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REP. JON HARDISTER IS EYEING COMMISSIONER OF LABOR ROLE
The following was reported by the [Carolina Journal](#):

As soon as first-term Labor Commissioner Josh Dobson made the surprise announcement that he would not run again, Guilford County state Rep. Jon Hardister, a Republican, began hearing from supporters that he should consider the role. Contacted this week, Hardister told CJ he is highly motivated to seek the position after a successful decade in the North Carolina House of Representatives.

"I am strongly leaning towards running for Labor commissioner in 2024," Hardister told CJ. "I will solidify my decision over the holidays and make an announcement in January."

"With over a decade of service in state government and more than 20 years of experience in the private sector, I am uniquely qualified to serve in this capacity," Hardister added. "The job of Labor commissioner is critical to the workers of North Carolina, and if elected, I will dedicate myself to the responsibilities of the office."

Dobson made the surprise announcement of his retirement during a Council of State meeting earlier this month. In the last century, it has been extremely rare for any elected member of the Council of State, which includes 10 statewide elected officers (the governor; lieutenant governor; secretary of State; state auditor; treasurer; superintendent of Public Instruction; attorney general; and commissioners of Agriculture, Labor, and Insurance), to voluntarily serve one single term, with the exception of governors and lieutenant governors, who were limited to a single term until 1980.



grateful for the support of my family. They have supported me during each of my previous five elections, and they are supportive now of my decision to not run for re-election. I'm also grateful for the employees at the North Carolina Department of Labor and the work they do every day to keep North Carolinians safe."

The original Bureau of Labor Statistics, the historical precursor of the present NC Department of Labor, was created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1887, with provision for appointment by the governor of a commissioner of Labor Statistics for a two-year term. In 1899, another act was passed providing that the commissioner, beginning with the general election of 1900, be elected by the people for a four-year term.

The N.C. Department of Labor is charged with promoting the "health, safety and general well-being" of more than 4 million workers in the state. The department serves the needs of the workplace through a variety of programs aimed at making the employees of North Carolina safe.

Dobson replaced North Carolina's longest-serving Labor commissioner, Cherie Berry, who won five elections as Labor commissioner, serving 2001-2021. Berry affectionately became known as the "elevator queen" after she added her picture to every lift-inspection notice in the state. The single four-year term for Dobson will be the shortest tenure of any elected Labor commissioner going back 120 years, except William Creel, who died two years into his first term in 1975.

Hardister, who was first elected to the N.C. House in 2012 and was recently re-elected to a sixth term, will now serve a fourth consecutive term as the N.C. House Majority Whip. He is the longest-serving N.C. House Majority Whip in the state's history. He also holds the record for the youngest member to serve in that position, having first been elected in 2016 at the age of 34. Hardister is now 40. The N.C. House Majority Whip position is responsible for counting votes, tracking member attendance, and coordinating session schedules with Speaker Tim Moore.

"Over the last decade, we have been successful in making North Carolina one of the best states for business. As a member of N.C. House leadership, I have had the privilege of playing a role in that success. If elected Labor commissioner, I will bring that same pro-business, pro-worker approach to the Department of Labor. I will work to support both employees and employers across our great state."

Jon Hardister was born and raised in Greensboro and attended Grimsley High School and Greensboro College, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in political science.

His district covers most of eastern Guilford County and parts of Greensboro. He serves on several committees, including ABC, Appropriations, Banking, Education, Elections, Judiciary, and Transportation. Hardister is behind a popular effort to make daylight-savings time permanent. He has worked to modernize alcohol regulations.

"Over the next couple of weeks, I will engage in conversations with friends, family, and constituents as I finalize my decision," Hardister said. "If I choose to run, I will work hard to earn the confidence of voters across North Carolina."

Aside from his job as a legislator, Jon works in marketing and real estate investing. He is the vice president for marketing of First Carolina Mortgage, a family-owned company.

- Posted by [Dallas Woodhouse](#) in the Carolina Journal on December 14, 2022.





DALLAS WOODHOUSE DECEMBER 16, 2022 32 comments 3 shares

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Aryn Schloemer
If elected Commissioner of Labor, what do you intend to do to protect employees from vaccine mandates? I don't recall you ever speaking out against them or doing anything to protect workers other than signing a letter to some hospitals sent by your colleagues. Did you do things to protect workers that I have simply not heard about? I hear you may have an opponent in the Republican primary who will commit to using all of NCDOL's powers to protect workers against vaccine mandates. Will you do that?"

