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JEWISH COMMUNITY
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OF GREATER WASHINGTON

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Washington Jewish Week



2024 MD PRIMARY JEWISH VOTER'S GUIDE

**U.S. SENATE,
CONGRESSIONAL
6TH DISTRICT &
MONTGOMERY
COUNTY SCHOOL
BOARD**



Dear Members of the Maryland Jewish Community:

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) and the Washington Jewish Week have produced this 2024 Maryland Jewish Voter's Guide for the US Senate, Congressional 6th District and Montgomery County Board of Education races in the upcoming Primary Election on May 14, 2024. This publication will introduce you to candidates' positions on critical issues facing the Jewish community. We sent out survey questions to each candidate and then compiled their responses – limited to a few paragraphs for each question. We also asked that they include a photograph.

For comprehensive information about the upcoming elections, including where, when and how to vote, as well as early voting and mail-in ballots [use this link](#) to the Maryland State Board of Elections. For voter registration questions please [click here](#).

IMPORTANT DATES TO KNOW INCLUDE:

- Primary Election Day is May 14, 2024, from 7am to 8pm.
- Early Voting is May 2, 2024 - May 9, 2024, from 7am to 8pm.
- Mail-in ballots must be postmarked or placed in a designated ballot drop box by 8pm on May 14, 2024.

We hope this resource is a valuable tool to facilitate your participation in our democratic process. For additional information, contact Deborah Miller at the JCRC at dmiller@jcouncil.org. The Washington Jewish Week always provides the latest in politics, news and local stories. Subscribe today and never miss out! www.washingtonjewishweek.com/bogo55

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Candidates for U.S. Senate – Democratic

Angela Alsobrooks



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

The rise in antisemitism is deeply alarming. I fully support the Biden administration's

comprehensive plan to combat antisemitism including their enthusiastic embrace of the IHRA definition of antisemitism. I believe we must do everything we can to reverse this disturbing trend, and every American has a responsibility to confront hate whenever we see it.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

As I have traveled throughout our State, I have found that folks are most concerned about reproductive freedom, crime and economic opportunity. In the Senate, I will co-sponsor the Women's Health Protection Act, a crucial step towards establishing federal legal protection for the right to provide and access abortion care. I understand public safety deeply, and under my watch as State's Attorney Prince George's County saw a 50% reduction in violent crime. I will passionately fight to ensure proper funding and nationwide implementation of standards to keep families safe and to reform the criminal justice system. I firmly believe in the need for comprehensive changes that promote safety, justice, and equity for all residents. On economic opportunity, I have a record of securing historic investments for my community and will continue this work in the Senate, to make sure that all families have the resources and opportunities to thrive.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I am proud to have spent my life in public service, first as an Assistant State's Attorney focused on domestic violence cases, then as State's Attorney, where under my tenure violent crime dropped by 50%, and most recently as Prince George's County Executive. I know Marylanders deserve a Senator who both fights for them and shares their concerns. The Senate lacks people with my lived experience, there are far too many multi-millionaires in Congress and not enough people who understand what the average person thinks and needs. I am running for Senate to be a voice for families like the ones I grew up with and whom I have worked for throughout my life.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

I have been deeply committed to making critical investments to preserve, protect and expand affordable housing opportunities for residents of Prince George's County. We directly preserved and created 3,301 affordable housing units since 2020, and committed funding for an additional 2,066 affordable units. We launched the Right of First Refusal Program to help preserve 1,452 affordable housing units since 2021. We created the Right of First Refusal Loan Preservation Fund, immediately committing \$25 million to preserve affordable housing. We've broken ground on 6 new affordable housing projects in Clinton, Glenarden, Fairmount Heights, College Park, Hyattsville and Glenn Dale and opened 3 new affordable housing projects in Suitland, Upper Marlboro, and Clinton. I will seek to continue this work by ensuring that we're providing the resources local jurisdictions need to continue to make investments in affordable housing, like the ones that we've made in Prince George's County.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

As County Executive, I fought to invest in Prince George's County's economic growth, bringing amenities to communities that had been left behind for years. I attracted more than a billion dollars to the Blue Line Corridor, worked to redevelop New Carrollton, and secured the first ever RAISE grant funding in Prince George's County history to build new trails. I also led in making the case to the federal government to build the new FBI headquarters in Maryland and for the Commanders to build a new stadium in Prince George's County. I have seen the economic benefit of these kinds of investments first-hand as each project brings new jobs, new businesses,

and pride in communities. I will be a strong advocate for continuing these critical investments into our future economy to ensure businesses have the infrastructure and tools they need to compete regionally for economic investments with companies around the globe

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

What happened on October 7th was a gutting tragedy. Six months have passed and we mustn't lose sight of that fact. We must eliminate the threat of Hamas. We need to release the hostages and get to an immediate ceasefire. I am deeply concerned about the ever growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza — innocent lives lost, aid workers killed, increasing famine. Prime Minister Netanyahu must do everything in his power to address this humanitarian crisis and increase the flow of aid into Gaza, and he must do so with haste and urgency. If he does not do so, then I agree with President Biden that we must use the strongest possible leverage to ensure that these aims are met. It's crucial that we remain committed to supporting Israel in defense of escalating attacks from Iran. I'm grateful that we were able to work alongside a coalition to stop this unprecedented attack.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I agree with President Biden that we must use the strongest possible leverage to ensure that we can address the increasing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, including the potential of conditioning aid. Our support for Israel's ability to defend itself in the face of attacks must remain ironclad.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I believe we should continue to provide Ukraine with the resources and strategic insight needed to combat Russian aggression. The fact is Republicans have decided that standing with our allies in the face of Putin's aggression is no longer in America's national security interest. Why did they decide that? Because Donald Trump decided that. They're wrong on the facts here, and they're wrong on the values. It is not only in Ukraine's interest to stand up to Putin's aggression, it's in America's national security and geopolitical interests to stand up to Putin's aggression. In the Senate, I'll fight to ensure we fund our allies and stand with the Ukrainian people.

Michael W. Cobb, Sr.

Did not submit a response.

Marcellus Crews

Did not submit a response.

Brian E. Frydenborg

Did not submit a response.

Scottie J. Griffin

Did not submit a response.

Robert K. Houton

Did not submit a response.

Joseph Perez

Did not submit a response.

Steven Henry Seufferer



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

AS a lifelong victim of antisemitism, This is a difficult question to answer. Attempts

to refute claims and spread truth will be met with accusations of lying, punishment will be met with more hatred and calls that we're trying to silence them. I truly don't know what the answer is, but I plan to work with the Maryland Jewish Community to find the answer, and will do whatever it takes.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Public Safety, Health Care, and Education. 1. Reevaluation and amending the 2nd Amendment to apply to modern day America 2. Increase taxes on the wealthy and corporations to fund medicare for all, and prioritize mental health treatment as being necessary 3. Undo Regan's cuts to the DoE and increase

government funding to public schooling.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

Unlike the front runners, I'm much more in touch with the average American, because I haven't been in politics or high profile positions. I'm just a guy that has to work for a living to support my family. I know what our struggles are actually like.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Increased funding to and expansion of HUD programs, fix rent rates at a maximum of 30% the median household income for a given area.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

If you make living more affordable, then people have more money to spend on other things, thus boosting our economy.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Militarily, engage in precision surgical strikes against Hamas and the Palestinian Authority without the use of missiles or bombs to eliminate civilian casualties, use our forces to guard humanitarian aid convoys to ensure that the aid gets to those that actually need it, rather than to Hamas. Remove Benjamin Netanyahu.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

At a certain point, Israel needs to be able to stand on its own. That aside, politically, continuing to fund Israel unconditionally is an endorsement of their government and the IDF's actions. If this is the only way to rein them in, then it's what would need to happen, but We need to try other options first.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

We can either continue to do it or let them fall to Putin's power grab. There's no perfect option here, so I choose the one that discourages despotic rulers from thinking they can do whatever they want to the rest of the world.

David J. Trone



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

Over 3,000 incidents of antisemitism have been reported since October 7th, which is a startling 361% increase. This is incredibly personal to me — my wife and children are Jewish and we are members at Temple Beth Ami and Temple B'nai. The tragedy at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh in 2018 was particularly painful for my family: one of my daughters was blessed to receive her Hebrew name in that Temple. Everyone deserves to feel safe and be free from discrimination at school, at their places of worship and in their communities. I have worked to improve safety and security for Jewish communities and will continue to push for increases in funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. We need to invest more resources in promoting an understanding of the historical roots and manifestations of antisemitism so that people can better recognize and challenge stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes. I also believe we need to hold people, organizations and social media platforms accountable when they spread hate-fueled ideas and promote anti-semitism. Together, we must stand firmly against antisemitism and all forms of hatred.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

High Costs: I voted for the Inflation Reduction Act, which expanded health care coverage for 38,000 Marylanders and made coverage more affordable for an additional 153,000 Marylanders. We capped the price of insulin at \$35 a month for Medicare recipients, capped out of pocket prescription drug prices and allowed Medicare to negotiate drug prices. I am also fighting to make college and career training opportunities more affordable and accessible for all students. Jobs and Growing the Economy: We can create jobs and grow Maryland's economy by investing in our workers and small businesses. This means more access to capital so our entrepreneurs can bring their

ideas to life and making it easier for businesses from disadvantaged areas to access tax incentives and federal contracts. Mental Health and Criminal Justice Reform: It's my mission in Congress to expand access to mental health and addiction treatment programs. The lack of treatment has placed undue burden on our emergency rooms and criminal justice system.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Our system is broken — and career politicians accept the status quo and fail to deliver on their promises. I've been able to get things done because I reject the calls of special interests and put people over politics. I've never accepted a dime from PACs, lobbyists, or corporations — and I never will. For three terms in the House, I've made bipartisan progress without sacrificing my progressive values, passing 28 bills to curb the opioid epidemic, provide mental health care, reform the systemically racist criminal justice system, and improve the day-to-day lives of Maryland families. I serve as co-chair of the Abraham Accords Caucus and was appointed by Speaker Pelosi to co-chair the U.S. Commission on Synthetic Opioid Trafficking where we have worked to stop the flow of precursor chemicals from China. Marylanders deserve a Senator ready to hit the ground running on day one, delivering results on the challenges facing our communities.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. There is a 96,000 unit shortage of affordable housing in Maryland, with 30% of younger Marylanders saying they would consider leaving the state to find better housing. I'll fight to make it easier for new homeowners to afford a mortgage and for resources to rehab vacant properties and housing units. Rehabilitating those properties to create truly affordable housing options in neighborhoods is a powerful first step to addressing the housing shortage. As part of the Build Back Better Act, I supported a \$170 billion investment in affordable housing. It also included the Unlocking Possibilities Program which would incentivize the elimination of restrictive zoning and land uses that have been a barrier to building new affordable housing units. The Senate dropped these provisions from the final legislation but I will continue to fight to ensure safe and affordable housing.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

The Baltimore region was awarded funding and a Tech Hub designation for a project that will use artificial intelligence technologies to improve health outcomes. 38 organizations — from our world class universities to top tier hospitals, researchers, and burgeoning tech industry — all worked together to harness all Maryland has to offer and to invest in our future. I was proud to support the CHIP and Science Act, which made the Tech Hub possible. Innovation fuels economic growth, creates jobs, and helps communities thrive. Our state's economy depends on preparing for the jobs of the future, and making sure that everyone can participate in that future. This starts with investing in education and a new generation of community-driven worker training programs such as more accessible technical education and partnerships with unions and community colleges to help kids know their options and start training and working after high school. And for those that choose to go to college, we need to make it affordable for each and every student.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

The death and devastation we saw on October 7th from Hamas was an atrocious assault on human life. I have always been a strong supporter of Israel and there is not a day that goes by where I do not think about the hostages, their families, and what we can do to bring them home. The facts are clear: our vision for peace cannot be achieved in the region if we don't eliminate Hamas. Hamas has targeted, killed, and sexually assaulted Israeli civilians and soldiers. They persist in employing human shields and civilian infrastructure for concealment, further endangering innocent lives. Since October 7th, we have seen horrific things. The loss of civilian life has been catastrophic. And we need a global effort to bring humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza. Any ceasefire must be conditioned on the release of all the hostages. As co-chair of the Abraham Accords Caucus, I'll continue to facilitate partnerships with Arab countries, so we can achieve these goals and think long-term about building stability and peace in the region.

Some lawmakers have suggested



conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Israel is an incredibly important U.S. ally in one of the most volatile regions in the world. The US-Israel relationship not only benefits Israel but also serves as the cornerstone for U.S. interests in promoting stability, security, and democracy throughout the Middle East. The U.S.-Israel relationship is more than just security, but includes collaboration on critical research and development efforts related to cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, medical advances, sustainability, and agricultural innovations. More than 80% of U.S. security assistance is actually spent in the U.S., helping to create jobs and foster new innovations. These innovative partnerships are more important than ever as we work to counter China's rising influence. In the wake of recent attacks by Iran, it's more important than ever that the U.S. and Israel's long standing partnership remain strong and rooted in our shared values and strategic goals. I have been a strong supporter of funding for the systems that helped thwart Iran's attacks, including David's Sling and the Iron Dome. Iran's actions threaten the peace and security of the entire region as it continues to provide support for terrorist organizations, such as Hezbollah and Hamas, develop nuclear capabilities, and attack our allies. I was proud to help pass the DEFEND Act and the Maritime Act to protect against the Iranian threat on land and at sea and I will continue to stand with Israel and hold Iran accountable for its actions.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is bigger than just one country. Putin is threatening democratic values across the world and nothing would make him happier than if the U.S. abandoned Ukraine. As a member of the powerful Appropriations Committee, I have pushed for Ukraine to have the resources it needs to defeat Putin. I have voted for humanitarian, military, and economic assistance to Ukraine. Our allies are depending on us. Walking away from Ukraine would have repercussions, making our allies less willing to partner with us on economic and security issues worldwide. Republicans have refused to support democracy in Ukraine and would rather let Putin win and have continued to hold hostage essential military and economic support that Ukraine urgently needs.

Andrew Jaye Wildman



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

By sharing with people what my mother taught me when she said, "Andy, you treat everyone

the same." All elected leadership needs to promote understanding. Antisemitism must be rejected. People must not dislike "groups" of people.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

The cost of food, housing, and gasoline. Then, concerns over finally stopping immigration. And of course, crime in our communities. See my website, WildmanforUSSeante.com/hot-topics

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I am an Independent turned Democrat to run for this office I am a Business Problem solver. I have a 40+ proposals. My proposals have 65% acceptance among regular Americans. We will have closed borders, Rent Control, the Death Penalty for murderers (for starters). I confront and fix problems. See CS2News Podcast.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Freeze all immigration for 2 years, at least. Suspend allowing non-citizens to buy residential housing. Put National Rent Control into operation. All "citizens" will have a fixed address.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Offering tax incentives to new businesses without giving it away for free.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward

reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Hamas and the Arab nations have put Israel between a rock and a hard place. There must be a 2-state solution. It will require a Middle East Peace Agreement that guarantees peace for Israel. Iran must be confronted or it is all a joke.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

If Israel is forced to give up too much to "settle with Hamas (Iran)" then the Middle East will be kicking the can down the road. People that are pressuring Israel do not understand or care about the last 3,000 years. I am a born again Christian and I care.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

Yes, we need to back Ukraine. However, but the world needs to demand a peace settlement between Ukraine and Russia. A small part of the Eastern of Ukraine needs to go to Russia to settle Russians there. Ukrainians in that area will be moved to the Ukraine. We cannot afford this war to drag on.

