

Meet the GOP Candidates for Governor

At the Wilmington Island Club on January 18, the Chatham County Republican Party delivered all six GOP candidates for Governor who will run in a primary on May 22, 2018. CCRP Chairman Linda Olson introduced the candidates and described the format of the Forum.

Introduction (Alphabetical list)

Casey Cagle – was the first Republican ever elected to Lieutenant Governor in Georgia.

Hunter Hill – A former Army Ranger, with three combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, he started a business after retiring from the Army. He has served two terms in the Senate, fighting for lower taxes, school choice and other conservative values.

Brian Kemp – has served two terms as Georgia Secretary of State, and has 30 years' experience starting and running a small business.

Clay Tippins – is a Stanford grad, a decorated Navy Seal, and a successful businessman. He has never run for a public office before.

Marc Urbach – taught school for 11 years, and is a professional author, journalist and public speaker, who uses the Courts to fight for justice and enforce the law. (He tried to get President Obama and Hillary Clinton indicted.)

Michael Williams – is a businessman and two-term Senator in Georgia, who was Georgia's Co-chair for the Trump Campaign.

Opening Statements

Brian Kemp – a 30-year businessman, he first ran for office successfully in a liberal district (Athens GA) that had supported Michael Dukakis for president. His motivation was to cut regulations, make state government more efficient, and preserve conservative Georgia values. As Secretary of State, he cut through red tape, and also stood up to the Obama Administration's attempt to overturn Georgia's innovative Voter ID law.

Michael Williams – A CPA who is new to politics, he got involved after ObamaCare destroyed his small business's ability to compete. His goal is to get the lobbyists, corporations and the rich elites out of influencing government decisions. He is the only candidate who supported Donald Trump in both the primaries and the general election.

Hunter Hill – After a college football career, he became an Army Ranger seeing combat in Iraq. His five years in the Georgia Senate has been spent pushing a conservative agenda of less government, and lower taxes.

Marc Urbach – As a former teacher and businessman, he is running to bring power back to the people and drain the political swamp.

Clay Tippins - Clay is a different kind of candidate in this race. He jumped in because he believes Georgia deserves better than politics as usual, with Georgia's government operating largely the same manner for the past fifty years. Clay wants to draw upon his unique experiences to bring Georgia's government from a past broken bureaucracy into the future.

Casey Cagle – Having served two governors (Deal and Perdue), he has seen Georgia become number one for business in the U.S. He believes the future for Georgia is bright – potentially 500,000 new jobs, that can be achieved by tax reform.

Question One: What do you offer that is unique and that can get you elected in 2018 against the Democrats?

Marc Urbach – His belief in returning power to the people, his plans and his statesmanship will make a stark contrast with whomever the Democrats put up.

Casey Cagle - A staunch conservative who has delivered on his promises. He has created new career Academies to help young Georgians get started in new jobs. His agenda is to build roads and bridges for the new jobs in Georgia, and to rapidly expand broadband in Georgia to help jobs in less populated areas.

Brian Kemp – The key to election success is a candidate that can be trusted and will fight for the right ideals. His record as Secretary of State proves the above. He also believes the Democrats really don't understand Georgians and their conservative values.

Hunter Hill – believes the U.S. has gotten off its true values, and government has gotten too big. It will take true leadership to turn things around and do what is necessary to expand the economy via better education through competitive school choice, and the elimination of the income tax to compete in the South.

Clay Tippins – His Navy Seal grit plus extensive management experience is what is needed to really shrink the size of government, yet build more roads and improve the healthcare system. It will also take some new thinking to solve a growing opioid problem in Georgia.

Michael Williams – The current government system is broken. It will take an outsider to fight against the establishment that is reluctant to change.

Question Two: With beach erosion and the prospect of off-shore drilling, how do you protect the environment?

Casey Cagle – The real question is how one maintains the hugely important Port of Savannah, where the Harbor deepening is a constant need to maintain. The Port is a \$60 billion annual generator of business in the Southeast.

Brian Kemp - As governor, he would approach every problem as he did as Secretary of State: use common sense. And consider the effects on all areas of the economy, including tourism – a major factor on the coast of Georgia.

Clay Tippins – He is believer that offshore drilling is a crucial benefit that can be managed as to its risks, to preserve Georgia's coastline as an ecological gem. He also knows that the Savannah Port maintenance is now 2.5 years behind schedule. Getting it back on schedule will boost economic development — not only in Savannah, but throughout Georgia.

Michael Williams – Is all for more drilling, and believes less government meddling is better, as the free market can manage the risks and rewards better.

Marc Urbach – Let the local communities have more of a say in oil drilling. And he is a real supporter of growing the Port of Savannah.

Hunter Hill – Natural resources can be protected even under the concept of more limited government, but keeping government to its core competencies. He believes in eliminating the state income tax, expanding school choice and helping the workforce be better prepared for the jobs of the future.

Question Three: What's your position on a state income tax, casinos and entitlements?

Brian Kemp – No casinos; reduce the income tax via spending cuts; and put more responsibility on individuals to become less dependent on government.

Casey Cagle – Incent individuals to reject food stamps, avoid casinos, and have broad tax reform.

Marc Urbach – Reject casinos, kill the state income tax (Florida and Texas have none), and give entitlement recipients three months to enroll in a school or training program or get a job.

Michael Williams – Don't need casinos; we have a lottery to support education, but the \$4 billion is not all used for that purpose. Cut entitlements, but our tax revenue increase of 70% in the past ten years has resulted in more spending, Cut spending.

Clay Tippins – Cutting income tax without increasing the sales tax means cutting spending. Clay would use his business skills and data to target waste, fraud, and abuse. On entitlements, some counties have abuses that can be curtailed, based on looking at their data.

Hunter Hill – Also is opposed to casinos. On entitlements, it is morally important to wean them off the government largess to restore dignity to an environment of working. Taxes can be reduced if government is restored to its true core purposes: Safety, transportation and education. Reducing the income tax would not mean increasing the sales tax.

Closing Statements and Final Perspective

Casey Cagle – Distinguish candidates not based on their ideas but their accomplishments. Georgia population is expected to grow by 4 million in the next 15 years (the size of South Carolina today). A major governor role is to plan for and shape that future. Need to rapidly expand broadband in Georgia, and help create vast new jobs. Over 100,000 jobs are unfilled today due to lack of skills – not only college trained, but industry apprenticeships. Also recognize 25% of children today live in poverty in Georgia.

Clay Tippins – In Education, get the federal government out of it; and get the banks and the federal government out of college loans. Have businesses get involved. In Georgia today, two thirds of 3rd graders can't read at grade level, and there are too many opioid prescriptions being given. These are emerging disasters. It may need an outsider with a very different perspective to start pushing appropriate solutions, as the establishment has allowed this to happen.

Brian Kemp – A small business owner's perspective is to cut taxes and cap spending. The electorate is looking for a governor to be trusted to do what he says he will do, based on a past track record. As Secretary of State, he cut his budget by 25% and innovated to save by outsourcing technology formerly done inefficiently by government. His four-point plan is to make Georgia No. 1 for small businesses, strengthen rural Georgia, reform state government, and put Georgia first.

Michael Williams – we can eliminate the state income tax, and cut spending. Cut the influence of lobbyists and special interests, and don't give special tax credits to corporations (who then contribute to election campaigns).

Marc Urbach – The voter choice seems to be between "career politicians" and "fake conservatives" versus new visionaries and statesmen.

Hunter Hill – Eliminate the state income tax, cut entitlement spending, and empower parents with more decisions on child education through more competition. Get government back to its core purpose. Be wary of all talk politicians, and go for results oriented leaders.