

★★★ 2018 Candidate Guide ★★★



GEORGIA GOVERNOR *and*  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



## ★★★ ACCG 2018 Candidate Guide ★★★

The 2018 ACCG Candidate Guide is designed to assist Georgia's county officials in navigating the 2018 election and assessing the positions of candidates for governor and lieutenant governor on timely topics of significant county concern. This guide includes brief biographical and contact information for each announced candidate, background information on anticipated county issues, and pertinent questions which ACCG hopes county officials are able to pose to the candidates as they campaign in their communities. The questions may also serve well for gauging the positions of candidates running for state senator, representative, or other statewide offices.

ACCG's commitment to equipping Georgia's county officials with resources to make informed election decisions is the premise of the 2018 Candidate Guide. This is not an endorsement of any candidate but it is an educational and advocacy tool. This guide will also help strengthen the partnership between county and state officials for the purpose of creating sound, balanced policies to benefit the citizens of Georgia.

ACCG encourages county officials to provide feedback on how the candidates address the issues. Please email, text or call a member of the policy staff directly with any feedback you receive on questions included in this guide.

2018

# CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR GOVERNOR



## Stacey Abrams

Democrat Stacey Abrams, an attorney, represented District 89 (DeKalb County; Atlanta) in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2007-2017, serving as House Minority Leader from 2010 to 2017. Abrams graduated from Avondale High School in DeKalb County and received degrees from Spelman College, the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, and Yale Law School.



- ★ **Campaign page:** [staceyabrams.com](http://staceyabrams.com)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [info@staceyabrams.com](mailto:info@staceyabrams.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/stacey.abrams.77](http://www.facebook.com/stacey.abrams.77)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@stacyabrams](https://twitter.com/stacyabrams)

## Casey Cagle

Republican Casey Cagle, a small business owner, has served as Georgia's Lt. Governor since 2007. Prior to this, Cagle represented District 49 (Hall County) in the Georgia Senate from 1995 to 2006, where he was Chairman of the Finance Committee. Cagle, a native Georgian, graduated from Gainesville's Johnson High School and attended Gainesville State College and Georgia Southern University.



- ★ **Campaign page:** [caseycagle.com](http://caseycagle.com)
- ★ **Campaign Office:** 770.458.7605
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/CaseyCagleGa/](http://www.facebook.com/CaseyCagleGa/)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@CaseyCagle](https://twitter.com/CaseyCagle)

## Stacey Evans

Democrat Stacey Evans, an attorney, represented District 42 (Cobb County; Smyrna and Marietta) in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2010 to 2017. In the House, Evans served on the Children and Youth, Ethics, Interstate Cooperation, Judiciary, Juvenile Justice, and Rules committees. Stacey is from Ringgold, Georgia and earned her bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Georgia.



- ★ **Campaign page:** [staceyevans.com](http://staceyevans.com)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [info@staceyevans.com](mailto:info@staceyevans.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/StaceyEvansGA](http://www.facebook.com/StaceyEvansGA)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@EvansforGeorgia](https://twitter.com/EvansforGeorgia)

## Hunter Hill

Republican Hunter Hill, a veteran and small business owner, represented District 6 (Cobb and Fulton counties) in the Georgia Senate from 2012 to 2017. He served on the



Appropriations, Judiciary and Finance committees, and as Chair of the Veterans, Military and Homeland Security Committee. A native Georgian, Hill received his bachelor's degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

- ★ **Campaign page:** [votehunterhill.com](http://votehunterhill.com)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [info@votehunterhill.com](mailto:info@votehunterhill.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/VoteHunterHill](http://www.facebook.com/VoteHunterHill)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@votehunterhill](https://twitter.com/votehunterhill)

## Brian Kemp

Republican Brian Kemp, a small business owner, has served as Georgia's Secretary of State since 2010. Prior to this, Kemp represented District 46 (Athens-Clarke County) in the



Georgia Senate from 2002 to 2006. Kemp, a lifetime Athens, Georgia resident, graduated from Athens' Clarke Central High School and received his bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Georgia.