Candidates for U.S. Senate - Republican

Moe H. Barakat



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

I am deeply troubled by the rising antisemitism in our nation. This age-old hatred contradicts our core values of freedom, dignity, and respect. To combat this, I propose several strategies: 1. Strengthening Law Enforcement Tools: Enhance our agencies' capabilities with the necessary resources and training to identify, prevent, and respond to antisemitic acts, including stronger hate crime laws and consequences. 2. Educational: Implement comprehensive programs that foster understanding and respect for Jewish history and contributions, integrating these into our school curricula to cultivate a more inclusive future. 3. Community Support and Security: Increase federal support to improve security for Jewish institutions and promote strong partnerships between Jewish communities and local authorities for enhanced safety. 4. Bipartisan Legislative Action: Work across the aisle to pass legislation that addresses and reduces hate crimes against Jews and other minorities, reinforcing that antisemitism is an American issue, not a partisan one. I will use my platform to advocate for unity and inclusivity, demonstrating America's strength in diversity.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

I am dedicated to addressing the critical issues of crime, property taxes, and drugs. Here are my focused strategies: 1. Crime Reduction: • Funding for law enforcement to recruit more officers and improve training. • Promote community policing to build trust between communities and law enforcement. • Expand youth engagement to provide alternatives to criminal involvement. 2. Property Tax Relief: • Ensure fair property tax assessments and propose targeted tax relief for homeowners, especially seniors and low-income families. • Stimulate economic development to create jobs and distribute the tax burden more evenly. 3. Combating the Drug Crisis: • Enhancing and securing our southern borders to protect from the influx of drugs and other dangerous articles. • Increase funding for comprehensive addiction services, including treatment and recovery programs. • Implement drug education and prevention programs in schools and communities. • Enhance interagency collaboration to disrupt drug trafficking networks. I aim to make Maryland safer, more affordable, and healthier by implementing these measures.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I provide a refreshing alternative to the career politician mold. I bring a unique blend of honesty, leadership, and an exceptional ability to navigate the complex political spectrum to deliver results. I have been the Managing Director of a US-international Business Council, Treasurer of a significant Trade

association, advisor on foreign policy, advisor on investment and trade, consultant on global business and economic growth, past US defense intelligence analyst, international business consultant, expert on security and antiterrorism, lead on Congressional and Government affairs, and a global speaker on financial and political issues. I've been instrumental in advancing investment in American states and cities, demonstrating my capability to forge cross-border partnerships that benefit the US economy. I have a Master's degree in Legal Studies from Washington College of Law, an Advanced Business Strategy Degree from Cornell Johnson Graduate School of Management, and a BA in Political science and public administration.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

My approach to tackling the affordable housing crisis centers on balancing regulations to encourage supply and affordability. I propose streamlining bureaucratic hurdles to expedite housing development while maintaining quality standards. By incentivizing private sector involvement through tax incentives and regulatory reforms, we can stimulate the construction of affordable housing units. Additionally, I will advocate for zoning reforms to allow for diverse housing options, including accessory dwelling units and mixed-income developments. Furthermore, I aim to foster public-private partnerships to increase funding for affordable housing initiatives. Through prudent regulation adjustments and strategic alliances, we can pave the way for accessible and sustainable housing solutions.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

As a U.S. Senate candidate with a proven track record of attracting significant investments to the United States, advancing trade, and supporting American companies in exporting, I am uniquely positioned to revitalize Maryland's economy. My plan involves leveraging my experience to: 1. Attract New Investments: I will use my expertise to attract new investments, focusing on sectors such as technology, manufacturing, aerospace, and defense that promise high growth and job creation. 2. Enhance Trade and Export Opportunities: By improving trade policies and removing barriers for Maryland businesses, I will help local companies expand their reach into international markets, boosting economic growth. 3. Advance Infrastructure Development: I propose significant investments in infrastructure, including transportation and digital connectivity, to make Maryland more attractive to businesses and facilitate efficient operations. These strategic actions will accelerate Maryland's economic growth, ensuring it catches up with and surpasses its neighbors.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Achieving a balanced resolution requires not only safeguarding Israel from attacks but also addressing the underlying issues in Gaza. The influence of Hamas, which endorses violence and the elimination of Israel, significantly undermines the prospects for peace and security. It's critical to find effective ways to eliminate their control over Gaza. An integral part of this effort involves leveraging U.S. allies' strategic capabilities and insights in the Arab world. Their involvement is pivotal in crafting strategies to remove Hamas' control, thereby facilitating an undisturbed and temporary transition in Gaza. This collaborative approach aims to ensure that threats of violence no longer overshadow innocent lives and to establish a durable peace honoring the rights and aspirations of all parties.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Israel is a vital ally to the United States in an incredibly volatile region. Our alliance with Israel should bolster regional peace efforts and enhance American influence and security in the Middle East. Our relationship with Israel should also be utilized to end conflicts in the Middle East and safeguard the people.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I support further aid for Ukraine's military amid Russia's aggression, emphasizing the U.S.'s commitment to its allies against foes like Russia and

China. This conflict transcends Ukraine, challenging global democracies and requiring a strong message of solidarity and deterrence from the U.S. Aid must be carefully managed and audited to ensure its effective use in Ukraine's defense without misuse. Blank checks aren't the answer; a strategic, accountable approach is vital. Additionally, under threat from Russia, European allies should match the U.S. effort, reinforcing a united front for democracy and against aggression. Thus, while additional assistance is vital, it necessitates strict oversight and international cooperation to uphold democratic values and collective security

Chris Chaffee



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

Antisemitism has been pushed in our Colleges and Universities.

Leaders on all levels need to condemn this behavior especially if it is in our Congress and Senate. Anyone in the education system who allows this behavior needs to be removed. We need to educate people as to the struggles of all citizens. We need to have open lines of communication. We need to unite as a nation by outreach events and inclusion events.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Inflation and high fuel costs. We need to return America to energy independence. This includes funding for drilling, pipelines and restoring our oil reserves. We are one major storm away from \$12.00 a gallon for fuel 2. Open borders are destroying the legal immigration system. We must follow our immigration laws on the books. This needs to be done ASAP. 3. Taxes across the board are driving Marylanders out of Maryland. End the tax tax spend spend cutting fraud waste and abuse in our state. This will allow us to have the same services without tax increases. We do have accidents from time to time, an example is the bridge. The port needs to be fully operational, so we do not lose 80 billion in revenue to another state.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I am a small business owner and farmer who loves Maryland. Our law makers are not in touch with the general population. We have had nothing but theater in our House and Senate and it needs to stop. Career politicians are pushing their own agenda. They are more concerned with their image instead of our issues.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Making a low-income renter into a homeowner would improve community and pride in something they can afford. We need to raise their income by educating workers in trades like electrical, plumbing and HVAC. Making funding available through nonprofits and offering bank incentives for homes that need work. This would allow the people to renovate and own these properties. This will be a good start to moving toward home ownership and conquering affordable housing.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Maryland taxes, fees and licensing are too high. Maryland is taxing our citizens and driving businesses out of our state. Maryland needs to be more business friendly. We should be soliciting businesses to set up shop in Maryland by giving incentives. Our lawmakers are adding taxes and fees to everything. We are not as business friendly as our neighboring states.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

It starts with sitting down and talking. Israel is our closest ally, and we will always support them. We must mediate a truce agreement with Israel to end this conflict.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Israel is our closest ally. The hostages need to be returned safely and aid given for defending themselves.

Promoting more war is not what we should be doing. We need to support them but push for a resolution to end the conflict. Hamas must retreat from the war against Israel which will allow the peace talks to begin.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

We have given too much to Ukraine. We need to secure our own border and we need to allocate the money for the Key Bridge. We need a Minsk agreement to resolve the Russia and Ukraine conflict. Americans are going broke.

Robin Ficker



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

I am disgusted and appalled by the rise of antisemitism in the United States, and I condemn it in the strongest sense. In the Senate, I will not just support resolutions condemning antisemitism, but also support stronger penalties for antisemitic crimes and violence. There is no place for antisemitism in this country and the hate must be confronted and rooted out.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Until recently, inflation, crime, and the border crisis. Now, the Key Bridge collapse takes precedent. I will vote to cut taxes and spending to let people keep more of their own hard-earned money. Larry Hogan has never cut taxes or spending. I will make our streets safer by working with localities to re-fund the police and ensure crime is punished, as well as work with President Trump to close the border and stop the invasion of criminals and fentanyl into our country. Larry Hogan will oppose President Trump and supports Biden's terrible border bill. I will ensure that the parties responsible for the Key Bridge collapse, not the taxpayer, pay to rebuild the bridge and make up for the loss of revenue. Larry Hogan ignored warnings and brought megaships like the Dali to our Port without fortifying the bridge, and now he expects taxpayers to pay for his mistake.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I've spent my entire life in Maryland fighting for limited government, accountability, and equal treatment under the law. I served this country in the United States Army. My Charter Amendments have received over 2,537,000 votes, limited property taxes, and imposed term limits. I have started and run numerous successful businesses. Larry Hogan is a career politician and failed Governor, who wants us to send him to Washington so that he can fit right in the Swamp. I will be a strong ally to President Trump and work to enact his Make America Great Again agenda. Larry Hogan has pledged to stop President Trump. President Trump has been a great supporter of the State of Israel and a strong advocate for the Jewish people, and I intend to stand with him in this fight. Larry Hogan opposes President Trump and appears to prefer Joe Biden, who has been an unmitigated disaster for the State of Israel.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

The lack of affordable housing is one of the many symptoms of the out-of-control cost of living facing Marylanders and Americans as a whole. Joe Biden's spending and lack of tax relief have sent inflation and our cost of living through the roof and made sure that Marylanders have less buying power than ever before. I will work to cut taxes to put more money back into Marylanders' pockets, as well as encourage an increased supply of affordable housing by incentivizing new affordable housing developments through tax incentives and opportunity zones.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

It is a tragedy that our great state has fallen well behind the national average in economic growth. Under Larry Hogan's administration, Maryland lost the battle to Virginia year in and year out, and we have seen that continue under Wes Moore. I will revitalize the Maryland economy by fighting for lower federal taxes and tax incentives for new businesses in Maryland via opportunity zones. I will also fight to bring back the federal tax dollars that Marylanders pay to our great state so that they can be spent to improve our infrastructure and keep Maryland open for business.

I will be a pro-business, Maryland-first U.S. Senator.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

I stand firm in my belief that Israel has the right to defend itself, and do not believe the United States should be determining when Israel ends this war. I believe that only once Hamas is fully defeated can Israel have peace. I do not want to see American boots on the ground in any foreign wars, but do support the United States continuing to provide weapons support and aid to Israel. What happened on October 7th was one of the worst atrocities I have ever seen, and I continue to pray for the people of Israel as they face further attacks.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I do not support conditioning aid to Israel and I will be a strong supporter of Israel and the rest of our nation's allies when I am in the U.S. Senate. Israel has been a great ally to the United States and I see it to be our duty to help and protect them when they ask for our help.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

As a threshold matter, I am against Russia's invasion of Ukraine. That said, I am also against NATO itself, or a NATO nation individually, entering the war, because it will mean America will be at war with Russia. Moreover, Ukraine is not an ally of the United States. I do not support pouring money into countries that are not our allies, and am critical of military assistance to Ukraine. I do not believe American tax dollars should be spent on a war that does not involve the United States or its allies.

Lorie R. Friend



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

I would attend every Jewish community event as your next senator and emphasize that we

need more safety and security at synagogues, remove the presidents of universities that allow students and groups to call for the genocide of Jews! Also, remove anyone that calls for the genocide of Jews.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

The rise of antisemitism. The southern border. The economy. We need to allow Israel to continue to annihilate the enemy once and for all and get out of their way. Instead, we need to stand with Israel and support them. We also need to make sure congress passes aid to Israel to help bring all the hostages home dead or alive. Our southern border needs to be closed. We have too many illegal Afghan, Iraq and Syrian refugees in Montgomery county that are not assimilating to our way of life. We need extreme vetting like they do in Israel and push for e-verify so we know who is coming here and their attentions. We also need to make sure that we take care of our own and put Americans first. In regards to the economy, the economy can only grow if we extend the trump tax cuts but pass a comprehensive budget that will allow our middle class to grow and get people off the street.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I am not a politician. I am a registered nurse that has seen what corruption can do in the hospitals. Covid was horrible for everyone but the way it was handled in Maryland, sacrificed life and didn't save life. I am not bought and paid for. I'm real, transparent, and will always work for my constituents.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

We need to stop relying on the federal government to provide affordable housing to people. Under president Trump, he proposed to reduce HUD because when affordable housing comes into your neighborhoods, it destroys the middle class. People are leaving Maryland because of the expansion of affordable housing. Section 8 should be in one place in Maryland, not spread in beautiful safe areas.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

We need to get people back to work and "drill baby

drill" Biden believes in putting the coal miners out to work and relying on electric cars. The majority of Americans can't afford electric cars and it cuts off our oil supply which is what we need to thrive in the USA. The more oil we produce and national gas, the better we will be

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Let Israel continue to annihilate the enemy and have their back on this. We also need to provide aid to them so they can bring our troops home. We also need to continue the Abraham accords so that more Arab nations align with Israel to combat the terrorists.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

We must provide aid to Israel. president Truman recognized Israel in 1948 and we must help and support our biggest ally any way we can

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

We should stop funding Ukraine and focus on helping Israel.