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Jon Hardister
Aryn Schloemer The answer is yes. I am against Covid vaccine mandates and will oppose any effort to establish such mandates on public or private employees. This has always been my position, which I have said before in media interviews and in commentary on social media. In addition, I voted for HB 572 - No Vaccine Mandate by EO, Rule, or Agency - which passed the House and was unfortunately not advanced in the Senate. Further, there was no realistic chance that the legislature could have succeeded in the effort not having a super majority and a Democrat governor. I will maintain this position moving forward.

Like Reply 8h



2



Brennan Tyler Brooks

I don't think you're being straight in your response, Jon. You haven't directly addressed vaccine mandates imposed by PRIVATE employers on their employees. I don't see you as a sponsor on HB 558 -- why not? Am I missing something where you supported 558 and in particular the protections to be granted by Part V? Why didn't you use your leadership position to help 558 advance? On July 29, 2021, you posted on Facebook: "Private companies certainly have latitude in the free market to require their employees to get vaccinated. But in this case, I believe it is wrong for private companies (including non-profit health care providers) to require employees to take vaccines that do not have full FDA approval." So, at least last year when it mattered, you were fine with private employers imposing vaccine mandates -- correct? Did you change your position? When? (And with all we know about the corruption and regulatory capture of the FDA, how can you legitimately use that as a grounds for saying a vaccine is safe?) Thus, can you TODAY commit that, as Commissioner of Labor, you would work to oppose PRIVATE employer mandates of ANY vaccine and use all tools available to you to help employees who do not wish to be vaccinated, including seeking new legislation from the legislature if necessary? I do hope you would make this commitment, even though it would appear to represent a change in your position on the issue. At some point, too, I hope you'd explain how broadly you view the employer's right to control its employees? Do you support Title VII, the ADA, FLSA, OSHA, and the numerous of other state and federal statutes that govern the employment relationship? And if it is okay for the government to regulate wages, hours, workplace safety, and countless other issues in a business, why can't the government ban employment discrimination on the basis of vaccination? Surely, you would not agree with employment discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, or the like. So where do you draw your ideological/philosophical line? Thank you.

Like Reply 7h Edited



Jon Hardister

Brennan Tyler Brooks Those are fair questions. First, I didn't sponsor HB 572 because I knew that Rep. Keith D Kidwell and his cosponsors were fully capable of handling it. I also knew that I would have the chance to vote for it, which I did. As for private business mandates, that is an interesting subject. As a conservative, I am leery of promulgating new regulations or restrictions on private businesses. I like to defer to the free market on many issues. If a business mandates vaccines, people can express their discontent by boycotting the business or choosing not to work there (the free market sorts it out). The business that my family owns has no vaccine mandate and we don't even ask our employees if they have been vaccinated (we view it as a private matter). But I don't want to tell another business what to do. I believe our primary objective here should be to prevent government overreach.





Brennan Tyler Brooks

Jon Hardister Everyone knows HB 572 was a joke, so that's no excuse. To the broader point, though, the government tells businesses what to do all the time (ADA, OSHA, Title VII, FLSA, etc.). Are *all* these laws wrong in your opinion? Are Right to Work laws good? They prohibit a private employer from requiring its employees to join a union, even if the private employer wants a closed shop. You do support Right to Work laws, right, even though they are clearly intervention by the government in the employee-employer relationship? You do support laws that prohibit race and sex discrimination by employers, right? Can we at least get agreement on that? So why leave the unvaccinated -- who have suffered terrible discrimination, harassment, and vilification from all quarters, including from the President of the United States himself -- with no legal protections? When I get calls in the future like I have since COVID mandates started from people facing termination from jobs they love because they object to receiving the COVID vaccine, do I tell them there's no use going to Commissioner of Labor **Jon Hardister** for help because he won't listen to your concerns? Seems like I tell them "yes" since you refused to take the pledge I presented above. Regular folks -- conservative, hardworking, God-fearing folks -- who don't make political donations but who make this state actually run have been suffering under the reign of Covidism for years now. They will be very disappointed that you would not be ally for them if elected. At least be honest, though, when someone asks if you're opposed to vaccinate mandates, since you really aren't. You're just opposed to government-imposed mandates. That's a huge difference.

