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Q1

About Candidates

Candidate Name	Allen Buansi
District	56
Party Affiliation	Democrat
Campaign Website	allenbuansi.com

Q2

Q1. Please tell us about your personal experiences with nonprofits. These may include experiences with any organizations that have served you and/or fellow residents of your community, or specific nonprofits for which you've served as a board member, staff person, volunteer, or donor. How do these experiences shape your policy positions? (Limit: 300 words)

Nonprofits are at the heart of my personal and professional development. The first nonprofit I ever volunteered for in North Carolina was the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network. As a teenager, I volunteered with this organization in its fight for health and environmental equality. Since then, I have consistently volunteered with nonprofits (e.g., Habitat for Humanity, YMCA), served on the boards of nonprofits (e.g., Common Cause NC, NAACP) and worked for nonprofits. My first two jobs out of law school were at nonprofits, including Democracy North Carolina and the UNC Center for Civil Rights.

As a Chapel Hill Town Council member, I have been proud to support our community and help nonprofits that serve the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area. On the Council, I supported town budgets that devoted nearly \$2 million to our area nonprofits. This funding was critical during the Covid pandemic, when the need for services and aid increased, while donations for nonprofits decreased.

My experiences with nonprofits have educated me. I have learned about the challenges facing people in need – from survivors of sexual assault to hungry families to people facing housing instability. My experiences have also given me policy priorities. For example, my job at the Center for Civil Rights examining criminal justice debt led to my work with my Council colleagues on the creation of the first-ever, town-run criminal justice debt fund for people saddled with excessive court costs and fees.

Nonprofits serve multiple critical roles. They are community and service providers. They are centers of learning and research on our society's shortcomings. They are also powerful advocates and voices, and they provide quality, trustworthy information through their work with people with lived experiences. I am committed to supporting nonprofits that are in the service of an affordable, accessible and inclusive North Carolina.

Q3

Q2. If elected, what would be your top three policy priorities? (Limit: 250 words)

My top three policy priorities are below:

Public education. I am a proud son and nephew of public school teachers. I am committed to expanding access to quality education, from pre-kindergarten to post-secondary. I will push for the following measures, including but not limited to:

- (1) Pay our school personnel a fair and competitive wages;
- (2) Fulfill our obligations under Leandro and properly fund school infrastructure, to address the \$12.8 billion in needed school repairs; and
- (3) Ensure paid parental leave is provided to teachers, so they and their families are supported.

Climate justice. We must consider all North Carolinians in climate action and mitigation measures. I will support the following measures, including but not limited to:

- (1) repeal a 2013 law that prohibits NCDOT's financial support to towns and metropolitan/rural planning organizations for standalone bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects. Repeal of this law would help communities move away from cars as the principal mode of transportation;
- (2) devote substantial resources to providing and improving public transit, especially in rural areas; and
- (3) fight efforts to allow fracking or drilling offshore and actively support clean renewable energy like solar and wind.

Healthcare. Disparities in healthcare access persist in our district and state. I will champion affordable access to quality healthcare, including our rural communities, and I will advocate for the following, including but not limited to:

- (1) expand Medicaid;
 - (2) reinstate North Carolina's Earned Income Tax Credit; and
 - (3) fight against measures to impose work requirements for those receiving Medicaid.
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Q4

The Center advocates on public policy issues that affect North Carolina's nonprofit sector and works with the NC General Assembly and North Carolina's members of Congress to develop laws and policies that save nonprofits time and money, help nonprofits operate more effectively, and preserve the public's trust in North Carolina's nonprofit sector. Our policy agenda includes:

- Ensuring that all 501(c)(3) nonprofits are fully exempt from federal, state, and local taxes.
- Promoting new and expanded tax deductions and credits that encourage individuals and businesses to give generously to support their communities through the work of charitable nonprofits.
- Supporting policy solutions that will address the nonprofit workforce shortage, including increased funding to support jobs in the nonprofit sector and investment in accessible and affordable child care.
- Seeking solutions to long-standing challenges that nonprofits face when they provide public services through government grants and contracts, including late contracts, late payments, overly complicated application and reporting requirements, and underpayment for indirect costs.
- Promoting laws that will help nonprofits and businesses alike to provide affordable and high-quality health care and other benefits to their employees.

Q3. If elected, which of these policy goals would you support most enthusiastically, and why? (Limit: 250 words)

First, these are all policy goals worthy of enthusiastic support. If I had to choose, my top three policy goals would be: (1) addressing the nonprofit workforce shortage, (2) promoting laws that will help nonprofits and businesses alike provide affordable and high-quality health care and other benefits and (3) seeking solutions to long-standing challenges facing nonprofits when providing public services through government contracts and grants.

First, addressing the nonprofit workforce shortage requires reexamining our state's level of support of nonprofits over the past decade-plus. We have seen decreased state funding allocations for various nonprofits, including community development corporations. This hurts our nonprofits' ability to pay their employees a competitive wage, contributes to the loss of workers and reduces the effectiveness of nonprofits in serving vulnerable communities. Reinvestment in our nonprofits means much needed reinvestment in our communities.

Second, affordable healthcare for our nonprofit workers is a must. Funding is notoriously unpredictable in the nonprofit world, but healthcare should be a stable benefit for any nonprofit worker. I want to explore what potential assistance government can give organizations with less than 50 full-time workers, to ensure they can offer their workers the best benefits possible.

Third, just as governments have deadlines and financial obligations they must meet, so too do nonprofits. This is especially important when paying employees and providing services to impacted communities. I am a proponent for governments making prompt, full payment for services and simplifying grant reporting requirements, so nonprofit partners have clear expectations.