Larry Hogan



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

Since 2014, I have made it clear that there would be no place for antisemitism in the state of Maryland. We increased funding for security at schools, synagogues, and childcare centers at risk for hate crimes. I also signed an executive order prohibiting all executive state agencies and departments from entering into any contracts with any business unless that business certified they would not engage in BDS. As a senator, that is exactly the kind of leadership that you will continue to see from my office.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

The economy: During our administration, Maryland's overall economic performance went from 49th to 6th, and CNBC named Maryland the nation's most improved state for business. I will bring this same successful approach to Congress to fight for hard-working families. Cost of living: Maryland families are already squeezed by historic inflation and tax-and-spend policies. My administration made it a priority to reduce the cost of living for every Marylander, including cutting health insurance premiums by 30%. With rising costs in healthcare, housing and everyday items, we will bring fiscal responsibility back to Washington and work across the aisle to find common sense solutions to the affordability crisis. Crime: We need balance in our criminal justice system that protects society from violent criminals by holding offenders accountable, respects and supports victims of crime, more effectively treats mental health and substance use disorders, and provides a meaningful path to re-entry for returning citizens. As governor, we passed historic criminal justice reform, stood behind our police with greater funding, and held violent criminals accountable.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I have a proven record of working across the aisle to deliver results for Marylanders. We got things done and worked with the other side rather than vilifying them. We represented Marylanders regardless of background and party affiliation and brought our state together through an unprecedented crisis. If elected, I would advance bipartisan, common-sense solutions and be an independent voice for all Marylanders who would stand up to the extremes in both parties. My approach to tackling the affordable housing crisis centers on balancing regulations to encourage supply and affordability. I propose streamlining bureaucratic hurdles to expedite housing development while maintaining quality standards. By incentivizing private sector involvement through tax incentives and regulatory reforms, we can stimulate the construction of affordable housing units. Additionally, I will advocate for zoning reforms to allow for diverse housing options, including accessory dwelling units and mixed-income developments. Furthermore, I aim to foster public-private partnerships to increase funding for affordable housing initiatives. Through prudent regulation adjustments and strategic alliances, we can pave the way for accessible and sustainable housing solutions.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Our administration worked to increase and expand affordable housing in all corners of the state. The Maryland Partnership for Affordable Housing, under my administration, provided affordable housing opportunities for people with disabilities who rely on Social Security and Social Security Disability payments as their sole source of income. The housing shortage is not just reserved to lower income households. Too few moderately priced houses are being built as well. Congress could remedy this by expanding the provisions in affordable housing programs to allow for moderately priced housing with additional subsidies for lower income families and reduce burdensome zoning and land use regulations to encourage additional development.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

As I took the oath of office in 2015, Maryland's state highway signs were being changed to say "Welcome to Maryland, We're Open for Business." That wasn't just a catchy slogan—it was the driving mission for our entire administration. The federal government can be a partner to the state by making sure every Marylander has pathways to succeed regardless of what neighborhood they grew up in, stopping the reckless spending that is driving inflation, and reducing the tax and regulatory burden on hard-working small businesses and families.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

The atrocities of October 7th can never be justified and Israel's right to self-defense can never be questioned. No one wants to see human death and suffering and we all want to see the violence come to an end. The way to achieve this is for Hamas to release all of the hostages and surrender unconditionally

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I strongly oppose any suggestion of conditioning aid to Israel. The United States has to stand with Israel, one of our greatest and closest allies. In the Senate, I will be an unequivocal pro-Israel champion.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

We must support the Ukrainian people against unprovoked Russian aggression. The bipartisan supplemental aid bill needs to pass immediately and the political theatrics that benefit Putin need to stop.

John A. Myrick



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

I had been a staunch advocate for Israel and have worked with the Israeli Government many times throughout my professional career. I will continue to advocate for Israel and will continue to speak out against Antisemitism and all hate-related crimes.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Our Southern Border Crisis is a catastrophe. Nearly 10 million Illegal Aliens have poured across our border in the past 3 years - that's 1.5 times the entire population of Maryland! This effects Maryland with the flow of Fentanyl and the cost of educating, housing, and providing medical care to these people. This must stop.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

The Economy is a shambles. Prices of everything from food, to housing, to fuel have skyrocketed over the past several years. Congress' so-called solutions to this have only made things for the average American worse. • I will work to restore America's energy independence, because it all starts with the cost of moving products from point A to point B. I believe that this can be done while still protecting the environment. • I will seek to repeal any legislation that further damages the economy and makes things for us more expensive. • I will serve as a advocate for Maryland products and services to be included in any proposed economic legislation. - Protecting Our Rights - We continue to see our 1st, 2nd, and 4th Amendment Rights eroded by our government. Parents investigated as "Domestic

Terrorists” for speaking out at school board meetings, attempts to force religious organizations to comply with policies that violate their beliefs; your financial transactions investigated for buying sporting goods or a Bible, Torah, or a Quran; our web browsing history being reviewed by the Departments of Defense and Justice for no reason – all egregious violations of our rights. I will see these violations ended and will hold those responsible accountable.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

None of my opponents have the breadth of experience at the Federal level that I have. Let me first say that I’m not a Politician; I’m a Public Servant. I have never served in Elected Office and never thought I would ever consider running for any elected position. Raised here in Maryland, and I have spent my entire adult life in the defense of Marylanders and of the nation. Early in my career, I was a Harford County Deputy Sheriff – the only Maryland Candidate for the U.S. Senate of either party to have ever worn a badge. I served 23 years in the U.S. Air Force Reserve; retiring as a highly decorated combat veteran. While serving in the Reserves, I worked as a Senior Civilian Intelligence Officer for various agencies within the U.S. Intelligence Community; where I was widely considered to be one of the leading Subject Matter Experts in Asymmetric Threats and National Security Intelligence Policy. I have lectured on National Security issues at major universities throughout the country; have testified before Congressional Committees, Sub-committees, and Members dozens of times; briefed NATO and Allied leaders; and have served as a keynote speaker for international conferences. I gained a unique perspective on how National-level decision-makers make policies that affect us every day.

Maryland’s economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Reviving the U.S. Economy will go a long way to improving the affordable housing situation for Marylanders. Reigning in run away Federal spending will ease the pressures on interest rates and will make housing more affordable and will allow businesses to once again borrow to expand and invest - thereby creating jobs and economic opportunity. Additionally, restoring energy independence by resuming the construction of the Keystone Pipeline and resumption of drilling on Federal lands will ease the price of fuel which, in turn, will ease the prices paid at the grocery stores for food and other staples. It all starts with the cost of moving products from point A to point B.

I will work to ensure that Maryland products and services are included in any future economic legislation. I will work with the Governor and leaders of the Maryland Legislature to encourage businesses to establish facilities here in Maryland - particularly in areas suffering from the lack of economic opportunities.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Israel’s response in Gaza has been deliberate, measured, and restrained. Hunting down terrorists is difficult, especially when the terrorists continue to use not only the hostages, but also the civilian population, as human shields. The loss of civilian lives in Gaza is tragic, but is a direct result of the actions of Hamas. I support Israel and I support ending this conflict by whatever means are necessary to minimize civilian casualties and provide safety and security to Israelis and those in Gaza alike. Israel needs American diplomatic backing, intelligence sharing, and humanitarian assistance to any and all civilians effected by the current situation.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Any financial expenditures should be made in support of Israel’s needs and humanitarian effort for those effected by the conflict. As the world came to America’s aid after the 9/11 attacks; so, too, must the world stand with Israel now.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

The Russian Federation invasion of Ukraine was avoidable. Had the Biden Administration sent U.S. Military Advisors to Ukraine as requested, Russia would never have risked a direct military confrontation with the United States and NATO. This Administration’s refusal was seen as a sign of indecision at best – a sign of weakness at worse – and provided the window needed for Russian troops to pour across the borders of a sovereign, democratic nation; throwing Europe into the largest land war

since the end of World War II. So, how do we now support our democratic ally as they fight for their very existence? Tens of thousands of innocent civilians are being killed as Russia continues to attack non-military targets. We have all seen the video footage of civilians murdered in the streets of cities and towns throughout Ukraine. I believe that Americans understand the stakes – failure to support Ukraine now will send a signal to Russia that we have lost our resolve to defend freedom. Which country is then next – Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia? All are now NATO members and all now enjoy the assurance of an American military response if attacked, however, this assurance rings hollow if we fail to counter expansionist aggression when it happens. We must support Ukraine.

Laban Y. Seyoum

Did not submit a response.

Candidates for Congressional District 6 – Democratic

Peter Choharis



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

With decades of experience as an international human rights lawyer and a member of a human rights organization’s board, I am dedicated to combating all forms of bigotry, including antisemitism. I will consistently speak out and condemn acts of antisemitism and hatred, using my legal expertise to fight for justice.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Economic Opportunity - Promote Economic Growth through Right to Start programs to allow new businesses to grow and prosper. - Introduce Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to provide concessionary loans, investment capital, and financial services to Western Maryland. Bring my knowledge of fostering startups to work with MD-6 communities to attract investment capital.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I will work hard to continue Rep. Trone’s success at ensuring that Maryland’s Sixth District gets its fair share of federal funding. Educational Opportunity - Although I support President Biden’s targeted loan forgiveness program, that is not a sustainable solution. - I will work to reduce the cost of higher education that has continued to increase over the last twenty years despite very low inflation for most of that period. Some colleges and universities will soon cost \$100,000 per year, which is crushing students and many parents who must co-sign loans. We have to reverse this cycle of annual increases. - Expand community colleges and keep fees and expenses affordable. - Expand access to vocational training and apprenticeship programs, including in high school. Healthcare - We have Medicare and Medicaid; Obamacare; Veterans Administration healthcare; employer provided (and tax subsidized) healthcare plans; and private pay healthcare. In other words, we have one of the most complex healthcare systems in the world. - I will work to improve healthcare access and reduce costs for uninsured and underinsured citizens, including children. - I support the Biden Administration’s efforts to allow drug manufacturers reasonable profits that take into account R&D costs while preventing outrageous drug prices.

I’m a successful businessperson and the 6th District has elected a businessperson for the last 12 years. I started my business from nothing, helped U.S. startups, assisted U.S. investors overseas, and advised foreign countries with economic development. I can help create economic opportunities throughout the Sixth District. - I’ve been a lawyer for decades. I’ve litigated tough cases in federal courts throughout the United States. I’ve been a law professor and legal scholar. I know how to fight discrimination and injustice. If the Supreme Court guts environmental protections and worker rights, I can help craft new laws. And if the rightwing tries to outlaw abortion nationwide, I know how to fight them. - As the former Executive Director of the 2004 Democratic Party platform Committee, I’ve been deeply involved in the party’s direction and messaging. - The U.S. and its allies are facing threats all over the world: Ukraine, the Middle East, and Asia. I’m a foreign policy and international law expert with

extensive global experience, having negotiated with ministers and a Head of State, and contributed articles to major publications like The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, and others.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Affordable housing is shorthand for poverty and wage inequality. After my parents divorced, my sister and I were raised by a single mom. During summers in high school, I worked as a janitor and factory worker to make money. I went to Harvard, the first person in my family to go to college. I worked as many as three jobs during the school year to put myself through school. I eventually went to Yale Law school and became a lawyer. I not only believe in the American Dream, I’ve lived it. But the American Dream is out of reach for fifty percent of Americans who won’t earn as much their parents did – the lowest since WW II. They won’t be able to live in the same kind of home, educate their kids, and maybe even not live as long. I’m running for Congress to change that and have put forward a specific plan to try to improve the economy of Western Maryland.

Maryland’s economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

I want to introduce Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) to all five counties in the MD-6. There are 15 CDFIs in Maryland, none of them are in the Sixth District. These can provide concessionary loans, investment capital, and financial services to benefit small businesses and low-income housing. I’m the only candidate to propose this. I also support a “Right to Start” to encourage business startups—from high tech to florists to restaurants. This would include streamlining government forms and applications and offering tax and fee holidays for businesses younger than five years old. As someone raised by a single mother, I understand firsthand the challenges of achieving financial security. That’s why I will focus on ensuring a living wage for all, making education more affordable, and fostering an economy that provides opportunities for the next generation. I will work to grow our economy, reform our tax system, and invest in education and job training.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

I support the proposed temporary ceasefire to free Israeli hostages, establish a humanitarian corridor, and work toward a more durable solution. As a former relief worker in Asia and Africa, I have worked in war and famine zones. I’ve entered villages where there are no children younger than eight or adults older than fifty, because they had died from hunger and disease. I feel anguished by the suffering in Gaza, which is not an abstraction to me. But I will also never forget the 9/11 attacks and the murder of thousands of innocent Americans. I also grieve for the families of the victims and hostages of Oct. 7th, and support Israel’s right to defend itself. As a lawyer with expertise in international law who has litigated the laws of war, I will apply my knowledge and training to help guide the Congress and Administration toward just and moral outcomes.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I oppose this. As Iran’s recent attack on Israel made clear, Israel faces very serious threats from Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran. I do not believe Members of Congress should try to micro-manage, and thus delay further, U.S. support to Israel.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I support the Senate Bill that will provide military and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, Israel, and Taiwan. The delay in the House of Representatives has severely undermined Ukraine’s security, the security of our European allies, and U.S. national security.

George Gluck



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

Jews have been the scapegoats of leaders wanting to reflect the factors of hard times from themselves to a minority unable to defend themselves. We have seen our courts used to incarcerate such leaders, as was the case with Proud Boys leader, Henry

Tarrio, who was sentenced to 22 of prison. Where leaders are not imprisoned, their organizations can be forced into bankruptcy, as with this \$26M damages award against organizations for “Unite the Right” violence in 2017. In 1987, an all-White jury awarded a \$7 million judgment, which was so significant that it effectively bankrupted the United Klans of America, which was known as one of the largest and most violent KKK factions. They continue even today, as with the lawsuit seeking to bankrupt a white supremacist group called the Patriot Front. Is it time to consider stochastic terrorism a crime?

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Three areas needing improvement here in Maryland (and elsewhere) are employment that pays a living wage, healthcare coverage, and education. To adequately address these and other issues, we must first avoid losing our democracy. Putting Marylanders to work in jobs that pay a living wage, enacting universal healthcare coverage, and enticing good teachers, and keeping them in our schools, cannot take place unless we stop the autocratic direction we have been heading in, and restore and enhance our democratic structures and processes. In 2015, President Carter said that our country was an “oligarchy with unlimited political bribery.” We have retreated to a place where the Republican House can’t hold on to their leader, much less help pass such legislation that would help the vast majority of us.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

First, the wisdom from having survived 77 years, and observed, very closely for the last three decades, how we have slipped from the country that produced the greatest middle class in history, to being 23rd in world happiness (based on factors like, GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, and others), down 6 from a decade ago. Second, my STEM training will be helpful in asking pertinent questions of expert witnesses in committees related to the climate catastrophe, cyber-security, etc., and forming effective solutions to related problems. Finally, the fastest growing group of voters in Maryland are non-Democrats/Republicans (in the past year Democrats lost 28,878 registrants, Republicans gained 275, and all others gained 56,125). A candidate who had not been a Democrat/Republican for two decades should attract many of these “independent” voters in a tight race.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

This is how I addressed a related housing problem in 2009. After Donald Praisner passed in 2009, I thought it would be interesting to run in the short special election to fill his County Council seat. A year or two before that Montgomery County, like the rest of the country, went through a housing crisis that saw many families lose their homes to foreclosures. I noticed that the homes in Montgomery County that were being foreclosed upon were those owned by low-income citizens of the county. At that time, the county collected just over \$800M in property taxes on 257,000 properties. All owners paid the same \$0.90 per \$100 of value of the property, a regressive tax. I proposed a progressive graduated tax, beginning with \$0.50/\$100 on portions of properties valued up to \$100,000, going up to \$1.30/\$100 for portions of properties valued over \$1,000,000, yielding about the same revenue.