[Like](#) [Reply](#) 6h

Brennan Tyler Brooks

Jon Hardister So, **Sebastian King**, are you also on board with letting the unvaccinated be discriminated against?

[Like](#) [Reply](#) 6h

Sebastian King

Brennan Tyler Brooks did you go to this rally at the General Assembly against Vaccine Mandates? It's easy to say you're for something or against something, but it's another thing to show up. I do agree with Rep. Hardister's point that it is tough as a conservative to pass mandates on businesses. It's a slippery slope that can make us just as bad as Dems. What I will say is this, Rep. Hardister has never and would never have vaccine mandates with his own business. I will also add that we've seen why it's important to have tested and proven candidates run statewide. If we lose this seat, a Dem could use an executive order to mandate all employees in NC to be vaccinated. Yes. The labor commissioner does have the ability to issue executive orders. As a conservative, I believe we must keep this seat red.

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Like Reply 6h



Brennan Tyler Brooks

Sebastian King Do you actually think I haven't been fighting vaccine mandates, including employer vaccine mandates, since the very beginning? Seriously? Do you know what I do? See www.brookslawnc.com. I've been working on this issue almost 24/7 since it started, taking calls and representing panicked employees against some of the largest companies in the country -- employees who got a callous cold shoulder from just about every elected official in this state, much to their eternal shame. I've filed EEOC charges, several federal lawsuits, and written countless letters to employers fighting against private employer mandates. And, I've won a lot of the time. I don't buy this "slippery slope" straw man argument for one second, and no thinking person should. I oppose employment discrimination -- race, sex, age, disability, and religious discrimination AND discrimination on the basis of vaccination status as well. Do you actually support employment discrimination on the basis of race or sex? Does **Jon**? If not, what's the difference now? If we as Republicans cannot embrace these fundamental civil and human rights, like those who founded this party, then the Democrats really are correct about the GOP. But I don't believe the Democrats are correct. Republicans are still the party of civil rights and human dignity, and I fight everyday to keep it that way.

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Jon Hardister

Brennan Tyler Brooks Thank you for the feedback. This is very thought-provoking. While I agree with you in spirit, I have a different opinion as it relates to the role of government. While I am opposed to government mandates, and I am philosophically opposed to mandates in general, I don't think the government should tell a private business what to do. Furthermore, the Department of Labor does not have the ability to prevent private businesses from having a vaccine mandate. That would require a change in law from the General Assembly. What DOL could do is submit a standard through rule making to create a vaccine mandate, which I would not allow to happen.

Like Reply 4h Edited





Intro

NC House Majority Whip

Lives in Greensboro, North Carolina

From Greensboro, North Carolina



Brennan Tyler Brooks

Jon Hardister Should the government tell employers not to discriminate on the basis of race in employment or do you think Title VII should be repealed?

Like Reply 3h Edited



Jon Hardister

Brennan Tyler Brooks Race is an immutable characteristic. Vaccine status is not. I do believe people are entitled to religious exemptions under the First Amendment.

Like Reply 3h



Gordon Hunt

Jon Hardister thank you for your position on the vaccines. Josh pushed back on the attempts to mandate vaccines across the state while knowing the federal government retains the power to step over the state DOL. If a private company chose to require the employees to have vaccines to continue employment that should be their choice. The employees have the ability to leave and seek other employment. For the state to assume they know all the details of all companies is the kind of arrogance we see from the big government ilk. I look forward to hearing your decision about DOL.

Like Reply 3h



Brennan Tyler Brooks

Jon Hardister So you do agree that some intervention by the government in private employment decisions is okay. It's thus a matter of line drawing, right? So why not draw the line to help the unvaccinated who have been suffering widespread harassment and demonization? Should religion continue to be protected under Title VII, even though employees can change their faith? I would hope you'd say it should be protected, but it seems like that would be too much government for you. Am I wrong? (Also, the First Amendment wouldn't help with private employers, so I'm not sure why you mentioned it.)

Like Reply 3h



Sebastian King

Gordon Hunt well said my friend

Like Reply 3h



Brennan Tyler Brooks

Gordon Hunt Would it be okay in your opinion for a private employer to require employees to use contraceptives and even have an abortion if the mandated contraceptive method fails?

