

Governor

Open seat (Gov. Brian Kemp is term-limited).

Keisha Lance Bottoms

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Former Atlanta mayor and former director of the White House Office of Public Engagement under President Biden.

Rick Jackson

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Founder of Alpharetta-based Jackson Healthcare, a medical staffing company; first-time candidate.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress “to work for peace and to reject war and violence.”* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

No public position found.

RICK JACKSON

No public position found.

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *“No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data.”* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Has called for pausing new data center construction while Georgia develops policies. Wants AI to supplement young workers rather than replace them, and says patients should be told when AI reviews insurance claims.

[1] Atlanta News First: debate transcript
[2] FOX 5: Keisha Lance Bottoms profile

RICK JACKSON

Opposes a blanket data center moratorium; would approve projects only with community support, strict environmental standards and lower power bills or taxes for residents. Would use AI to cut wasteful state spending.

[1] FOX 5: Rick Jackson profile
[2] Atlanta News First: debate transcript
[3] Jackson campaign: Action Plan

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is “a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society.”* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Calls full Medicaid expansion a “day one priority” and would end the Georgia Pathways program. Supports a \$15 statewide minimum wage.

[1] AJC: Governor debate takeaways
[2] Bottoms campaign: Issues

RICK JACKSON

Said at the October debate, “I am going to expand Medicaid to cover everybody,” without losing existing federal funds; earlier opposed full expansion, favoring work requirements. Has not backed a minimum wage increase, focusing instead on higher-paying jobs.

[1] AJC: Governor debate takeaways
[2] FOX 5: Rick Jackson profile

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion “cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life.”* [Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026](#)

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Campaigns on repealing Georgia’s abortion law and restoring the pre-Dobbs Roe standard, calling abortion decisions “deeply personal.” Proposes expanding prenatal and postpartum care in underserved areas.

[1] [AJC: Where Bottoms, Jackson stand on abortion](#)

[2] [FOX 5: Keisha Lance Bottoms profile](#)

RICK JACKSON

Supports Georgia’s current abortion law, including its exceptions for rape, incest and the mother’s life. Reiterated that support after a recording surfaced in which he seemed open to further limits.

[1] [AJC: Where Bottoms, Jackson stand on abortion](#)

[2] [FOX 5: Rick Jackson profile](#)

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty “is not really pro-life.”* [AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025](#)

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

No public position found.

RICK JACKSON

No public position found.

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *“Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants.”* [Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026](#)

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

As mayor, barred the Atlanta city jail from accepting new ICE detainees. Supports “lawful and responsible collaboration” between local and federal police but “will not support ICE tactics designed to terrorize Georgians.”

[1] [AJC: Where Bottoms, Jackson stand on immigration](#)

RECORD IN OFFICE

Signed Executive order (Sept. 2018) ending the city jail’s holding of ICE detainees

RICK JACKSON

Pledges to make Georgia “number one in the nation for deporting all CRIMINAL illegal immigrants” and to partner with President Trump on enforcement.

[1] [Jackson campaign: Action Plan](#)

[2] [AJC: Where Bottoms, Jackson stand on immigration](#)

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is “the right of every person to worship according to conscience.”* [Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026](#)

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

No public position found.

RICK JACKSON

Has endorsed Georgia’s participation in the federal tax credit program for donations to private school scholarships.

[1] [FOX 5: Rick Jackson profile](#)

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *“We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures.”* [AP, Oct. 1, 2025](#)

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Says Georgia should “slow down and reassess” data center expansion to protect utility bills and water resources, and calls for flood mitigation and reliable water infrastructure.

[1] [Bottoms campaign: Issues](#)

[2] [AJC interview with Bottoms](#)

RICK JACKSON

Would eliminate state taxes on residential electricity and natural gas, and require “strict EPA standards” for data centers.

[1] [FOX 5: Rick Jackson profile](#)

[2] [Atlanta News First: debate transcript](#)

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