Maryland’s economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

We should attack this problem from two directions – bring back good paying jobs lost to other countries with the passage of treaties like the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and bring new technologies here. According to <https://www.citizen.org/wp-content/uploads/md.pdf>, “Maryland has lost more than 72,000 manufacturing jobs – two out of five– since the 1994 NAFTA and the World Trade Organization agreements took effect.” My wife and I harvest parts of our nightly salads from a hydroponic device in our kitchen. Hydroponic farming could easily be adapted here in Maryland. As stated in <https://wolverinmagazine.com/hydroponics/hydroponic-farming/>, this method conserves water, can produce crops all year long, and yield larger harvests than conventional farming.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

A military solution to this conflict seems highly improbable! In the beginning, there was a fight for independence. Since then, how many truces and ceasefires have there been? From the Suez crisis in

the 1950s, through the Six-Day War, the Yom Kippur War, the First and Second Lebanon Wars, the First and Second Intifadas, the Hamas takeover of Gaza, Wars in Gaza from 2008 through today, truces and ceasefires have ended in ever-growing destruction of property and lives. Diplomatic solutions need to come from top-down negotiations, but also from bottom-up pressure from both Palestinians and Israelis ready to end the growing cycle of violence. As the son of two Survivors, who has demonstrated against the present Israeli government in DC and Tel Aviv, and against President Trump's Muslim Registry, I feel I am particularly suited to participate in efforts to promote both top-down and bottom-up solutions to reach lasting peace.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

We have always conditioned aid to Israel. The conditions are certainly based on the actions of the existing Israeli administration, but not solely. The circumstances produced by other "players" in the mid-east, and their effects on our interests there are also part of our decisions to provide immediate aid. As this is being written, we, and other allies, have rightfully, aided Israel defend itself against a barrage of Iranian drones and other missiles. Sooner or later, we and other interested parties will develop a plan to bring a lasting peace to the Palestinians and Israelis. Imposing that plan will not just magically happen, but there is no doubt that it will put conditions for aid on both parties.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

Our options to aid Ukraine are not now the same as they were at the beginning of the war, two years ago. Since then, Finland and Sweden, undoubtedly feeling threatened by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, have become members of NATO. Recent Ukrainian offenses have resulted in large loses of men and materiel for both sides, but regained Ukraine little in the way of territory. I believe the best hope now is to aid Ukraine in a defensive effort to lose no more territory to Russia during the next few months, and hope that convinces Putin to negotiate a peace treaty.

Ashwani Jain



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

To effectively address the rise in hatred and violence targeting the Jewish community, it's crucial to implement a multifaceted approach. This involves bolstering educational programs that shed light on the rich cultural heritage of the Jewish community and the atrocities they've endured; strengthening laws to combat hate crimes and imposing stricter penalties for perpetrators; investing in mental health and counseling services specifically tailored for victims of hate crimes; and fostering dialogue and collaboration among different religious communities cultivates mutual understanding and respect.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

After spending 90% of my time canvassing door-to-door in communities across the District (and having reached more than 50,000 individual voters), residents are most concerned about the cost of living and feeling like they don't have a seat at the table. That is why I'm fighting for Medicare For All, Canceled Student Debt, Free Public College, a \$26 minimum wage by 2030 and taking bold stances like being the first to call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

What is needed in Congress is someone who understands how to build coalitions at the federal level and fight for increased federal funding for our district (through existing funds and through programs like Community Project Funding). I have the most expansive federal experience of anyone in the race. This includes being appointed to two different offices in the Obama White House and two federal agencies. I am committed to ensuring that from day 1 constituents can call my office, talk to a real person, and receive assistance working with federal agencies.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key

issue?

As one of President Obama's White House Liaisons at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, I understand the need for affordable, available and sustainable housing. As the first in the race with a housing platform, a few of my top priorities include creating a new neighborhood homes tax credit, expanding the low-income housing tax credit, federally funding and encouraging "smart growth" and mixed-use development, enacting "just cause" protections, investing in assisted living facilities and lowering the cost of living for residents through Medicare For All and a higher living wage.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Each of the policies I've outlined are investments in our economic development. Furthermore, my proposal to establish a \$26 minimum wage by 2030 will bring up every worker's salary up to the national average of \$55,000 a year. This helps our economy, reduces poverty and crime rates, expands our tax base and helps businesses find, hire and retain workers. It is also what businesses would already be paying if the minimum wage had kept up with inflation to give workers the same buying power now as they had in the 1930s when the minimum wage was first established.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

I was the first and only in this race - back in November - to call for a ceasefire (i.e. the only way to get aid to civilians and get hostages released), a 2-state solution and conditioning military aid on upholding humanitarian law. I believe in the right and nuanced approach that supports our ally Israel's right to defend itself against terrorists while also calling out Netanyahu's apartheid regime of ethnic cleansing with no regard to civilian lives. Voters deserve leaders who stand up for human rights and take bold stances regardless of which way the political winds blow.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

All military aid should be conditioned on upholding humanitarian law as defined by the UN. We already have this practice (under the Leahy Law) and already have regulations set in place from our Departments of Justice, State and Defense.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I support the Ukrainian people's fight to defend their rights, democracy, and independence. While I acknowledge that Ukraine is not a perfect Democracy, I am in favor of aid being sent to combat Putin's war of colonization in Europe. This aid, just like aid going to any other country, would need to be conditioned on Ukraine upholding humanitarian and international law.

Lesley J. Lopez



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

My family history has connected me to the Jewish community and the generational fight against antisemitism. My great uncle, Colonel Curtis L. Williams, was a lead interrogator in the office of the U.S. Chief of Counsel for the International Military Tribunal in Paris and Nuremberg. To honor this heritage, as a Delegate in Maryland's General Assembly, I authored successful anti-hate crime legislation that has increased training for law enforcement to better understand and prevent hate crimes and hate speech, as well as served on a legislative workgroup convened to address swatting, which is an increasingly frequent hate crime in our state. I fully support President Biden's comprehensive plan to combat antisemitism, as well as legislation to expand law enforcement's authority to crack down on antisemitic rhetoric, and seek to combat dangerous mis- and disinformation targeting the Jewish community.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

I believe that the three top issues for Marylanders are infrastructure, childcare affordability, and climate

change. Western Maryland is seeing huge growth and in order to ensure that this is sustainable, we need investments, including federal money, to build new schools and transportation options. Childcare is a major issue for working families, especially working moms, and Maryland has some of the highest costs in the country. A lack of affordable childcare is a gender issue and an economic barrier, so supporting both providers and families is vital. Climate change is an existential threat, and we must take steps to address it. I've been proud to support strong climate change legislation in Annapolis, and will continue to support reducing our emissions and investing in green energy in Congress.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I'm a proven lawmaker with a track record of bipartisan success and a working mom who knows the challenges families face. In my two terms in the General Assembly, I've taken on tough issues, like ghost guns, and won with bipartisan support. Last year, I served as President of the Women's Caucus, where we led on reproductive rights. I also have extensive experience working on Capitol Hill so I am ready to hit the ground running and deliver for the 6th District.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

The affordable housing crisis is impacting families across the country. In addition to addressing the factors associated with the rising cost of living in our region, we need to increase the inventory of affordable housing, and I will fight for additional funding for this in Congress. I was proud to support Governor Moore's housing legislation in Annapolis this session. We also need to keep in mind housing is a part of a large conversation about poverty in America, and that means addressing wage stagnation, wage inequity, inflation, healthcare costs and lack of affordable childcare.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Growing our economy requires investing in our communities and working with our existing businesses to support growth. It requires investments in renewable energy and infrastructure, as well as ensuring that businesses providing high-quality work to Marylanders are supported. In Annapolis, I was proud to support legislation that supported our businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, and will continue to support economic growth in our state in Congress. Furthermore, supporting policies like affordable childcare that allow parents to get back to work must be a part of the conversation.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

The October 7th terrorist attack was a horrific act of violence by Hamas and I strongly believe Israel has the right to defend itself. Since the brutal attack against innocent Israeli citizens, there has been a significant military response to free Israeli hostages taken by Hamas and root out the terrorist leaders who perpetrated the attack. As a result, we've tragically seen significant civilian casualties in Gaza and many more displaced from their homes and living in dangerous conditions, even lacking basic needs. I support the Biden Administration's ongoing diplomatic efforts and firm commitment to protect innocent life, provide humanitarian aid, secure the release of hostages, and work towards a durable and secure peace.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

It is vital that the United States continues to support our ally and work toward regional stability. I support the approaches taken by the Biden administration to work with Israel using diplomatic means as necessary to ensure that we minimize civilian harm while allowing them to defeat Hamas and bring home hostages.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I support the President's work to stop Russia's continued invasion of Ukraine. This conflict is at an inflection point and we must not walk away from our allies. Ukrainian troops desperately need ammunition and weapons to fight back against Russia and save lives. This is paramount to global security, as everyone knows Russia will not stop at Ukraine.

Tekesha A. Martinez

Did not submit a response.

April McClain Delaney



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

The dramatic rise in antisemitism is incredibly concerning - particularly the hateful anti-Israel rhetoric coming from many college campuses. We must be clear, unequivocal, and forceful in condemning antisemitism, and collectively work to ensure that this horrific conflict overseas does not have further spillage here at home in the form of antisemitism or islamophobia. Constituent work includes convening community stakeholders to foster dialogue, cultivate tolerance and build solutions to address the underlying issues. I will be unwavering in efforts to protect people from hate crimes and unrelenting in our commitment to prosecute hate crimes. No member of our community should live in fear of a hate crime. When social media is weaponized to cultivate hate and incite violence, discrimination and hate crimes against ethnic and religious minorities can result. These platforms should have a responsibility to help keep users' safe and prohibit the spread of violent rhetoric that endangers vulnerable groups.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

While economic security is always top of mind for all Americans, Maryland faces three major challenges - reproductive rights, climate change and youth mental health. As a strong advocate for reproductive rights I will codify Roe into law and fight extremists who want to ban access to reproductive care. Addressing climate change is crucial. I believe we must support legislation like the IRA and do more to reduce our carbon footprint. And finally, we are facing a mental health crisis in America especially among our youth. As a mother I believe we must have stronger privacy laws and better safeguards to protect our children's well-being. My leadership at Common Sense Media has given me the experience to tackle tech related mental health issues. We must put a great focus on providing mental health services to those who need it. In Congress, I will prioritize each of these issues.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I have 30 years of experience in legal, nonprofit and government work, most recently as a high-level political appointee at Biden's Commerce Department. I founded Common Sense Media's Washington office, where I advocated for kids' online safety and digital literacy. At Commerce, I expanded broadband access and addressed online abuse, enhancing national security. I have shepherded legislation through Congress, met with stakeholders across the country and represented our nation on the world stage.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

We need significant investment to address the shortage of affordable housing. I commend President Biden for stepping forward with new steps to make buying a new home a reality. These include lowering the cost of a home with a mortgage relief credit, down payment assistance for first generation homebuyers, tax credits to build more housing, and lowering costs for renters. But we are making some headway. Right now there's more housing being built than in the past 50 years. Rent has dropped in many areas over the past year, and more people own homes now than before the pandemic hit. However, the fact remains that rent is too expensive, and many Americans still struggle to find affordable homes to buy. This is an issue that is of critical importance in Maryland and the 6th district that I plan to tackle head on.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

As a former entrepreneur, I support domestic investment to drive small business growth and entrepreneurship as a cornerstone of our economic strength. Legislation like the CHIPS Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill will drive the creation of high-value jobs in Maryland. We must leverage technology to drive economic growth across the 6th

District and in Maryland. In the Biden Commerce Department, I led the rollout of rural broadband grants and understands the importance of strategic investments to capitalize on our research and education assets.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Iran's attack on Israel on April 13, 2024 makes a resolution all the more complicated, but for there to be peace, Hamas must relinquish control over Gaza and return the hostages before talks of a diplomatic solution can begin. Solving this crisis has to be a multi-faceted approach. We must keep pushing for negotiations to reach a ceasefire deal between Hamas and Israel which could involve mediators or regional players. The focus now is on releasing the hostages and tackling the dire situation in Gaza by backing aid programs to deliver services and assist in reconstruction projects. It all includes prioritizing diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and a commitment to addressing the underlying issues of the conflict in order to achieve a just and lasting peace for all parties involved.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Funding for Israel is imperative, and that aid cannot be encumbered by political ideology or fickle political considerations of the moment and therefore it cannot be conditioned. Support for Israel's defense enables it to continue to defend itself against attacks but also provides an anchor for stability and peace in the region. The 2016 Memorandum of Understanding is an unshakable commitment from the United States to Israel and I will support the MOU without any additional conditions. The deep ties between our countries is essential to supporting the only democracy in the region but also providing for the economic security of the United States and its allies. A secure, strong, stable democratic Israel is essential to global trade and regional security. It is imperative that we continue to support the strong collaboration between our countries through mutual investment in research, innovation, trade, and cultural exchange.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

We must stand up to dictators like Vladimir Putin. The Biden Administration has been tremendously effective in responding to the Ukraine crisis. Thanks to the President's work with our allies, we've been able to help Ukraine hold its own against a much stronger opponent. We cannot allow financial and military support for Ukraine to become a political football. It's a strategic investment for national security and global stability and as a member of Congress, I will be a strong proponent for continuing military aid to Ukraine.

Stephen R. McDow, II

Did not submit a response.

Mohammad S. Mozumder



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

When Israel kills Palestinian children, and with Israeli politicians like May Golan stating "I am personally proud of the ruins of Gaza, and that every baby, even 80 years from now, will tell their grandchildren what the Jews did when their families were murdered and raped and their civilians were kidnapped," it's going to create a lot of animus against Jews. Zionism, as predicted by many anti-Zionist Jews including Albert Einstein, is destructive to the Jewish people. It foments hatred as it's fundamentally a racist philosophy incompatible with peace. It's predicated on violent dispossession of Palestinian Muslims and Christians. The state of Israel itself should be abolished and replaced with a new single multi-ethnic state. This will solve a lot of anti-semitism.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

1: Stop the genocide that Israel is committing with US support. Nobody wants to be part of a government that is committing genocide. Congress should immediately defund Israel. 2: Transportation. To solve that, I'd immediately expand metro everywhere. The red line should be extended to Germantown, Clarksburg, and Frederick. There should also be high speed rail line built to solve regional transportation bottlenecks. I'd build a 30 minute high-speed rail line that goes from

Hagerstown to DC with exactly 4 stops: Hagerstown -> Frederick -> Gaithersburg -> Bethesda -> DC. 3: Inflation. Our record low unemployment is actually inflationary. Companies are having difficulty finding workers, so they have to raise wages. This is good for those specific workers, but not good for the economy as a whole. It hits the unemployed and retirees on fixed income the hardest. We can solve this just by increasing immigration.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I am a scientist and can approach the issues rationally and thoughtfully without bias.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Areas around metro stations should be zoned to provide high density housing. This is transit oriented development and can be used to increase housing supply while reducing traffic.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

I'd increase small business funding targeting various sectors of our economy, such as promoting SBA (Small Business Administration) loans for tourism and event management companies in beautiful western Maryland, or SBA startup funding for medical and high tech industries along the I270 corridor and Baltimore.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

A single state solution is the goal. No Palestinian is interested in genocide of Jews. They just want to live in peace and with full human rights that the state of Israel has been denying them. A 2-state solution is a bad idea, as they would constantly be at war with each other. India and Pakistan are a 2-state solution, and look at them always going to war. A single multi-ethnic state is the only acceptable outcome.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

It shouldn't be conditions. All aid should be eliminated. Let's work to build a non-apartheid state instead.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I support military assistance to Ukraine as I believe in democracy. Russia is an authoritarian state trying to take land based on the false belief that ancient claims affords them modern rights to a land. This is the same false claim that Zionists are using to steal Palestinian land, by-the-way.

