

NAME: Lester Jackson
PARTY: Democratic
SEEKING: Labor Commissioner

1. Why are you seeking your office?

For too long, Georgia's working families have struggled to make ends meet while an underfunded and directionless Department of Labor delays payout claims and unemployment benefits. It's time Georgia had a Labor Commissioner who fought for the resources to support anyone in our state who needs a helping hand. Georgians deserve a Labor Department that works as hard as they do.

2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

When I'm Labor Commissioner, we won't just be the unemployment office. We'll be the future employment office. We will shift the department's focus and priorities to empower Georgia's working families and make sure all Georgians have access to the jobs and skills that allow us to earn a living wage. We'll have a labor department that is technologically savvy, where people can get their concerns addressed in a timely manner.

3. What distinguishes your candidacy?

I have the experience to represent all Georgians. I have served for more than twenty years in the Georgia General Assembly, longer than any of the other candidates. I've served my country in the United States Navy and created jobs as a small business owner. As Chairman for the Senate Committee on Urban Affairs, I have the know-how and relationships to fight for Medicaid expansion, resolve costly delays and meet the challenges and opportunities of the post-pandemic recovery.

4. Pick any one issue. Expand on how you will address it.

I will ensure that the Labor Department is accessible and accountable, something it has woefully failed at under current leadership. There is no excuse for labor offices sitting closed and phone calls going unanswered while department employees eat for free on more than a million dollars of taxpayer funds that came out of your pocket. When I'm the Labor Commissioner, someone will always be available to pick up the phone when you call, and we'll fight for the resources the department needs to reopen offices and truly serve our constituents.

5. What are your ideas on curbing all the many area-wide shooting?

We have seen a rise in gun crimes over the last few years, and unfortunately the laws in our state are about to make it easier than ever for someone to get a gun. I believe there is much to be done legislatively, but until we can accomplish those goals we must focus on mitigation and prevention strategies at a community level, meeting folks where they are. Another way to

prevent some of this violence is to raise the standard of living for all Georgians, which gets at the root causes of violent crime.

6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background.

A lifelong Georgian, I am a Navy veteran, dentist, small business owner, and State Senator with over 20 years of experience in the General Assembly. During my tenure, I have held more leadership positions and passed more legislation than anyone else, including forward-thinking proposals like the first hate crimes legislation in 29 years, along with bills to curb dropout rates and aid disabled veterans. I am one of few Democrats to lead a committee, serving as Chair of Senate Urban Affairs. Now, I want to bring my ideas and experience to the Labor Department to better serve all Georgia