**Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to more issues and concerns for all students and their families, but this is especially true for students with disabilities. Additionally, the gap in graduation and drop-out rates between students with and without disabilities continues to undermine their futures. For example, in the class of 2018, only 66 percent of Black students with disabilities, 71 percent of Hispanic students with disabilities, 77 percent of white students with disabilities, and 79 percent of Asian American students with disabilities completed high school. Furthermore, just seven percent of students born with a disability graduate from college. What is your plan for ensuring that all students with disabilities receive a quality and appropriate education to acquire the critical and marketable skills necessary to compete in a job-driven economy?**

I strongly support the nations four policy goals as outlined in the American for Disability Act (ADA) of equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. In order to meet these goals all children and youth with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities must receive a free appropriate public education that includes fair evaluation, ambitious goals, challenging objectives, the right to progress, individualized supports and services, high quality instruction, and access to the general education curriculum in age-appropriate inclusive settings. I support fully funding the Individuals with Disability Act (IDA). I will also work with the relevant federal agencies to help assure that there is adequate monitoring and enforcement through federal agencies that the IDEA, ADA, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are met.

**In the economic expansion prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the national employment rate for working-age people with disabilities in America was 37.6 percent compared to 77.8 percent of people without disabilities. Further, there continues to be significant disparities in employment outcomes within the disability community, which varies from state to state. There are significant racial disparities in disability employment outcomes. 38.9 percent of working-age white people with disabilities have jobs compared to only 29.7 percent of working-age Black people with disabilities had jobs, 39.4 percent of working-age Hispanics with disabilities and 43.2 percent of working-age Asian-Americans with disabilities. The pandemic has ravaged the disability community and more than 1 million workers with disabilities have lost their jobs. If elected, what will you do to ensure that the government is removing barriers and promoting high quality, inclusive services built on evidence-based policies, practices and procedures leading to competitive, meaningful careers, which includes promoting entrepreneurial opportunities?**

People with disabilities face numerous barriers to economic security. Barriers include housing, transportation, and healthcare. I will support the Homes for All program; funding for the Federal Transit Administration programs such as Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program and the United We Ride interagency initiative; and fight for protecting, improving and building on the Affordable Care Act including long-term care services and mental health parity. I support raising the minimum wage and phasing out the subminimum wage, strengthening the Earned Income tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, paid family and sick leave, adequately funding vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs, and the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act.

**The disability community fundamentally believes in the need to ensure “Nothing about us, without us” – real inclusion and places at decision making tables – because we know solutions that work and want to be a part of making our communities stronger. What specific measures have you taken to make your campaign accessible for, and inclusive of, people with disabilities, as every issue impacts our lives?**

Rev. Warnock and the Warnock for Georgia campaign takes seriously its commitment to the inclusion of members of the disability community. We have made it a priority to include the concerns of the disabled community in our policy platform – including fighting to make sure protections for pre-existing conditions remain in place so that no one with a disability can be denied health insurance. In addition we have tried to lead by example whenever possible, for example closed captioning our TV ads to ensure that everyone can receive our message.

**RespectAbility published Disability in Philanthropy & Nonprofits, based on our study on the levels of disability inclusion in the social sector across the country. This largescale study found significant data showing that nationwide, organizations overall want to be inclusive, but are unintentionally excluding the one-in-five people with disabilities. What will you do to promote policies and practices designed to support full community engagement, access and inclusion of people with disabilities?**

To be all that we can be as a society it is imperative that we maximize the skills, talents and abilities of all those in our communities, including those with disabilities. I will work with disability advocates throughout the nation and state to help educate the public of the importance of meaningful inclusion of those with disabilities in government, and the for-profit and not-for-profit corporate arenas. I will be an active voice in this arena and will work to hold public and private sector leaders accountable.