Adrian Petrus

Did not submit a response.

Laurie-Anne Sayles



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

While all forms of bigotry are insidious and unacceptable, the first step is to understand the

difference between Anti-semitism and other forms of discrimination. It's essential to recognize the unique nature of anti-Semitism and its roots in conspiracy theories. The best way to deal with it is through education provided by experts who understand this difference and can approach the topic meaningfully. We should make Holocaust education mandatory and include anti-Semitism in our DEI curricula, anti-bias training, and codes of conduct for both students and faculty in our schools.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Talking with Marylanders, I have identified three primary concerns that are crucial to them. These issues are the opioid epidemic and the impact on safe communities, especially in rural areas, the lack of quality jobs and infrastructure investments, and the struggling education system. As a member of Congress, I am committed to addressing these issues by implementing policies prioritizing healthcare access for all residents, especially in rural areas. I will invest in sustainable infrastructure and renewable energy to create quality jobs and boost the economy. Moreover, I will prioritize education funding to

ensure that all students have access to high-quality education from early childhood through higher education. In addition to these measures, I will ensure my Congressional colleagues collaborate with state and local governments to implement programs that support small businesses and provide resources for entrepreneurship. I can improve Marylanders' well-being and prosperity by addressing these critical issues in Congress.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I am a highly experienced and accomplished policymaker, organizer, advocate, and public health professional. Over the past 15 years, I worked for some of the top health research agencies in the country, including NIH, FDA, and the Nature Conservancy, before making history at the municipal and county levels. As a Gaithersburg city councilmember during the pandemic, I successfully led my hometown through some of the most challenging times, including racial unrest, the pandemic, and the most prolonged government shutdown. My National League of Cities colleagues named me Legislator of the Year for my bipartisan accomplishments. Most recently, President Biden recognized me with a Lifetime Achievement Award for my extensive public service to the community. Furthermore, as the only full-time lawmaker representing 40% of the electorate as a Montgomery County Councilwoman at-large, I am committed to advancing S.M.A.R.T.E.R. policies to ensure Washington works for us.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

The imbalance in the demand and supply of houses primarily causes the issue of affordable housing. Therefore, I strongly advocate for increasing the housing supply and creating financing options that enable low-income working families to access quality housing and pathways to homeownership. I spearheaded the passage of the Opening Pathways to Economic Necessity (O.P.E.N.) zoning text amendment. This amendment aims to increase the availability of affordable housing by accelerating the approval of affordable residential developments and investing in early intervention programs for youth. As a congresswoman, I am committed to expanding my work locally and nationwide by pushing for allocating more resources to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase the housing supply and provide pathways to homeownership.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

With my years of experience as a former Chair of Economic Development with the National League of Cities, being recognized as Legislator of the Year, and currently serving as a member of the Economic Development Committee for the Montgomery County Council, I am the best candidate to revitalize Maryland's economy. My focus on critical industries with enormous growth potential, such as technology, healthcare, and tourism, will attract more businesses and create numerous job opportunities. Infrastructure improvements are crucial, and I will not hesitate to make the necessary investments to modernize them. Investing in education and workforce development programs will equip Marylanders with the skills needed for future jobs, and I am determined to make it happen. I promise to implement these strategies in Congress and make a significant difference in Maryland's economy.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

I express my condolences to all those who have lost their loved ones in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Gaza. The continuing conflict between Israel and Gaza has caused numerous civilian casualties. It is truly heartbreaking that innocent civilians continue to suffer. I believe that any ceasefire in the region should focus on the safe return of all hostages and bodies of those who have died while in captivity. Congress must prioritize the safety and well-being of all parties involved, including civilians in Israel and Palestine, and establish a bipartisan task force to conceive a permanent multifaceted approach that addresses the political, economic, and social factors driving the conflict, provide humanitarian aid to Gaza and the West Bank, and explore every possible solution that considers all perspectives and needs, including negotiations to establish a peaceful and prosperous two-state solution.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Providing aid to Israel is crucial for maintaining a solid ally in the region and promoting stability amidst ongoing conflicts. However, this aid should always respect human rights and international law and contribute to facilitating peace talks. It's essential to have a thoughtful and nuanced discussion about the ongoing conflict with bipartisan stakeholders to address common challenges and promote regional stability. Congress should provide aid to support these efforts while considering the different perspectives and needs of all parties involved.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

Providing military assistance to Ukraine is essential to help the country defend itself against Russian aggression, promote regional stability, combat corruption, and promote democratic reforms. The Democrats in the House of Representatives have passed several bills in the 116th Congress that provide military assistance to Ukraine, including the "Ukraine Security Partnership Act" (H.R. 2615) and the "Ukraine Assistance and Security Act" (H.R. 4887). These bills aim to provide Ukraine with military aid, including weapons, equipment, training, and economic and humanitarian assistance. We cannot tolerate countries that launch attacks on our foreign allies. We must work together across our strategic alliances to ensure their continued protection and prevent Putin's unwarranted attacks and efforts to impose dictatorship over the Ukrainians. We must act assertively and decisively to support our allies and defend democracy.

Joe Vogel



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

As a Jewish American, and the descendant of Holocaust refugees, addressing the surge of antisemitism is one of my top priorities. In Maryland I worked to establish a Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention to protect our communities from extremism and hate. I also sponsored and passed subsequent legislation to make sure those who are hateful, have no place on that commission. I was the lead sponsor of the Hate Crimes Graffiti Removal Act, which requires that hate crime graffiti be removed within 24 hours. This was personal, as it took days for my building management company to remove swastikas that were painted in our lobby. In Congress, I would support the Countering Antisemitism Act, establishing a White House National Coordinator to Counter Anti-semitism, chartering an annual threat assessment of antisemitic violent extremism, and countering antisemitic discrimination in higher education.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

After meeting with voters across this district, from Oakland to Gaithersburg, the three areas I intend to prioritize for our state are economic growth, mental health, and the opioid epidemic. For economic growth, I believe that every American regardless of race or citizenship status should see in their future a country full of opportunity. We need to raise the minimum wage, subsidize and support entrepreneurship, expand diversity pipelines in higher education and the private sector, and bolster collective organizing. For mental health, we need to expand access to mental healthcare providers by incentivizing mental health careers in underserved communities, while also allocating more funds for research on preventative steps for our communities to take. Regarding the opioid crisis, we need to disrupt the supply and distribution of illicit opioids and expand services that provide Americans the support they need to avoid overdoses and end addictions.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I have a record as a legislator, and have demonstrated my ability to deliver results for this community. I have worked with my colleagues, often across the aisle, to author and pass legislation to address the fentanyl overdose epidemic, recruit more mental health professionals to work in our schools, make historic investments in climate tech innovation, ensure children in the foster care system are treated with dignity, and better address hate crimes. I live in the district I am running to represent, and have built a campaign with support in all five counties - from Garrett County to Gaithersburg. I am backed by the teachers, the Sierra Club, several unions, seven Members of Congress, and dozens of local officials.

These are folks who I've worked with, and who know what it takes to be effective in Congress and they know I have what it takes to get the job done.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

We have a housing problem here in Maryland, both in terms of supply and affordability. These challenges go hand in hand though, and I am committed to working across federal, state, and local levels to develop solutions. As a member of Congress, I would cosponsor the End Hedge Fund Control of American Homes Act of 2023, increasing the housing supply by mandating that large private equity firms and hedge funds sell off all single-family homes over a 10-year period. Ensuring that Wall Street firms aren't buying up housing options at the expense of American families. I would also cosponsor the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act, expanding the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to encourage investment in the development and maintenance of affordable housing. Finally, I would work to incentivize the redevelopment of vacant office buildings as new housing units, increasing the supply of housing options and driving down the price.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Too many Marylanders lack a clear path to a good-paying job. We need to change that. My approach to revitalizing our economy rests on three pillars: investing in K-12 education, community colleges, and apprenticeships to build pipelines to good-paying jobs; subsidizing the industries of tomorrow like clean energy, electric vehicles, and software design; and empowering organized labor so jobs not only grow the economy but also take care of Maryland families. As a member of Congress, I would work to make community college free and fund job-training pipelines across the country, attract federal investments through policies like the Chips and Science Act to Maryland to create good-paying, sustainable jobs for our workforce, and pass the PRO Act to empower unions to advocate for their members and codify worker and union protections into law. I believe these steps will help us build a vibrant economic future that leaves no Marylander behind.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

October 7th was the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust, sending shockwaves throughout the world. This conflict has been painful, and personal. Helping craft a sustainable resolution to the ongoing conflict in Gaza must be a top priority for American foreign policy, but an entirely unconditional and one-sided ceasefire is not the way to do it. Hamas has pledged to repeat October 7th hundreds of times over. For there to be any possibility of peace, Hamas must be dislodged from power, and any bilateral ceasefire must come with the release of all the remaining hostages. The U.S. must support Israel's right to defend itself as it dismantles Hamas, but we also must push for civilian protections. As a proud supporter of Israel, who cares deeply about its future, I worry that the actions of the Netanyahu government have presented major obstacles to peace, and I believe Israel and the region would be best served by new leadership.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I am committed to being a staunch advocate for Israel. I believe strongly in Israel's right to defend itself, and in our responsibility to support that defense. The close defense coordination was vital when responding to Iran's attack last weekend. For that reason, I do not support conditioning aid. Our aid, including in the form of Iron Dome replenishments, is essential for Israel's security. Despite the close friendship between the United States and Israel, these two nations – and their leaders – do not always agree. I have concerns about the Netanyahu government, and their actions in Gaza and the West Bank. The benefit of a close friendship is that we have the ability to encourage our friends to change their actions if we deem them to be harmful. Conditioning aid not only leads to immediate security concerns for Israel, but in the long term undermines that valuable friendship.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I visited the Ukrainian Jewish communities in Kyiv and Kharkiv back in 2017, and my heart breaks for what those communities, and all of Ukraine, are experiencing. This is a war for democracy and the rules-based order, and the U.S. must stand strong against current and future Russian aggression through

sustained military aid and diplomatic solidarity. Congress and the Biden Administration should support institutionalizing aid delivery through NATO to insulate arms transfers from partisan politics. It must also begin working with Ukraine, while working to get Ukraine to a position of strength, to advance an acceptable political resolution. I support the U.S. helping negotiate an armistice that defines a new border and demilitarized zone, establishes a UN dispute resolution commission, and institutes a ceasefire guaranteed by NATO. Our allies and adversaries are watching, and America must continue its defense of democracy, sovereignty, and territorial integrity around the world.

Destiny Drake West

Did not submit a response.

Kiambo "Bo" White



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

I'm from Detroit and grew up with the Jewish community, I would stand with and support

open and honest conversation about our differences but more importantly our shared values.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Women's Rights, fighting for democracy/voting and protecting social security.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I have worked with state democratic parties, national unions and my diverse upbringing and professional experience.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Community outreach which offers credit information options, services to enhance career options and laws to curb rental cost.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

Partnership with union/skilled trades, education choices, relationships with not for profits.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

The events of October 7th can't be downplayed. Israel has every right to defend themselves, partner with our allies on messaging and access for goods/services for Gaza locals, and direct attacks against Hamas leaders.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Israel doesn't want to create any generation against them, this is a tough one and I would need to do more research on what would be a best practice.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

We must continue to aid in every way the citizens of Ukraine. It's part of not only world security but American security.

Altimont Mark Wilks

Did not submit a response.

Candidates for Congressional District 6 – Republican

Dan Cox



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

By continuing to advocate for strict hate crime law enforcement; requiring the arrest of rioters and protesters who call for the death of Jews or destruction of Israel and America; passing a national standard

for Holocaust education; increasing private religious schools and institution's security grant opportunities; increasing vouchers opportunities so that all including the religious can achieve a world-class education; banning BDS movements on college campuses that receive federal funding; mandating education on the Holocaust and establishment of Israel as part of core curriculums in colleges and universities that accept federal funding; moving Congress to adopt a definition of anti-semitism that strengthens protection from violence; establishing a fully-funded college internship opportunity for every college receiving federal funds to have students participate for credit in accompanying trade missions of United States personnel to the State of Israel.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

1. Open Border flowing fentanyl, sex trafficking and even violent criminals into our communities is deadly. I will vote to reinstate the remain in Mexico policy and the "quick deportation" model, mandate asylum law be upheld, and seal the Border. 2. The Economy is demolishing the dreams of our young people, retirees and working families. We must immediately reduce inflationary spending, strengthen the U.S. dollar and buy down the national debt, ensuring we re-establish our economy as the world leader. Our United States is teetering at the unsustainable 150%. 3. Crime. Supporting our law enforcement is urgently needed. Robberies, car-jackings, rape, murder, burglary and hate crimes are mitigated through active support of our police and the will of our civil authorities to enforce the law to protect our communities. This requires a federal strengthening of quasi-immunity and requires conditional funding in exchange for enforcement benchmarks and prosecutions of violent crimes.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

UNFLINCHING RESOLVE FOR FREEDOM. I will always stand and fight in defense of our ally Israel and against anti-semitism. As a constitutional attorney trained in defense of civil liberties under my Jewish law school professor, I have 20 years of civil rights experience in federal and state courts, including being the only candidate for this office to have repeatedly fought and won cases against anti-semitism defending Jews in court including defending against recent pro-Hamas attacks against both a Jewish professor and a professional business owner. I will continue to apply that knowledge and experience to Congress. As State Delegate, I sponsored and co-sponsored legislation to increase penalties for hate crimes and have always stood with Israel and for our Constitutional and natural human rights. My experience in international affairs and my world travel also has given me a strong perspective on defending our freedoms here in America, lest we lose them like we are seeing happen to Jewish students on our prestigious campuses.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

MONEY IN THE POCKET. As a husband and father of 10 children with my bride, we understand the housing crisis in Maryland very well. While property taxes increased on homes such as our this year in Maryland by an average 36%, rent and inflation are preventing access to housing for young adults with skyrocketing costs. We need to take immediate action to lower property taxes, increase dollar-for-dollar tax credits to landlords for reduced housing being offered on the market, and allow first-time home buyers to receive a 100% tax credit on their income taxes for the purchase to seek to stabilize the market. At the same time, a direct reduction in income tax withholdings will allow several hundred dollars a month more in the pockets of workers and will further ease the overall increase in housing and inflation.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

OPEN UP MARYLAND'S CLEAN ENERGY. We would be richer than Dubai if we access the 100% clean energy LNG in our world-largest deposit, Marcellus Shale. I will push for this as a matter of economic and national security and in turn will seek to broker deals with all sides to find ways to safely and ecologically access this energy in Maryland and provide stakeholder and tax incentives to all Marylanders in return. This single push will make Maryland a world's leading economic powerhouse as nations such as Latvia are standing by with their LNG ships at this moment waiting to purchase our LNG because they cannot buy from Russia. Additional measures include pushing legislation that will ensure our federal income tax reductions are matched by Maryland through policy that requires equal protection, along

with equality in corporate tax rates with competing states. The power of the Congressional purse is how we leverage this positive revitalization as partners with the State of Maryland.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

LET MY PEOPLE DEFEND THEMSELVES. It is axiomatic that Hamas is a terrorist organization, and they are still holding hostages including Americans. We must never demand a "cease fire" of Israel when it is fighting for its life like it is now. My strategy in addressing this conflict would be to ensure the current Secretary of State encourages factual, and not accusatory, analysis of the situation and ceases threats of sanctions and divestment of Israel. You cannot negotiate with a tiger with our head in its mouth. First, you eliminate the tiger (Hamas); second, you then ensure the new leadership of Gaza and Judea-Samaria is democratic and open, respecting the human rights of all including the recognition of Israel. Without this total surrender of the demonic Hamas terrorists and official, formal recognition of Israel as a permanent State, there can be no lasting diplomatic solution because such would therefore open the door for annihilation of the Jews in Israel which we shall never allow to occur, by all the power that righteous people including America and our European allies together with Israel shall ensure.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

Absolutely not. Israel must be free and independent, and it has a sovereign right to defend itself without foreign meddling or conditional support. Our treaty with Israel requires our full support, not the current Biden administration's undermining of the effort to secure peace.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I am opposed to continuing to giving away taxpayer money to Ukraine to advance a war. Peace must be pursued.