Like Reply 3h



Gordon Hunt

Brennan Tyler Brooks I had to look to see what you do, and now I see why your line of reason was reminiscent of a monkey and football with a quart of grain alcohol. You should ask yourself you're own absurd questions so you can argue with yourself.

Like Reply 2h





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Brennan Tyler Brooks

Gordon Hunt I take it then that you agree an employer could require contraceptives and abortion of its employees, and that it would be wrong for the government to prohibit such a mandate. **Jon and Sebastian**, what say you?

Steve Noble, this seems like an interesting conversation that has been sparked about the Commissioner of Labor race already.

Like Reply 2h Edited

Sebastian King

Brennan Tyler Brooks imagine being a lawyer and relying solely on false equivalency fallacy 😊 no one has even announced for Labor and it seems like you have to focus on attacking a representative that has helped make our state the #1 state for business.

Like Reply 2h Edited

Brennan Tyler Brooks

Sebastian King Imagine being an elected official and avoiding questions of significant importance about your fundamental beliefs and principles.

Like Reply 2h

Brennan Tyler Brooks

Sebastian King I'm just asking questions. There will be many of those during a political campaign, don't you know? Funny you consider questions to be an attack. Have I hit a nerve? As they say, the truth does not mind being questioned; a lie does not like being challenged. 🇺🇸

Like Reply 2h Edited

Sebastian King

Brennan Tyler Brooks - I'm not a candidate or doing any campaigns so no you didn't hit a

divide our party, that's your prerogative. Just says a lot to me as a former candidate if you spend your time attacking others instead of talking about your own vision / qualifications.

Like Reply 1h

Gordon Hunt

Brennan Tyler Brooks I'm not the lawyer here but are conflating a condition with a disease? In HR speak, I don't remember those being treated the same way. Regardless, Jon is fully prepared to be an excellent Sec of Labor and has the experience to have folks like yourself send him letters to hand to staff attorneys to write responses so can enjoy your endless circle of questions be they legitimate or simply self indulgent.

Like Reply 1h



Brennan Tyler Brooks

Gordon Hunt As a matter of political first principles, would it be permissible for the government to prohibit an employer from requiring its employees to take contraceptives or have an abortion? Or is that too much interference with the free market for you? It's very simple. **Sebastian? Jon?** What's your answer?

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**Brennan Tyler Brooks**

Sebastian King Do you have to pay royalties to the GOP Establishment for those meaningless stock phrases, or do you get to use them for free?

Like Reply 1h



Aryn Schloemer

If elected Commissioner of Labor, what do you intend to do to protect employees from vaccine mandates? I don't recall you ever speaking out against them or doing anything to protect workers other than signing a letter to some hospitals sent by your colleagues. Did you do things to protect workers that I have simply not heard about? I hear you may have an opponent in the Republican primary who will commit to using all of NCDOL's powers to protect workers against vaccine mandates. Will you do that?"

Like Reply 8h

**Scott Moore**

You've got my vote my friend!

Like Reply 6h

**Cynthia Y Griffith Davis**

My thoughts and prayers are with you, as you consider your future to represent "The People" in a new capacity.

May you prayerfully consider your past service and future service, as to where you can serve your constituents, "The People", with the greatest... [See more](#)

Like Reply 5h



Write a comment...

**Jon Hardister** is in Gibsonville, North Carolina.

5d ·

...

Great turnout today at the Gibsonville Christmas Parade. The Campaign Mobile (Ford Mustang) was on hand for the occasion.



40

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Carolyn Cudd
Love that car!!!

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Jon Hardister is in Washington D.C.

6d ·

...

It was great to meet former NFL sportscaster Michele Tafoya at a GOPAC conference in Washington, DC. I admire her passion for freedom of speech and individual liberty. It was fascinating to hear her accounts of interviewing legendary NFL players on the sidelines, including Tom Brady (aka the GOAT).



Sebastian King and 105 others

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Bill Pixley
GOPAC?? Really Jon?

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Jon Hardister
Bill Pixley Respectfully disagree. What does Matt Schlapp have to do with GOPAC?

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Check out these photos I took on an evening walk around the National Mall in Washington, DC.



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Carolyn Cudd
Really nice!!!!

GIPHY

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