**QUESTION 1: Do you have designated advisors and clear processes for making decisions on disability issues? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I have a team of people who advise me on policy, including disability issues.

**QUESTION 2: Is your campaign accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. We work to be inclusive to people with disabilities. We caption many of our videos, and we are working to make sure that all of our videos are captioned. We also make every effort to hold our events at ADA accessible buildings.

**QUESTION 3: Do you have a proven record on improving or a plan to improve the lives of people with disabilities? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I have always been and will continue to be an advocate for expanding opportunities for Americans with disabilities.

* I sponsored HB 249, which would update North Carolina’s archaic disability terms.
* I sponsored HB 475 and HB 1276, both of which worked on protecting those who receive disability benefits.
* I sponsored HB 2500, a bill that would provide funding for developmental disability services.
* I voted for SB 526, which required local school’s administrative units to adopt a policy prohibiting bullying and harassing behaviors motivated by actual or perceived differentiating characteristics.

**QUESTION 4: Do you have a plan/commitment to reduce the stigmas about people with disabilities that are barriers to employment, independence and equality? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. No one should be discriminated against or stigmatized by differentiating characteristics including disabilities of any kind. In the State House, I voted for legislation that required schools to adopt policies prohibiting bullying and harassment behaviors motivated by actual or perceived differentiating characteristics including disabilities. As your next U.S. Senator, I will continue this commitment to make sure that people with disabilities experience no barriers in employment, independence, and equality. I will work with the disability community to address stigma.

**QUESTION 5: Do you have a proven record on enabling, or a plan to enable, people with disabilities to have jobs, careers and to start their own businesses? Do you have specific strategies for youth employment for people with disabilities and/or sector strategies such as jobs and careers in STEM, hospitality, healthcare and elder care? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I believe that anyone who works hard and plays by the rules should be able to get ahead in life, and people with disabilities deserve the same opportunities as everyone else. This means making college more affordable for everyone, increasing K-12 school funding for schools so they can better meet the diverse needs of their student bodies, providing early work experiences and community college training, and creating public-private partnerships that break through employment challenges. This is a top priority of mine because inclusive, accessible, and affordable education enriches students, grows our economy, and keeps our nation globally competitive.

In the State House, I supported alternatives, like virtual charter schools, to expand educational opportunities for students with different needs and for students in rural areas. I sponsored legislation to establish a college grant fund for economically disadvantaged students, supported measures to allocate more state lottery funds to underserved public schools, and sponsored tax deductions for families saving for college. I am committed to increasing funding for Pell Grants, capping student loan interest rates, helping students refinance loans at lower rates, providing debt-free community college for students who work hard and make good grades, and expanding income-based student loan repayment options for those with unmanageable debt.

I will also work to expand early work experiences and apprenticeships in high school, as well as through the debt-free community college programs, so that all students, including those with disabilities, can be empowered to achieve successful transitions to the workplace.

**QUESTION  6: Do you have a plan to enable students with disabilities, including those from historically marginalized communities and backgrounds, to receive the diagnosis, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and accommodations/services they need to succeed in school and be prepared for competitive employment? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. It is imperative that we give students all the support they need to succeed in school including providing clear diagnoses, Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and any needed accommodations. We must work to make sure that all students remain in the classroom when possible, not in out-of-school suspension, not in segregated schools, and not left to drop out of school altogether. In the State House, I sponsored legislation that provided more funding to schools for students with disabilities. But this is just the start. We need to change school policy to keep students in the classroom learning, rather than segregated, suspended, or even dropping out.

**QUESTION  7: Do you have a plan to reform the benefits system (Medicaid, Medicaid buyin) to enable people with disabilities to work to the best of their capacities without losing supports they need to work? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. We should reform Medicaid so that it incentivizes folks to work without the risk of losing the benefits they need.

**QUESTION 8: Do you have a plan to ensure people with disabilities are eligible for affordable health insurance regardless of preexisting conditions? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. We can all agree that the Affordable Care Act isn’t perfect, but it expanded health insurance to thousands of North Carolinians and took on discrimination in coverage. And I won’t go back to a time when insurance companies discriminated against women, canceled people’s policies if they were sick, cost so much out of pocket that people were forced into bankruptcy, and denied coverage to those with pre-existing conditions. As a U.S. Senator, I will make sure that all people with disabilities are eligible for affordable health insurance regardless of pre-existing conditions.