Chris Hyser



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

I condemn all forms of hatred and discrimination, recognizing the importance of protecting

religious freedom and promoting unity. I will combat bigotry through education, law enforcement, and fostering inclusive communities. My efforts will address all forms of hatred, ensuring that no group faces discrimination or persecution. By promoting understanding and tolerance, I aim to create a society where every individual feels safe and valued, regardless of their background or beliefs. Together, we will stand against all manifestations of hatred, working towards a future of mutual respect and dignity for all Americans.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

1. Economic Recovery: I will focus on promoting job growth and business development by reducing burdensome regulations and taxes. This includes incentivizing small businesses and attracting investment to our state. 2. Public Safety: I will prioritize law enforcement support and work to address rising crime rates, particularly in urban areas. Strengthening community-police relationships and implementing targeted crime prevention strategies will be crucial. 3. Education Reform: I will advocate for school choice initiatives to empower parents and improve educational outcomes. Additionally, I will work to enhance accountability and transparency in our education system to ensure taxpayer dollars are effectively used.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

My deep roots in our district and understanding of its diverse population give me a unique perspective unmatched by my opponents. Unlike career politicians, I bring a fresh outlook to the table as a chaplain and blue-collar worker. My common-sense Republican values guide me in prioritizing the needs of our community over political agendas. I am committed to representing the voices of everyday Marylanders, ensuring their concerns are heard and addressed. With my genuine connection to our district and dedication to serving its people, I am the best candidate to bring positive change and effective leadership to our region.



Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

As a chaplain and in homelessness task forces, I understand the urgency of affordable housing in Maryland. I prioritize American citizens and advocate for policies that prioritize locals. I'll work to streamline regulations and incentivize affordable housing development, ensuring families have access to suitable housing. By focusing on citizens' needs and practical solutions, we can effectively address Maryland's affordable housing crisis.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

I'll prioritize pro-growth policies, including reducing burdensome regulations and taxes to promote job growth and business development. I'll incentivize small businesses and attract investment to our state. Additionally, I'll focus on improving infrastructure to enhance connectivity and facilitate commerce. By fostering a business-friendly environment and supporting entrepreneurship, we can unleash Maryland's economic potential and ensure prosperity for all residents.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

My approach as a chaplain is to prioritize diplomacy and cease all military action. I will work tirelessly to facilitate peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine, advocating for dialogue and mutual understanding. By promoting constructive dialogue and addressing the root causes of the conflict, we can achieve a lasting resolution that ensures the safety and security of all parties involved.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I firmly believe in prioritizing America's interests and fiscal responsibility. I oppose military aid to any country, including Israel. Instead, I advocate for a strategic reassessment of foreign aid (humanitarian only), ensuring that taxpayer dollars are not used to fund military conquests. Aid should be provided based on mutual interests and shared values, with accountability measures in place to ensure it serves its intended purpose. Additionally, I support diplomatic efforts to promote peace and stability in the region, but not at the expense of American taxpayers or compromising our principles.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I advocate for an 'America first' policy, prioritizing the needs and interests of our nation. Therefore, I oppose providing military assistance to any foreign country, including Ukraine. Our resources should be directed towards addressing domestic challenges and strengthening our own defense capabilities. While I recognize the importance of supporting allies, I believe in fostering diplomatic solutions and strategic partnerships rather than providing military aid. It is essential that we focus on bolstering our own national security (closing the Southern border to start) and ensuring the prosperity and safety of American citizens.

Neil C. Parrott



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

Antisemitism on campus and in Congress is on the rise, due largely to intersectional leftism.

To an ascendant, radical American left, Jews are oppressors, therefore antisemitism is acceptable, even virtuous. The Biden administration's laughable idea to fight this hatred is more educational programs and partnerships on combating antisemitism with CAIR. Recent antisemitism in the US is a direct byproduct of the decline of America's commitment to equal treatment. Critical Race Theory teaches that everyone is either oppressor or oppressed, that collective

punishment is justified, and treating people equally is not justice. To defeat antisemitism we must stop CRT, eliminate discriminatory diversity, equity and inclusion bureaucracies in schools and corporations, and block extreme leftist social policies that betray the important American principle of equal treatment for everyone regardless of background. Additionally, we need to end the administration's utterly shameful funding of the UNRWA, which has ties to Hamas and promotes antisemitism.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Inflation and the cost of living, illegal immigration and the Biden administration's open border policies, and violent crime. Recent polls showed crime to be voters' number one issue in Montgomery County and in Maryland as a whole. Congress can block radical pro-crime legislation that keeps repeat offenders on the streets, prevents police from doing their jobs, and discourages new hires. Congress must mandate the enforcement of our existing immigration laws and secure the open border. The number of illegal aliens entering our country since Biden took office exceeds the entire Maryland population. The uncontrolled border results in fentanyl deaths, human trafficking, increased violent crime, and unsustainable social program costs. We also must prioritize lowering the cost of living, which has increased \$11,434 annually for an average family since Biden took office. We can only do this by reducing outrageous government spending and unleashing American energy.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

I served for 12 years in the Maryland House of Delegates and was the Republican nominee for Congress in Maryland's sixth district. I fought against Maryland's undemocratic, gerrymandered congressional maps, and won, making the sixth district more representative for the people. I listen to people and have been privileged to regularly help constituents. I was born in Bethesda, grew up in Maryland, became an Eagle Scout, a professional engineer, an MBA, and a small-business owner. As a husband and father of three, I care about people and like to work for practical, common-sense solutions to big problems. For 12 years in the Maryland state house, I fought against illegal immigration, gerrymandered maps, and dangerous soft-on-crime policies, and for lower taxes, smaller government, and more personal freedom.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Housing is too expensive across the country, burdening renters and homebuyers. We need more housing supply, more freedom, and more opportunity. The housing crisis is inflationary — too much demand chasing too little supply. "Affordable housing" is often just another word for inefficient and ineffective government subsidies, market interventions, and regulations. We need the reduction of barriers to allow abundant housing production. In Congress I will work to incentivize the building of more housing nationwide. More supply will lower costs. More government spending will not. Getting inflation under control by reducing government spending and ending illegal immigration will ease pressure on the housing market. The federal government should stop subsidizing localities' bad housing policy. Federal dollars going toward housing vouchers, tax credits or capital investment must be conditioned on localities building more housing. Deregulating housing will lower housing costs for families much more than incentivizing more subsidized housing.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

For 12 years as a Maryland state Delegate, I fought for lower taxes, less government and more pro-business legislation. Unfortunately, in a state with Democratic supermajorities committed to high taxes, wasteful spending, and unchecked government growth, it is difficult to compete against neighboring states offering better environments for job growth and business development. In Congress, I'll always fight for Maryland's economic growth. I'll fight for an end to reckless, inflationary spending. I'll vote for unleashing American energy, and for lower

taxes and fewer regulations. I'll fight against reckless executive overreach into the economy, no matter who is president. I'll fight for better trade deals that put Maryland workers and businesses first and don't fund the militaries and economies of our adversaries. As a traffic engineer, I'm particularly passionate about improving north/south roadways, and widening 81, 270 and US-219. Doing this will improve transportation of goods to and through Maryland.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

The US should let Israel fight its own wars the way they see fit. When Israel was attacked on October 7th, it was the biggest unprovoked mass murder of Jewish people since the holocaust. Hamas still has Israeli and US hostages that they refuse to release.

Gazan leadership has shown that they do not plan to live at peace with Israel, but want Israel annihilated. A "two-state solution" only exacerbates the problem. Now that 85% of the Gazans' 2.3 million population have been displaced, allowing them to seek asylum in Egypt or other countries in the region should be explored.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

While no aid to a foreign country should be unconditional, Israel remains the only democracy in the middle east, and Israel is one of our most important allies and partners. October 7th was the largest mass murder of Jewish people since the Holocaust. Iran just attacked Israel with unprecedented drone strikes. At this critical moment, continuing US aid and support to Israel is more important than ever.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

Biden's policies invited Putin to invade. Even as Russia built up for the invasion, Biden clumsily signaled that the US wouldn't help Ukraine. Russia has been waiting to take more of Ukraine since they took Crimea on Obama's watch. After Biden's humiliating retreat from Afghanistan, Russia saw weakness and acted accordingly. Russia had the money for war from their increased sales of oil exports. This sudden influx of money resulted from Biden's executive orders on the first day of his term. Biden shut down the US Keystone XL Pipeline and opened Russia's Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. He suspended US oil and gas leasing agreements leaving us to rely on nations like Russia to supply a portion of our oil and natural gas. The US needs to become energy independent again, thus reducing Russia's income. We should work to negotiate a peace deal between Russia and Ukraine to stop the war.

Mariela Roca



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

To effectively combat antisemitism in the United States, I plan to focus on firm measures like promoting education and awareness to foster understanding and tolerance. I will strongly advocate for strict enforcement of hate crime laws to protect Jewish communities from targeted violence. In Congress, I will work relentlessly with my colleagues to condemn and prevent anti-Semitic acts. Upholding Israel's right to self-defense and highlighting its dedication to protecting all its citizens' rights are vital in our alliance. Strengthening U.S.-Israel relations is also top priority for me, including providing aid that reinforces Israel's security and supports our strategic interests. I believe in robust cooperation to expand peace initiatives like the Abraham Accords. We must condemn bigotry against any religious groups; and especially concerning is the increase in hate crimes and intimidation we are seeing being directed at Jewish communities and Jewish students on college campuses across the US and world.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

The top priorities for Western Maryland constituents are the economy, inflation, securing our southern border and increased crime plaguing our communities. I will work with my colleagues to strengthen our Economy, and work towards unleashing energy here at home, especially with our untapped resources here in Western Maryland. I will also work to bring policies that will defend our public safety and national security and will support parents with parental rights, school choice, and women's rights in sports. I am passionate about veterans' resources and healthcare. Our VA healthcare system has so many unaddressed systemic issues and fails to provide adequate and timely care to our veterans. As a veteran, I get my care 100% through the VA and understand firsthand these issues. Additionally, my experience in medical supply chain logistics is something Congress needs to fix our crumbling US supply chain and end our dependencies on countries like China.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

My extensive 15-year experience in the federal government, coupled with my military background, provides me with a strong foundation to tackle the current challenges facing the U.S. I bring a unique, disciplined perspective to the table, offering innovative solutions derived from my years of service. My experience with supply chain management is unparalleled among the candidates, ensuring efficiency and resilience in addressing logistical issues. My background and resume speak for themselves, demonstrating a proven track record of effective leadership and problem-solving. I am ready to hit the ground running on day one and work tirelessly for the betterment of our nation.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

To address the affordable housing crisis in Maryland, we will work to lower interest rates, making homeownership more attainable for residents. By lowering interest rates, we can ease monthly mortgage payments, enabling more people to buy a home. Additionally, we must combat inflation by implementing measures to reduce the cost of living. Lowering costs will put more money back in your pocket, helping Marylanders afford rent or mortgage payments.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

To revitalize Maryland's economy amidst national and regional slowdowns, tackling Congress's negligence in addressing our debt crisis is paramount. The refusal to fulfill constitutional obligations threatens economic stability, as evidenced by historical collapses on other countries. Congress's inaction to do their job directly impacts citizens, fueling inflation, undermining military readiness, and hampering investments in crucial sectors like transportation and healthcare. Addressing this requires proactive measures, including halting continuing resolutions and omnibus bills, banning earmarks, and eliminating redundant federal programs. By prioritizing fiscal responsibility and efficient governance, we can redirect resources towards sustainable growth, ensuring Maryland's economy flourishes despite some of the national challenges we are facing.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

I will always first and foremost support Israel and its right to defend themselves and its citizens. Israel is a democracy. Israeli Arabs have rights in Israel. They can hold office and be elected in Israel. And certainly, as an American I am and always will be going to support a democracy in the Middle East. I think most Americans would agree that we want nothing more than there to be peace in the Middle East, and peace between Israel and Palestinians. When I get to Congress, I will do everything in my power to help foster productive discussions towards that goal. Until Hamas supporters change their mantra and rhetoric on their quest of the total destruction of Israel; until these individuals stop saying things like "from the river to the sea", it will be very hard to work towards any peaceful solution. Hamas needs to be eliminated.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

I am against any conditional aid to Israel. When I get to Congress, I am committed to enhancing and nurturing the critical relationship in place between the United States and Israel. This partnership between both countries should always stand as a cornerstone of US foreign policy, embodying shared values, strategic interests, and mutual support. I am committed to always supporting and not delaying any bills related to the appropriated annual security assistance to Israel of \$3.3 billion each year. I also support the \$17.3 billion in supplemental aid and am incredibly disappointed that Congress is playing politics with that measure. These resources being provided to Israel play a crucial role in ensuring the US has a strong, capable, and democratic ally in the Middle East.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

I understand the concerns about military assistance to Ukraine, especially the lack of clear accountability on the spending of taxpayer dollars and the uncertainty of the long-term situation. Supporting Ukraine is crucial, but we must ensure that the funds are being used effectively and transparently. It's important not to treat Ukraine funding as a bargaining chip in domestic policy issues; instead, we should urge European countries to take on more responsibility, given their geographical proximity. Prioritizing our own needs and urging others to step up can help create a more balanced approach to supporting Ukraine while also addressing challenges at home.

