoverable grants. While I am more predisposed to grants I am mindful that the homes we assist citizens in staying in are assets that are most likely appreciating in value hence the rise in taxes to begin with. The question for me is not IF we stabilize neighborhoods, it is HOW best to do it?***

## **Policing and Public Safety**

14. Is there a trust problem between the people of Durham and the police department? Are you satisfied with the department's responses to issues of use of force, racial profiling, deployment of personnel, searches, and communication with the public?

***With the exception of the incumbents there may be no other candidate participating in this election cycle that has been more intimately involved in this issue either in the driving of the public debate, or in the actual shaping of policy than I have. I emphasize "in this election cycle" because there are scores of passionate and diverse activists who aren't running for office but who literally changed the conversation in this city and brought us face to face with some uncomfortable truths that could no longer be ignored. Chief among them is the FADE (Fostering Alternatives to Drug Enforcement) Coalition who years ago along with the Southern Coalition for Social Justice issued a clarion call to a diverse group of civic minded organizations to lend their muscle and influence to push for the adoption of a specific set of recommendations to address empirically substantiated issues with the Durham Police Department. I was asked to coordinate and lead Durham CAN's participation in that coalition. My acceptance of that mantle changed my life. No matter the diversity of my public portfolio it is this issue that has garnered the most attention and rightly so. It is no less than a life or death issue. The answer as to whether there is a trust problem between the people of Durham and the police department is a complicated one that is colored by history, race, class, where you live, and how vested one feels in the American experiment. My engagement with this issue has found me at times outside yelling at buildings, and other times inside the building sitting at the table. As a result, I have literally been called both a "cop collaborator" and a "cop hater". I have been maligned as an "agent" by angry activists, and a "bowtie wearing Muslim who wants cops to get ambushed" by uniformed uninformed police officers. (I'm Christian by the way). The truth is that the Durham Police Department is made up of some remarkable women and men many of whom are possessed of an uncommon sense of valor and heroism. The***

***truth is that there are many of them (probably the majority) who would not hesitate to run towards gunfire to pull any citizen out of the way. The truth also is that there have been and are some cultural and organizational challenges that have exposed the worst in our nation's history and psyche that a justice loving and free people deserve to have addressed and corrected. I have given voice earlier in this document and in numerous public utterances to some specific policies I will pursue if elected to the city council.***

15. To what degree, if any, should the city cooperate with U.S. Department of Immigration & Customs Enforcement? Should the city become a sanctuary city? If your answer is yes, for whom should the city provide sanctuary and by what means should sanctuary be provided? If your answer is no, please explain your reasons. In either case, please be specific.

***As a city councilperson, I will insist that the funding provided for our police department is used for the discharge of the core mission to protect and serve the citizens and visitors of the Bull City. The DPD is not an extension of the federal law enforcement apparatus in general, nor of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in particular. I understand the cross-agency cooperation and camaraderie that characterizes law enforcement organizations and will encourage and support the participation of the DPD in various task forces aimed at making us safer. However, in my assessment if undocumented residents of our city are afraid to call the police or cooperate with police in the course of an investigation out of fear of deportation then that makes us all less safe. I do not support the "rounding up" of individuals for purposes of determining status and will not countenance the participation of the Durham Police Department in such activities. On the other hand, if in the course of an investigation pursuant to a violent or other serious incident an individual's status is learned, then I consider that qualitatively different from indiscriminate round ups. The term Sanctuary City resonates with me as one who has had some experience with places designated as***

***sanctuaries. In Durham, one's status should not preclude them from accessing help when needed; nor should the slightest infraction subject them to being ripped away from what is familiar and safe.***

16. Should the city allocate more, less, or about the same money to policing? Please explain your answer. If your answer is less, would you allocate more money to other services to improve public safety? Again, please explain.

***As an African-American male that has been profiled, threatened, and intimidated by police in the past, and as an advocate for police reform it is almost reflexive for me to talk about policing through the lens of these vantage points. For so many citizens the discussion of policing understandably comes down to "will I survive a routine traffic stop?" Or "can I walk through my neighborhood without being questioned?" However, as a person that is voluntarily running for public office I am obligated to consider the issue of police funding levels from an expanded perspective. I am running for a seat on the Durham City Council and if elected will be sworn to serve all the people of the Bull City. As shaped as I am by my work in improving relations between police and the community, the question I must now ask as a public official is how much does it cost to keep 250,000 people safe? Is there some nationally accepted fee schedule we can refer to? Do we really think that what we spend now will be sufficient if our city keeps growing at its current rate? If elected the citizens of our city will and should expect people like me to stay up at night thinking about how to respond to the unthinkable. In our modern context, the discussion about police funding isn't just about vehicle, weapon, and body camera purchases fueled by our concerns about HEAT/SWAT team deployments or crowd control tactics. We must also ask ourselves if we wake up one morning to coordinated teams of multiple armed attackers on a killing spree at Southpoint Mall, Hillside High School, and the American Tobacco Campus simultaneously are our first responders sufficiently staffed and equipped to respond? Or are we***



***content with waiting for state and federal resources to arrive? My suspicion is that if the nightmare scenario were to occur the questions hurled at our politicians would be quite different. Given my well documented engagement with this issue it may be surprising to some when I declare that I don't know yet if we should increase or decrease police funding. The question that will ever be before me is what does it cost to keep 250,000 people safe? There are some things, however, that I have already put in the public record that I am prepared to propose and pursue: I believe that at some point our police officers should be incentivized and required to live within Durham city limits. I believe that the training our police receive should not just be about implicit bias but should also speak directly to race and racism. I believe that mandatory non-enforcement related contact with the public should be part of the review and promotion process. Finally, I believe that a budgetary "Front End Initiative" that commits to spending no less than a fixed percentage of any public safety budget on the types of things that many in our community believe lessens the likelihood of contact with law enforcement and the criminal justice system should be adopted.***

## **Civil Rights**

17. Name one issue in Durham that directly impacts, or is directly impacted by, race inequity and how can the city incorporate a race equity framework in addressing this issue?

***Traffic stops. The genesis of much of my work in police reform was the revelation of gross disparities along racial lines in Durham Police Department traffic stop data. While recommendations were put in place to address these disparities the problem of black motorists being stopped and searched at a higher rate than white motorists has persisted. As mentioned elsewhere in this document, I believe a***

***recalibration of DPD training to include racial sensitivity and bias should be pursued.***

18. If the city could adopt an ordinance concerning the civil rights of members of the LGBTQ community, what provisions should that ordinance contain?

***In my assessment, a lengthy response to this question would betray the utter simplicity of this matter. This is the United States of America. Our moral creed is "all are created equal", and our statutory cornerstone is "equal protection under the law". Any ordinance concerning the civil rights of the LGBTQ community should contain an unqualified rejection of any form of discrimination similar to the one applied to other protected categories of citizens.***

#### **Personal and Political**

19. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense other than a minor traffic offense? If your answer to this question is yes, please describe the charge or charges, the circumstances, and the outcome.

***I have never been convicted of any criminal offense.***

20. For whom did you vote in the 2012 and 2016 presidential and gubernatorial elections? For whom did you vote in the 2014 U.S. Senate election?

***In 2012, I voted for Barack Obama for POTUS and Walter Dalton for NC Governor. In 2016, I voted for Bernie Sanders in the primary and Hillary Clinton in the general election for POTUS, and Roy Cooper for NC Governor. In 2014, I voted for Kay Hagan for the US Senate.***