

Serving The People Of Georgia

An Interview with The Honorable Brian P. Kemp, Governor of Georgia

EDITORS' NOTE On November 8, 2022, Governor Brian Kemp was re-elected to serve a second term as Georgia's 83rd governor. Kemp's political career began when he served as a state senator from 2003-07. He served as Georgia Secretary of State from 2010-18. He is a business owner, entrepreneur, and investor. A native of Athens, Georgia, Kemp started his first small business over 35 years ago with a pickup truck and a shovel. His experience as a small business owner has driven his mission to put hardworking Georgians first since taking office as Georgia's governor. Governor Kemp, First Lady Marty Kemp, and their three daughters live on their family farm in Athens and are committed to building a safer, stronger Georgia for all who call the Peach State "home."



The Hon. Brian P. Kemp

As the #1 state for business for 11 consecutive years, our commitment to attracting jobs and investment has led to over 193,000 new jobs and over \$90 billion of investment coming to communities statewide since I first took office. We're not resting on our laurels when it comes to working with job creators to address the challenges they face in creating opportunities for hardworking Georgians. That's why we passed meaningful tort reform this year to restore balance to our courtrooms and help stabilize costs

for businesses and consumers alike. We're also addressing the need for workers to fill these incredible opportunities, with the largest direct college admissions program in the nation, Georgia MATCH, already leading to enrollment increases at our higher education institutions and the Top State for Talent Act that I signed this year aligning the needs of businesses with our high demand career pipeline.

Finally, I believe it is our government's responsibility to promote the well-being of our

citizens, which is why ensuring our communities are safe and have access to quality healthcare has been a defining feature of my time as Governor. We've made Georgia a national leader in the fight against human trafficking by cracking down on traffickers and buyers while ensuring we are a safe haven for survivors. We've taken the fight to criminal street gangs and supported our brave law enforcement who work every day to keep our streets safe. We've also committed more funding to mental health than ever before, ensuring all Georgians know it is ok to not be okay. Additionally, our innovative, Georgia-centric approach to healthcare, Georgia Access and Georgia Pathways, have led to over 1.5 million Georgians receiving care that fits their needs.

How do you describe Georgia's strengths?

Our state has a lot to offer, and that's why people are voting with their feet by continuing to move to Georgia and open businesses here. From a business perspective, our approach to working with job creators, not against them – something I like to call the "Georgia Way" – ensures we have the infrastructure, workforce

What attracted you to public service?

Marty and I built our first business, Kemp Development and Construction Company, from the ground up with a pickup truck and a shovel. While we felt the struggles of those Friday nights where we weren't sure if we could pay our employees, I grew fed up with government standing in the way of its citizens' success and ignoring their concerns. That inspired me to run for the Georgia State Senate, and later Secretary of State, to work to cut red tape and streamline government. After prayerful consideration with Marty and the girls, I decided to run for Governor in 2018, and have been blessed to serve the people of Georgia ever since. Through it all, that work ensuring our government is responsive and efficient has remained my top priority.

Will you highlight the priorities for your administration?

I believe our government should work for its citizens and ensure they can be successful when they work hard, and that vision has been the driving force for my administration. To help fight the negative effects of inflation, we've returned over \$7.6 billion to Georgians through income tax refunds, homestead tax exemptions, and suspensions of the state motor and diesel fuel tax. This year, I again signed legislation accelerating the largest income tax cut in state history by another 20 basis points. We've been able to take these steps because of our responsible, fiscally conservative approach to budgeting.



Governor Kemp at the opening of Units 3 and 4 at Plant Vogtle, the nuclear power plant located in Waynesboro, Georgia

“I believe our government should work for its citizens and ensure they can be successful when they work hard, and that vision has been the driving force for my administration.”



Governor Kemp at the signing of historic legislation delivering commonsense, meaningful tort reform

development, and pro-business environment job creators need to thrive. And we certainly have all of these in droves, with national publications ranking Georgia #1 in all three of those categories.

More than that, people choose Georgia because of the opportunities we offer not just for a successful career, but also for a fulfilling life. Our world-famous southern hospitality offers an open door and smile no matter where you go. Our bountiful natural resources stretching

from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Golden Isles provide memorable experiences statewide. Our cuisine and attractions in cities and towns across Georgia are always ready to create new memories. Through it all, the people of our state are its greatest strength – always ready to roll up their sleeves and get things done so they can enjoy some time cheering on their favorite team or relaxing with family and friends.

How important is a strong public/private partnership in Georgia?

In short: it's the key to everything we do in our state. It means at both the local and state level, across branches of government, we work with job creators, not against them, to promote mutual prosperity. It means we work with the private sector to support growth in our communities and address needs for hardworking Georgians. Just as we did during our response to the pandemic, we are always listening to our business partners on their needs and what actions we can take to help them have the opportunity to succeed.

Will you discuss your administration's focus and commitment to transparency?

One of the main reasons I felt the need to get involved in politics was because I was fed up with getting the government runaround every time I needed an answer. I tell my entire administration, from top to bottom, that whether the answer is positive or negative, we owe the people we serve a response so they can move on with their lives. We'll keep working to ensure our state government is responsive and trustworthy.

How concerned are you about the partisanship that exists today, and what can be done to bring people together?

I'm not too concerned because I believe the American people will reward leaders who do what they say they are going to do. Here in Georgia, we've been successful because we kept our promises and did what we told voters we would do. Because of that integrity, Georgians have rewarded us at the ballot box.

What advice do you offer to young people beginning their careers?

Do the right thing even when no one is watching. When people can trust who you are at all times, they will entrust you with responsibility just as they have us here in Georgia. ●



Governor Kemp attending the opening of a new on-site hangar for the Georgia DPS Aviation Division at their headquarters