Tom Royals



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

As a devout Christian and former U.S. Navy aviator who flew combat missions over Afghanistan and Iraq, I understand the importance of a strong alliance between Israel and the United States. The United States, and all our institutions, should lead with absolute moral clarity in condemning terrorist violence in all circumstances and supporting the people of Israel as they take decisive action to defend their safety against unimaginable savagery. We cannot afford to coddle ignorant and dangerous views with silence. I believe members of Congress must universally condemn anti-Semitism in all its forms, without equivocation, shut down any legislation promoting the dangerous BDS movement and fight any anti-Semitic remarks made by members of the House. The rising antisemitism on college campuses is morally repugnant and deeply disturbing. Any institution of higher learning that allows the scourge of antisemitism to fester on its campus should be prohibited from receiving federal tax dollars.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Maryland is under attack. From our southern border to inflation and rising crime. Maryland needs a fighter who will go to Congress and build a safer, more prosperous future for hardworking Maryland families. In Congress, I'll work to secure the southern border, reinstate the Remain-in-Mexico policy, and prioritize a merit-based immigration system. I'll also cut reckless spending and lower middle-class taxes because you work hard for your money, and you deserve to keep more of it. Finally, I'll rally the resources to increase funding for local police departments so they can address staffing shortages and provide more training opportunities to keep communities safe. As a father and a veteran, I will never stop fighting for hardworking Maryland families.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

When America was under attack on September 11th, 2001, I stepped up to serve. Now, I see America under a different kind of attack - extreme politicians targeting the rights of parents, lawlessness on America's border allowing crime and lethal drugs into Maryland's communities, soft-on-crime policies putting our communities at risk and reckless spending and out of control debt threatening the livelihoods of hardworking Maryland families. I'm ready to take the values that guided me on combat missions over Iraq and Afghanistan to fight for our country. In Congress, I'll fight to secure the border, cut reckless government spending and restore safety in our communities. When America is under attack, you send a fighter.

Affordable housing continues to plague

Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

Maryland families are under attack, struggling under the weight of inflation and a sluggish economy. Interest rates have doubled in the last few years creating financial hardships for every hardworking Maryland family. Bureaucrats who have never spent a day in the real world have too much power over your life and Maryland businesses. In Congress, I'll fight to ensure rules of the road maximize the competitiveness of Maryland businesses and support their success. I'll also work to foster market-based solutions to increase housing and decrease costs.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

As my wife and I grow our family, we, like millions of families around the country, have a budget and never spend more than we can afford. That is why it is so frustrating to watch out-of-touch politicians carelessly throw away billions of dollars in hard-earned taxpayer money and increasingly push America further into a debt crisis. Not only has their reckless spending given us the worst inflation in four decades, but it's creating a mountain of debt for our children and grandchildren to pay off. It's time to restore common sense and fiscal discipline in Washington and deliver relief for Maryland families struggling under the weight of inflation and a sluggish economy. I'll work to enact policies that support the district's manufacturing and agricultural sectors while encouraging more growth in our life sciences, tech, and logistics industries. In order for our district to be an economic engine, it is vital we upgrade critical infrastructure.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

Israel is a sovereign democratic country and has an unequivocal right to defend itself against hostile actors. The United States must support Israel in deed and in truth in its fight to destroy Hamas, free the hostages, ensure an attack like the one on October 7th never happens again, and defend itself from Iran. Furthermore, aid to Israel must be without conditions. We cannot tie our ally's hands behind its back in the face of existential threats like Hamas and Iran. Israel is going to need time to achieve its objectives and the United States must exercise its soft power to prevent global actors from interfering or attempting to bully Israel while it wages war against Hamas. The United States should oppose attempts by the illegitimate International Criminal Court to bully Israel and attack the honor of the Israeli Defense Forces.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

In Congress, I will unapologetically stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Israel as America's most important strategic ally in the Middle East, defend our shared values, and fight against anti-Semitism. Aid to Israel must be without conditions. We cannot tie our ally's hands behind its back in the face of existential threats like Hamas and Iran. The United States must continue to honor its signed Memorandum of Understanding with Israel that established a framework for the United States to provide nearly \$4 billion annually in military funding through Foreign Military Financing grants along with partnership programs focused on research and development for assets like the Iron Dome system. It is also critical for the U.S. to renew this agreement with Israel prior to its expiration in 2028.

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

The primary reason this is happening is because we have a weak President who our enemies neither respect nor fear. When America projects weakness and leads from behind, chaos ensues on the global stage. I served in the Navy as a Naval Flight Officer flying F-18 Super Hornets off aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf. I know all too well the threat Russia poses to our country, our allies, and to the entire world. I do support military aid to Ukraine; however, under no circumstance should the United States put U.S. troops on the ground and in harm's way. Furthermore, I believe Congress needs to conduct vigilant oversight over every dollar we give to Ukraine to ensure the money is being used properly. China is watching our every move when it comes to Ukraine. The greatest deterrent we can provide to China's aggression is to ensure Putin fails in his quest to conquer Ukraine.

Brenda J. Thiam



Antisemitism has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, how do you plan to effectively combat this age-old hatred?

We have federal laws in place that provide consequences to those who break the law and discriminate against others based on their race, gender, religious beliefs, etc. You'll have a representative who will seek funding and resources to provide educational training regarding preventing antisemitism. You'll also have a representative who will sponsor legislation to increase the penalty and consequences if the crime results in the loss of life based on a hate crime.

What do you believe are the three top issues facing Marylanders? How would you address them?

Financially struggling seniors, crime, transportation/infrastructure. Seniors are really struggling in this economy with rent/mortgage, groceries, and prescriptions. You'll be electing someone who will sponsor legislation that will help citizens maintain a healthy means of living. I will support the solvency of social security so that it's around for years to come for those who have paid into social security for years prior. You will elect a representative who will fully fund law enforcement agencies to ensure they have the funding they need for resources to keep us safe in our communities. Our highways can become very congested due to commuters and accidents caused by motorists who aren't attentive. Interstate 81 needs to be widened and you'll get a representative who will prioritize this project to ease traffic congestion.

What qualifications make you the best candidate, versus your opponent(s)?

As a former State Delegate in the Maryland General Assembly, I sponsored HB221, which is a Maryland law that enables disabled veterans to obtain a complimentary angler's license to increase recreation and outdoor activities. You'll be electing someone who successfully championed funding for the Commission on Aging to improve their programs for seniors in the community. I advocated for the Robert W. Johnson Community Center and obtained \$100,000 to address needed repairs for the center. I debated bills on the floor, in committee and was confident when doing so. I understand the importance of compromise but not at the stake of selling away beliefs and values to get resources for the district. I'm equipped and ready to work for the needs of American citizens.

Affordable housing continues to plague Marylanders. How will you address this key issue?

I will sponsor legislation to incentivize first-time homebuyer programs to encourage homeownership. I will also work closely with state and locally elected officials to explore permitting and design impediments that will allow new home constructions to be approved quicker. States can also consider altering their zoning rules that will enable a greater ability and selection of what homes can look like. This is an issue that can be addressed more-so at the local and State level. I will avail myself to pertinent elected officials to provide funding for new home development.

Maryland's economy is growing, but at a slower rate compared to the nation as a whole and neighboring states, how will you revitalize our economy?

I will sponsor and support legislation bringing jobs back to the U.S.A. Bringing jobs back from China will aid in providing manufacturing jobs for Americans. I will support legislation to stop the excessive spending and sending millions of dollars to foreign countries, instead of taking care of the American citizens. I will sponsor and support legislation that will encourage people to return to work. I've come to learn that some people who earn a disability check might be able to work and they are abusing the system. I will support legislation that will provide more oversight and accountability for people to return to work if they are able. Returning to work can help stimulate the economy.

As the Israel-Hamas war enters its seventh month, what is your strategy toward reaching a diplomatic and military solution to the conflict?

War must be a last resort. It's expensive and innocent lives are lost during the war. The war between Israel and the terrorist group Hamas is tragic. Israel responded in self-defense of its people and made every effort to protect them. The U.S. must continue to support Israel during this tragic time. Hamas terrorists are not looking to negotiate. Terrorists are looking to kill and destroy everyone and everything. This war between Israel and Hamas is a vital threat for the U.S. and it must end expeditiously. I'm not in support of boots on the ground to aid in fighting this war.

Some lawmakers have suggested conditioning aid to Israel, what is your position?

At this time, it's not appropriate to discuss conditioning aid to Israel considering the war with Hamas that's occurring. The U.S. has provided aid to Israel over the last several years that focuses on military defense assistance (i.e. aircraft, missiles, etc). However, with the aid that's currently in place and ends 2028, if the war is over, considerations to condition aid to Israel should be explored after 2028 (provided the war ended).

What is your stand on military assistance for Ukraine?

The U.S. has sent several billion dollars to Ukraine to aid them during the war with Russia. This aid far exceeds the aid that's been given to other countries. I was in full support of assisting Ukraine when this war started years ago, but the U.S. has to begin to pull back on additional funding to Ukraine. The U.S. needs to train the Ukrainian people to begin to take the lead in this war and take care of its people as the U.S. gradually bows out from financial assistance. We should send our men and women as boots on the ground to aid in this war.

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Candidates for Montgomery County Board of Education

At Large

Lynne Harris



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

The next superintendent must be a humble, gracious leader and communicator who truly appreciates the good work happening, but is also firm in the face of the culture that needs to change. Confronting defensiveness and excuses, replacing them with the expectation that every conversation start with 'how do we get this done?'. They must be fully committed to making MCPS an anti-bias/anti-racist school system, and fully committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. They must be solidly grounded as an instructional leader, including the work to make every classroom inclusive and affirming, support the ongoing success with the Science of Reading and comprehensive overhaul in the way MCPS teaches math - at all grade levels, in all content areas. A leader who is adept at doing more with less, is a strong proponent of the Sustainability work, and prioritizes the work to create structures of accountability in all areas of MCPS

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

As with all forms of hate/bias, the Board must continuously monitor anti-semitic incidents and MCPS' response, and the development and delivery of specific staff and student anti-semitism trainings. Trainings must be co-created with students and staff who know firsthand what anti-semitism is, and subject matter experts in the community. Trainings must be engaging, interactive and beta-tested before implementation. The student-created Stronger Student app needs more promotion. It provides students the power to report incidents in real time, including anonymously. All community must be empowered to report incidents with user-friendly, culturally responsive tools, and incidents must be tracked, effectively and efficiently investigated, and monitoring dashboards made accessible (with privacy protections). Curricular content must be continuously reviewed in partnership with students and community partners for accuracy and true balance, and newly approved courses like Holocaust Studies, Jewish Peoplehood Throughout History, and Ethnic Studies made more widely available in our High Schools

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

MCPS must require annual, specific training on all forms of hate/bias. Anti-semitism/anti-Zionism content must be created with subject matter experts in the community, and the students and staff who experience that bigotry and will be on the consumer side of the training. The approach to anti-hate training needs to shift from online modules to interactive engagement, and the culture around training - from all those who participate - from 'box-checking' to curious, open-minded inquiry. As a former MCPS teacher, I think intentional thought needs to be given to the timing of training - because presenting staff with a litany of annual compliance trainings they must complete in a short space of time at the start of each school year does NOT create a climate for curious, open-minded inquiry. Pacing trainings throughout the year, particularly if they are high quality, in-person and truly engaging, will be more impactful.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

MCPS does not have a specific employee social media policy. Instead, use of technology - including social media - is governed in a patchwork combination of things like Policy IGS - Educational Technology, and regulation IGT-RA - governing MCPS technology

systems and network security. The primary focus of each being privacy protection, network security, and setting out appropriate uses of MCPS technology and user accounts. IGT-RA prohibits an array of inappropriate uses of MCPS accounts/technology - including cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation and fraud. The Employee Code of Conduct addresses all forms of bullying, harassment and intimidation - but doesn't speak specifically to personal social media use, though the language is generally applicable to any behavior that could constitute bullying, harassment and intimidation. Given the current climate and proliferation of social media use, it makes sense to triangulate all of those things into a single clear social media policy.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

Holocaust education should be strengthened in MCPS. High school students are telling us that discussion and study of the Holocaust was extremely limited in their MCPS trajectory. As discussed at the April 11 Board of Education meeting, creating a collaborative team of students, teachers and curriculum staff to review and update curricula is a model MCPS started using several years ago, and needs to be intentionally operationalized to review history and world studies curricula for accuracy and the inclusion of age-appropriate introduction of the Holocaust with more comprehensive historical context - which students also tell us is lacking. The Holocaust Studies course, currently finishing a pilot at B-CC and likely to be added to the MCPS course catalog next year - needs to be scaled to ensure all high school students have access. Jewish Peoplehood Throughout History is in its initial pilot at Blair - if well reviewed it should be similarly scaled.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

Public education is a public good, essential to creating a thriving society in which everyone uniquely contributes and has value. An essential part of public education's core mission is to provide an education full of windows and mirrors - ensuring every student sees themselves and their experience reflected in the classroom, and also sees beyond their own experience, learning to appreciate the experience of others. That is how we create critical thinking problem solvers who see value in everyone, and don't judge people based on personal characteristics. Allowing parents to say 'I don't want my kids to learn about those people' or 'I don't want my kids to learn THAT history' or 'I don't want any student to have access to THIS book' is contrary to the mission of public education. I trust MCPS's professional librarians and the inclusive books they make available in MCPS media centers.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

Pillar One of MCPS's Theory of Action is differentiating resources to meet individual needs. Structures of accountability are required to monitor that, especially for emergent multi-lingual learners and special needs students. We will have data at the end of the school year on how covering IB, AP and Dual Enrollment fees for all students impacted uptake. Universal screening identifies far more ES and MS students ready for enriched instruction than can be accommodated in current programs. MCPS needs a real program to ensure all schools are providing that enrichment. For secondary students, the magnet programs have never been equitably accessible. In a county this size, geography matters. Many barriers are created when students have to travel long distances to school. A plan to expand great programs like CAP, VAPA, Global Ecology, the middle school magnets, to multiple additional sites throughout the county to create true access for every student, is essential.

Sharif Hidayat

Did not submit a response.

Melissa Kim

Did not submit a response.

Jonathan Long

Did not submit a response.

Fitzgerald Mofor

Did not submit a response.