- ★ **Campaign page:** [kempforgovernor.com](http://kempforgovernor.com)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [KempForGovernor@gmail.com](mailto:KempForGovernor@gmail.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/BrianKempGA](http://www.facebook.com/BrianKempGA)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@BrianKempGA](https://twitter.com/BrianKempGA)

## Michael Williams

Republican Michael Williams, a CPA and small business owner, has represented District 27 (Forsyth County) in the Georgia Senate since 2015. He serves on the Banking and Financial



Institutions, Appropriations, Ethics, Finance and Public Safety committees. Williams is a graduate of the University of Montevallo in Alabama.

- ★ **Campaign page:** [williamsgeorgia.com](http://williamsgeorgia.com)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [michaelw@williamsgeorgia.com](mailto:michaelw@williamsgeorgia.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/MichaelWilliamsGa](http://www.facebook.com/MichaelWilliamsGa)

2018

# CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



## Geoff Duncan

Republican Geoff Duncan, a small business owner, represented District 26 (Forsyth County) in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2013 to 2017. He served on the Ways and Means, Information and Audits, and Banks and Banking committees as well as House Majority Deputy Whip. Duncan graduated from Chattahoochee High in Alpharetta and attended Georgia Tech.



- ★ **Campaign page:** [teamduncan.org](http://teamduncan.org)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [GeoffDuncan26@gmail.com](mailto:GeoffDuncan26@gmail.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/geoffduncanforlg](http://www.facebook.com/geoffduncanforlg)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@GeoffDuncanGA](https://twitter.com/GeoffDuncanGA)

## Rick Jeffares

Republican Rick Jeffares, a small business owner, has represented District 17 (Henry, Newton and Rockdale counties) in the Georgia Senate since 2011 and is a former Henry County commissioner. He is Chairman of the Regulated Industries, Vice Chair of the Natural Resources and Secretary of the State Institutions and Property committees. A Georgia native, Jeffares graduated from Clayton College and State University.



- ★ **Campaign page:** [rickjeffares.com](http://rickjeffares.com)
- ★ **Campaign Email:** [JeffaresforGeorgia@gmail.com](mailto:JeffaresforGeorgia@gmail.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/RickJeffaresForGeorgia](http://www.facebook.com/RickJeffaresForGeorgia)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@RickJeffaresGA](https://twitter.com/RickJeffaresGA)

## David Shafer

Republican David Shafer, a business owner and investor, has represented District 48 (Gwinnett and Fulton counties) in the Georgia Senate since 2003, serving as Senate President Pro Tem since 2013. He is Chairman of the Administrative Affairs, Vice Chair of the Insurance and Labor, and a member of the Appropriations, the Health and Human Services and Reapportionment committees. A native of DeKalb County, Shafer graduated from the University of Georgia.



- ★ **Campaign page:** [davidshafer.com](http://davidshafer.com)
- ★ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/davidshafer](http://www.facebook.com/davidshafer)
- ★ **Twitter:** [@DavidShafer](https://twitter.com/DavidShafer)



# The Issues

*Significant county issues on which to solicit the candidate's feedback.*

## Broadband Access

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**Questions:** What measures does the candidate suggest to improve broadband access across Georgia? Should the state preempt, mandate, or encourage how local governments manage their public's right-of-way to accommodate the placement of private telecommunications poles and equipment?

## Rural Healthcare and Hospitals

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**Questions:** Does the candidate have a plan to address the financial troubles and closures of Georgia's rural hospitals? How will the candidate ensure adequate access to healthcare for all Georgians, particularly those in rural areas?

## Mental Health Services

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**Background:** With the closure of the state hospitals, counties have become the largest providers of mental health services through their local jails. As a result, counties are required to provide services they are not qualified to administer.

**Questions:** How will the candidate address the lack of behavioral health services around the state? What assistance will the candidate give counties that are struggling with this population?