**Elected officials have multiple opportunities to demonstrate a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, full community participation and celebrating the contributions and accomplishments of people with disabilities through press releases, speeches, celebratory events including National Disability Employment Awareness Month. There are significant stigmas that create attitudinal barriers that limit options and perpetuates low expectations for people with disabilities. What measures will you take to combat these stigmas and promote opportunities for people with disabilities?**

I pledge to actively work to combat stigmas and promote opportunities for people with disabilities. I have committed my whole life to service and helping people. I am running because I believe that Georgians are looking for a U.S. Senator whose priority is going to be their needs and concerns. I believe there are places all across our state — from underserved communities of color in South Georgia and disaffected rural North Georgia towns suffering for decades as access to health care, hospitals and jobs has diminished, to cities like Atlanta, Clayton, and Savannah that are looking for someone to fight for them. Those with disabilities are a vital and important part of our communities, and I will fight to ensure that they are able to reach the apex of their desires and abilities.

**In our nation’s public schools, there are 6.3 million students with disabilities. The changing demographics of America are reflected in these students, with 11.4 percent of students with disabilities nationwide, almost 720,000, also identified as English-language learners. Their accommodation needs are compounded by the fact that many come from households that do not speak English at home, adding an extra challenge for parental interaction. It can also be harder to diagnose disabilities in children when they are English language learners. Additionally, immigration issues and fears over the public charge rule impact students with disabilities, their families and the wider workforce. What policies would you advance to enable students and their families who are English language learners with disabilities to succeed in school and employment?**

It is vital for the economic health of our communities that all of our children and youth are given the resources needed to succeed in school, whether they have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and/or English-language barriers. I will work to help assure that schools receive the resources they need. I will also work with the Biden/Harris administration to roll back the Trump administration changes to the public charge rule.

**Housing, criminal justice, climate issues, transportation and every other area have significant impacts on people with disabilities. What additional policies and priorities, other than those already discussed above, do you plan to focus on to improve the lives of people with disabilities?**

Climate change may be the defining issue of this generation, and impacts all Georgians, with or without disabilities. The flooding and extreme weather we have seen in coastal Georgia and across the South are sobering reminders of how devastating climate change can be in our daily lives, especially in underserved and rural communities. Affordable Remediation is the company to call for [Mold Removal Services Toms River NJ](https://affordableremediation.com/mold-testing-removal-remediation-in-toms-river/) after water damage. For sump pump repairs, contact this expert in [sump pump repair in Rochester, NY](https://reimerhvac.com/rochester/plumbing/sump-pump-repair/). You may also contact these [plumbers in cincinnati](https://bassettservices.com/cincinnati/plumbing/) for professional services.

People with disabilities though are at an increased risk of the adverse impacts of climate change. Twenty-six percent of adults in the United States have some type of disability. Due to discrimination, marginalization, and certain social and economic factors, people with disabilities may experience climate change differently and more intensely than others. I will work to ensure that the development of climate policy include the experiences and perspectives of people with different types of disabilities.

I have focused on the work of environmental justice throughout my time at Ebenzer Baptist Church. I believe that solutions to climate change are moral issues and that we can act on the consensus that already exists among Americans by ignoring Washington special interests and putting effective, common sense policies in place. I support rejoining the Paris Climate Accords; reversing the Trump administrations attack on the Environmental Protection Agency and standards for clean air and water; investments in green infrastructure, structural reinforcement and climate science; and advocate for marginalized people, including those with disabilities, to receive training and education to participate in the green new economy jobs.

In that 32 percent of federal prisoners and 40 percent of those in jail have at least one disability, criminal justice reform must take the into consideration the specific realities and needs of people with disabilities, including the areas of school-to prison pipeline, the overall justice system and returning to our communities.

It is important that criminal justice reform efforts ensure adequate a community based mental health system. Too many of those in contact with the criminal justice system have mental health and/or developmental disability issues. I will fight for increased funding for support services on the front end so that fewer people are ensconced with the criminal justice system on the back end.

In addition to improving mental health care within prisons, we must address the challenges individuals face even before they enter the system. One such obstacle is the financial burden of bail. Many individuals who are arrested, particularly those from marginalized communities, find themselves stuck in a cycle of debt, relying on [bail bond loans](https://www.bailbondloanservices.com/) to secure their release. This often exacerbates their situation, leading to further financial strain and increased risk of recidivism. Reforming the bail system, alongside improving mental health services, is critical in preventing unnecessary pretrial detention and ensuring that people with disabilities are not disproportionately affected by financial barriers to justice.