**QUESTION 9: Do you have a plan to provide home and community-based services to people with disabilities who would rather live in their own homes instead of institutions, and have the community attendant supports they need to work? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I will work with experts in the community to reform Medicaid, so that people with disabilities can afford to have access to community attendant supports and are not penalized from receiving this support because of their employment status. People with disabilities should be allowed the freedom and independence to work while also being supported by personal care assistants at home when needed.

**QUESTION  10: Do you have a plan to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive services that would prevent them from being swept up into the criminal justice system, divert individuals with disabilities who are arrested to treatment options in lieu of jail where appropriate, receive needed accommodations in the criminal justice process and while incarcerated, and offer appropriate reentry support to help individuals with disabilities leaving jails and prisons reintegrate into their communities and secure jobs? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. We have the highest incarceration rate in the world because of decades of failed policies. Instead of serving justice and promoting safety, we are incarcerating millions of non-violent men and women. Too many people are behind bars for low-level drug crimes. They should be released and given a second chance to become productive members of society. When I was in the State House, we worked hard to update our juvenile justice system to help juveniles get back on the right path and lead productive lives. For those 750,000 or more inmates with disabilities, we must make sure that they receive the accommodations they need. We must support all people with the mental healthcare and other services they need—not put them in solitary confinement or other punishments. We also must make sure that when people are released, they have the resources to be properly reintegrated into society including the Medicaid benefits and medications they need to maintain their disabilities and healthcare outside of prison.

**QUESTION 11: People with disabilities are twice as likely to be victims of crime as those without disabilities. People with disabilities also are far more likely to suffer from police violence, partially because manifestations of disability can be misunderstood as defiant behavior. Do you have a plan to address these issues? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. The fact that the rate of violent crime against people with disabilities is double the rate for people without disabilities must change. We must increase police training on how to work with people suffering from mental illnesses, reduced cognitive abilities, or other disabilities. We must also protect people with disabilities from discrimination, stigma, poor health, and violent crime.

**QUESTION 12: Both children and adults with disabilities are more likely to be victims of rape or sexual assault. Do you have a plan to address this issue? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**I have always looked out for victims of domestic and sexual violence. In the State House, I supported a number of bills that strengthened laws against sex offenders, including the state’s registry. I sponsored legislation that prohibited victims from being billed for rape kits and brought the state into compliance with VAWA, which secured millions in future federal spending. I was successful in passing legislation that increased the penalty for violating a protective order while armed with a deadly weapon and making changes to how domestic violence cases were handled in court. In the U.S. Senate, I will continue to work for protecting all people from domestic and sexual violence taking special care to address the needs of people with disabilities who are more likely to be victims of rape and sexual assault.

**QUESTION 13: Do you have a plan for veterans with disabilities facing barriers transitioning from active duty to civilian employment? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I understand the sacrifices veterans make to protect freedom and the folks here at home. My dad was a doctor in the Air Force during the Vietnam era, and he taught me the importance of taking care of those who serve our country. This is especially important for the twenty-five percent of veterans who report service-connected disabilities. Laws like the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act are essential to protecting disabled veterans transition back to civilian employment. We must continue to support veterans with disabilities and lower barriers to transitioning back home.

**QUESTION  14: Do you have a plan for accessible, affordable, integrated housing to allow people with disabilities to live in the communities where they work or are seeking work? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I am an advocate for affordable and accessible housing for all people, and this is especially important for people with disabilities in order to lower barriers for seeking and maintaining employment. In the State House, I was a prime sponsor of HB 176, which would have helped build low-income housing through a program that offers tax credits and other incentives. I was a prime sponsor of legislation that would have called for a bond referendum to decide whether the state should issue up to $250 million in bonds for NC Housing Trust Fund. I will continue to be a champion of accessible, affordable, and integrated housing in the U.S. Senate.

**QUESTION 15: Do you have a plan to address the lack of accessible transportation options that is a barrier to work for people with disabilities? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. At GoTriangle, we worked to increase public transportation options for all people, and specifically worked to address the lack of accessible options for people with disabilities. This was a major issue for us, and I continue to be a champion of improving public transportation for all people when I am in the U.S. Senate.

**QUESTION 16: Do you have a plan to advance innovations (i.e., assistive technologies, devices) that can help people with disabilities become more successfully employed, productive and independent? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I would support legislation to advance innovations that can help people with disabilities become more successfully employed, productive, and independent.

**QUESTION 17: In your foreign policy and national security plan, do you plan to continue America’s tradition of standing up for the rights of oppressed people, including people with disabilities, around the world? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. Our country should support any nation in achieving a level of disability rights and opportunities available to those living with disabilities in the United States.