## Home Rule

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**Background:** Home Rule is the right of the people to determine and implement public policy at the grassroots level.


**Question:** Does the candidate have views on either enhancing or preempting counties' current abilities to adopt ordinances, resolutions, or regulations relating to their unique community's needs?

## Preemptions

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**Background:** Preemptions usually result when the state attempts to resolve a particular county issue with a statewide solution that prohibits or limits counties from exercising home rule authority.

**Questions:** Does the candidate have views on whether and when state preemptions are appropriate? When are they not appropriate?



## Unfunded Mandates and Cost Shifting

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**Background:** Mandates and cost shifting are state directives that compel a local government to provide a service, program or benefit without providing the appropriate monies or funding source.

**Question:** Does the candidate have views on how these mandates have impacted local governments?

## Property Tax Issues

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**Background:** Counties must raise revenues to meet costly state-mandated services and meet citizens' demands for discretionary services with most of this money derived from the property tax.

Several types of property, including forestland and conservation use property, enjoy preferential treatment for tax assessment purposes, thereby shifting the tax burden to other residential and commercial properties.

**Question:** What is the candidate's position on state initiatives to grant preferential tax treatment to particular types of land uses?

## Property Assessment Limitations

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**Background:** Property values are rapidly increasing in some areas of the state. While property owners may enjoy the increased equity in their property, they may not like the resulting impact on their property tax bill. Although most counties roll back the millage rate to offset the total increase from property value inflation, the rollback does not necessarily protect the individual taxpayer from increases.

**Question:** Does the candidate believe anything should be done at the state or local level to limit the amount a property's value can increase in a single year?



# The Issues

## Title Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT)

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**Background:** The current TAVT distribution formula has resulted in a windfall to the state of approximately \$500 million per year while many local governments receive less revenues than prior to TAVT.

**Questions:** Does the candidate support means by which to make the distribution of this tax more equitable between the state and local governments? Does the candidate call for the end to the annual statewide cap on the dollar amount counties receive from TAVT?

## Sales Tax

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**Questions:** The ability to fund county operations and requirements is greatly impacted by any reductions in the sales tax base. Does the candidate have any views on the following:

- Ensuring the Georgia Agricultural Tax Exemption (GATE) Card is not abused;
- Creating even more exemptions to the state and local sales tax base; or
- Taxing Internet remote sales?

## Tax Reform

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**Background:** Three major revenue sources (income tax, sales tax and property tax) fund the majority of state and local government services. To reduce state and local reliance on one or more of these revenues requires a corresponding increase in our reliance on other revenues or cuts to expenditures.

**Question:** What type of tax reform, if any, does the candidate support and how would they accomplish it?

## Law Enforcement Salaries

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**Questions:** Does the candidate believe that the state should mandate what salaries and benefits counties provide to law enforcement officers? Should the state be required to pay for any minimum salary, pay increase or expanded benefit that the state requires?



## Public Safety

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**Background:** If the state increases salaries for local law enforcement officers, then other public employees will surely seek state-mandated salary increases.

**Question:** How does the candidate propose handling other public safety personnel's requests for minimum salaries, increase in salary, and mandatory benefits?

## Constitutional Officer Salaries

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**Questions:** Does the candidate support state-mandated pay increases for sheriffs, probate judges, clerks of superior court and tax commissioners? If so, how does the candidate suggest that counties pay for this?

## Transportation and Transit

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**Questions:** Does the candidate have a position on how to improve transportation issues facing both metro Atlanta and the rest of Georgia? How would any improvements be funded? Should the state invest more money in transit, particularly in the metro Atlanta area? Does the candidate have views on whether the state should assume more management over local transit funding?

## Georgia's Voting Systems

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**Questions:** Does the candidate support replacing Georgia's current voting systems to ensure greater accuracy and security? If so, should the state assume this cost?





## ★★★ ACCG Policy Staff ★★★

*Please email, text or call the ACCG policy staff directly with any feedback you receive on the questions included in this guide.*



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