Rita Montoya



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

The new superintendent must model integrity and transparency. They must model the behavior expected of students and staff and create an environment of openness so that change can occur. The new superintendent must be willing to acknowledge and discuss mistakes and missteps so solutions can be created. They must also be fiscally resourceful as costs continue to rise and budget requests are more challenging to fill. The Board should follow suit to rebuild trust in MCPS by families and employees. MCPS' lack of community trust negatively impacts budget allocations; the hiring and retention of administrators, educators, and support staff; and class enrollment and family engagement. This hurts students' ability to advance, achieve and succeed. MCPS and the Board of Education must be more transparent and communicate with families and staff about potential changes as well as get their input about the impact of the changes on their families. They must also be willing to If elected, I will model accountability, leadership, oversight, and transparency to rebuild trust in MCPS by students, families, educators, staff, administrators, community members and elected officials. I will work to establish open lines of communication to ensure a collaborative approach to improving MCPS.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

MCPS must ensure that students and staff feel safe in school buildings. Safe schools means being safe from hate bias as well. Statistics demonstrate that hate bias incidents are drastically increasing in MCPS. The fact that a US House Committee has asked the MCPS Board Chair to testify on the county's response to antisemitism in early May is a sign of the extent of the problem. While HB 1386, which passed both houses and is expected to be signed by the Governor, requires training for staff every other year, I believe MCPS must go even further. MCPS must front-load anti-hate bias education for students and staff every year. I think this education should also be required of Board of Education Members and PTA leaders and available to parents/caregivers as well. Moreover, MCPS must treat incidents of antisemitism and other forms of hate bias with the seriousness they deserve and ensure that victims are provided not only with support services but assurances that schools are taking steps to make sure it does not happen again.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

As mentioned above, I think that MCPS must front-load anti-hate bias education for students, staff, Board of Education Members and PTA leaders every year. Anti-hate bias education must be all inclusive so that all students and staff feel safe in school buildings. This means education about antisemitism and anti-Zionism.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

My understanding is the current MCPS social media policy does preclude MCPS employees from posting hate bias when posting in their capacity as employees within the limits of constitutional law. This can also include posts from personal accounts where the employee has previously indicated they are affiliated with MCPS. If elected, I will work with my colleagues to review the policy to ensure that it meets standards for hate bias safety.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

Yes. The Holocaust is history and MCPS should treat it as such by incorporating Holocaust history into the social studies curricula. I also think MCPS should offer middle school and high school level courses focused on cultural atrocities such as those based on religion, ethnicity and political persecution.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

I do not support opting out of inclusive curricula. I do believe, however, that all parents deserve a chance to give their input and have their voice heard. If I'm elected, I will treat all people with respect rather than disparage them, their children or their religious beliefs. We can disagree with others without weaponizing stereotypes.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

If elected, I will work hard to increase academic rigor and provide students with tailored programs serving all student needs and learning styles. For example, school initiatives like WIN (What I Need) group similarly achieving students for tailored learning experiences 30 minutes, four times a week. All students are met where they are and move forward. I strongly support programs like WIN because closing the achievement gap doesn't mean lowering the standards; it means providing those who don't have what they need with what they need to achieve (tutoring, homework help). Special education programs need funding and more staff. Students and families should also be given an opportunity to engage with MCPS and the Board prior to major changes to their students' programs, unlike the recent lack of communication and engagement about changes to the Darnestown Learning Center and Connections autism programs. Recently, I testified before the County Council about the need to keep families' preferred autism support services and programs because program changes disrupt autistic student's learning experiences and well-being as change can be challenging to adjust to. I am also concerned about the students' home schools ability to provide the level of support the students need. As an advocate, I have worked with families in need of IEP and 504 services in public and private school settings so I know first-hand how challenging it can be to navigate that process. If elected, I will be a fierce advocate for special education students and families. I will work hard to secure the funding needed for programs and staffing as well as provide clarity about how to obtain services.

District 2

Brenda M. Diaz



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

The new superintendent must value parental involvement in their child's education. Parents are the bedrock of society and the cornerstone of our MCPS community, shaping the future through their dedication to their children's development. With parental support, we will meet our main goal as a public school system to provide rigorous academic instruction. As such, the new superintendent and Board must respect the inherent right of parents to guide their children's moral compass and cultural beliefs. In addition, to rebuild families' trust in MCPS leadership, the Board of Education must hold meetings during hours when parents and students are available to participate. We must also restore speaker time to three minutes. We want to hear and welcome the voices of all of the members of our MCPS community, from developing curriculum to making it easier to join their children on field trips or help out coach with the team as a volunteer. We must also focus our efforts on responsible resource allocation through diligent oversight. This means, for example, eliminating redundancies in MCPS's budget in order to focus on our mission to deliver a quality education to our students. If we want fully-staffed, fully-equipped schools, we must pull out the

rot from a top heavy Central Office and transfer our precious resources back to our teachers and students our children. Finally, to gain the trust of our employees we must boost the morale of our teachers. The key to teacher retention, teacher recruitment, and solving the teacher shortage crisis is to first take care of our current teachers who are in our classrooms with our children. We will boost morale among our teachers by providing the tools they need to be successful in the classroom. From functioning copiers, and printers in department offices, and bringing back GoGuardian- our teachers deserve to have fully equipped schools. We must also aim to return highly qualified Central Office staff to the classroom as teachers, subs, or test administrators in schools that report gaps in faculty. Finally, we must visit classrooms to observe our teachers as they deliver lessons, hold open forums, including candid one-on-one meetings with teachers, to hear directly about their concerns and needs.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

The rise in anti-Semitism within MCPS is a reflection of restorative justice practices that are across the board failing to teach our students that harmful actions against others carry serious consequences. It is important that MCPS begin to support administrators and teachers seeking to enforce the Student Code of Conduct when bullying, harassment, threatening and violence take place beginning at the elementary school level. Furthermore, MCPS must remind administrators and teachers that schools are meant to be centers of learning, exploration, discovery, and knowledge, not political controversy. Currently, the rise in anti-Semitism is in part due to the war between Israel and Gaza. MCPS should refrain from making any public statements on this foreign conflict. Teachers & administrators must remain neutral in the political and cultural wars of our time, especially in their instruction. Finally, MCPS must begin to reinforce the founding ideals of our country throughout our Social Studies curriculum, especially religious freedoms, in order to secure that all of our students, including Jewish students, are safe no matter their background, heritage, or religion.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

It is important that teachers, administrators, and BOE members receive professional development training on anti-Semitism during pre-service week. In addition, a class should also be offered specifically on anti-Semitism through the MCPS Department of Professional Growth Systems for those teachers and administrators who are interested in learning more.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

MCPS should revisit the contract to examine the disciplinary procedures for teachers who engage in hate speech, including anti-Semitic materials on public platforms.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

Holocaust education can certainly be strengthened within MCPS. Currently, covering the Holocaust is not a mandatory component of either Modern World History or US History. One way to address this problem is to require questions on formative and summative assessments, thus compelling teachers to cover the Holocaust in class lessons. In addition, offering a high school elective titled, "Holocaust Studies" would be another way to strengthen education in this particular area.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

Freedom of religion is enshrined in the First Amendment of our Constitution and in the Constitution of the State of Maryland, Article 36. Maryland allows parents to opt their children out of certain portions of sex education curriculum, including portions related to human sexuality or sexually transmitted diseases, for religious or moral reasons. This policy typically falls under the broader umbrella of "parental rights to control the education of their children" rather than specifically "opting out" of sex education. Currently, MCPS introduced topics on this discussion to elementary school English Language Arts instead of maintaining it within the Family Life/Health/Sex Education curriculum. Maryland state law provides for parental involvement in sex education and allows parents to review instructional materials related to sex education and to request exemptions for their

children from certain portions of the curriculum. In addition, it is important to note that MCPS elementary school principals objected to age-inappropriate content in the LGBTQ+ books selected, citing anti-religious bias in discussion guides, the lack of teacher training, possible tension developing between schools and community as a result, and inconsistent training from district offices. Furthermore, restoring opt-out would be consistent with MCPS's Memorandum from the Superintendent at pp. 5-6, adopted by the Board of Education on June 17, 2014. It is clear, the opt-out policy must be instituted.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

1. Read full texts above grade level. When we have high expectations of our students, they want to learn and meet the challenge. 2. Introduce books that greatly expand students' vocabulary. 3. Study the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. 4. Implement less group work and more individual work. 5. Teach students how to diagram sentences, learning all parts of speech. 6. Reward academic achievement. 7. Introduce Singapore math at the elementary school level.

Ricky Fai Mui



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

The Superintendent is the highest executive of the Montgomery County Public School System, hired to manage the Offices and programs under MCPS. I would expect that the Superintendent have: a. prior successful experience in leading a large company or more than 25,000 employees, b. be academically competent; c. have industry experience aside from being an educator, to include finance and business background d. be morally competent e. the capability to be a very quick learner f. an outspoken or charismatic attitude g. experience working with K-12 Aside from the qualifications and certifications, the Superintendent must be an active team builder, and must be able to implement changes and improvements, while navigating natural resistance to change. If the Superintendent can demonstrate the capacity to lead change or responsiveness to a situation, it is a large step toward rebuilding trust.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

To paraphrase a quote: we allow, therefore it exists. This is true in business, religious intolerance, or criminal activity. I would never allow or condone Anti-Semitism in Montgomery County. On Day One, I would focus on establishing far greater discipline in our public schools. I would push for an immediate refresh of the Student Code of Conduct, adding that physical, verbal, or written instances of racial, cultural, or gender discrimination will not be tolerated; just as the standard with working in the corporate world or federal government. I would propose specific corrective actions leading up to separation from the school system or potentially handed over to the judicial system for egregious violent behavior. You must set the expectations, and then adhere to them. MCPS staff and students must be accountable for their actions. Training is awareness; let's push for putting responsible behavior into practice.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

I would not discount training, it is useful channel to raise awareness and to communicate the standards of behavior. Application of the training is a much better return. Training and cultural sensitivity information can be used to communicate social norms, taboos, and acceptable behavior, which may be different. I oversaw this line of training to my sailors prior to visiting foreign countries. That is a small price for a very rich cultural population in America.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

I would push for consistency and follow the predominant social norm that corporate or federal employees are held to; employees should be held accountable for their social media posts. It is

irresponsible and illogical to think that a pervasive personal view will not affect all aspects of a person's life; we cannot express anti-Semitic views on the street and suddenly switch it off crossing into campus.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

We all have lessons to learn from WWII and the Holocaust. If my historical comprehension is correct, America's entry into the war with Nazi Germany included plans of liberating the Jewish prison camps. People around the world have heard accounts of the terrific treatment of the Jews within the Prison Camps. My initial exposure to the Holocaust was a diary started by a similarly aged girl to me at the time, by the name of Anne Frank, who sadly never finished her story. We can clearly see how a world, left unchecked, unregulated, with fanatics in authority, can lead to widescale corruption of even the most decent people. Elect stable leaders who want to promote order, discipline, adherence to structure, and academics. I will get MCPS back on track to produce citizens that can be productive as an adult in Montgomery County.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

Parents with strong commitment to modest religious or cultural beliefs, are offended by the mandated requirement to read literature focused on sexualized content and acts that cannot be replicated in public, especially by underaged children; view the Opt-Out as their last cry for help. As a parent, I would never intentionally expose my children to pornographic material, and those that condone such literary filth, should be referred to the American Justice system. Every electronic device has the ability to be set for content appropriate for children, and the film and tv industry has an age-appropriate rating for sex, drugs, alcohol, nudity, language, violence, etc. However, extremists feel they are above the law and want to intentional use academic content to violate the established laws. The FCC routinely fines for obscene content on tv; this should apply to children's books as well. Fix the problem, don't sacrifice an education. Trust me on the Board of Education.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

I vow to remove any and all barriers to learning. I need a chance to push for a complete budget audit of the \$3.3 Billion operating budget. Special needs students require consistency, a regulated routine, and support. Providing that early on in a young student's life will mitigate the learning loss through time. It is always harder to catch up if the gap continues to widen, I dubbed it as the relative motion of knowledge. The same principle applies to any student, regardless of color, age, gender, or race. I propose we utilize a combination of smaller class sizes with a teacher-paraeducator pairing. The Teacher can present the main knowledge, while the paraeducator circulates amongst the students to provide as much individual mentoring as possible. With time and instruction from the Teacher and practice and focus from the students, we can get our disadvantaged students on track.

Rebecca Keller Smondrowski

Did not submit a response.

Aby Thioye

Did not submit a response.

Natalie Zimmerman



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

Strong in communication skills -

Even with well-intended comprehensive policies, there will continue to be challenges and growing pains as MCPS transitions into a more trustworthy system. We need a superintendent who is willing to communicate as much as possible with the public and to release information swiftly and clearly as it develops. Solution-oriented -

We need a superintendent who desires to do more than issue proclamations or acknowledge problems. Acknowledging reality is a very low rung on the ladder of accountability. A solution-oriented superintendent

will take steps beyond talking about the problems and take actions to address them. Data-driven -

Part of leadership is admitting when a proposed solution is not effective. MCPS needs a superintendent who will be willing to examine data and decide if the executed programming should continue, be enhanced, or be abandoned for a new idea. There is no shame in innovation based on data and current research, and we need a superintendent who understands this.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

First and foremost, the Board of Education itself must engage in antisemitism training. After this, the Board needs to conduct listening sessions with those affected by antisemitism. We need to hear from students, staff, families, and community members to understand the issues, feelings, and what solutions would make stakeholders feel safe. At the same time, we need to be offering antisemitism training to staff and students. HB 1386 just passed in Annapolis. It calls for anti-bias training for school staff. MCPS cannot just follow the law here, but should instead be leaders in this case. We should provide high-quality anti-bias training every year for both staff and students. Antisemitism should absolutely be included in this training.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

As mentioned above, I believe that MCPS should be leaders in anti-bias training and go beyond just what is required by law. Students and staff should be receiving anti-bias training every year, and the training should not just be a "check-box", but instead should be intended on creating connection and creating change. It is my understanding that the Whitman cluster has sought out antisemitism training from JCRC and the Anti Defamation League already, and I believe that this should be replicated throughout MCPS.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

It is my understanding, as a current MCPS employee, that we do not have an explicit social media policy, but instead social media guidelines/best practices. While there is certainly an element of free speech here, schools have a compelling interest to limit speech that may "materially and substantially interfere with requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school", as stated in *Tinker v Des Moines*. Any educator or staff member making hateful statements, online or in person, will interfere with their ability to make all of their students feel safe and will therefore interfere with their ability to do their job, which will affect the operation of the school. In any case, MCPS must make their policies clearer, and therefore communicate the consequences of violation.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

I do believe that Holocaust education should be strengthened in MCPS. A 2020 report shows Maryland as one of the states with the lowest Holocaust Knowledge Scores, based on surveys of Millennials and Generation Z. We need to make the curriculum more robust and create greater oversight in how the curriculum is implemented from school to school and classroom to classroom. We could consider an evidence of learning measure administered at the end of a course/unit on the Holocaust where students get an opportunity to share their learning in different manners, as well as allowing for data-tracking metrics. Beyond this, we need to ensure the curriculum we offer is impactful and connects to students. We should partner with local organizations to enhance the learning experience about the Holocaust for students.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

Current law around opt-outs applies to the human health and sexuality portion of curriculum. MCPS follows the law in allowing families to opt-out of this portion of the curriculum. MCPS's job is to prepare students for their future in all capacities as they mature. This includes preparing our students to interact with diverse people. Families and caregivers, like with any school subject, should be guiding their student(s) in the ways they see fit to help develop their academics and morals. It is not the job of MCPS or an educator to parent, but instead to prepare students for the world and to be good citizens. Opting out of curriculum is a slippery slope - especially as we see pushback on teaching things like the full scope of American history, the realities of the Holocaust, and eliminating diverse

books from school and public libraries.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

Our current numbers show that about 55 percent of MCPS students are students of color. We need to be looking at our policies for recruitment and retention at the schools that teach our most vulnerable students. One of the ways we can do this is with mentorship programs for students and staff. We want our students to see people who look like them at all levels of staffing in MCPS. We also need high-quality implicit bias training that is beyond just checking a box, but actually creating connection and change. We know our Black and Brown students are less likely to be recommended for challenging courses than their White and Asian peers, not because of a lack of ability, but because of implicit bias. When it comes to our special education students, we need to reduce the workload on their teachers so they can use their planning time to craft high-quality lessons instead of being forced to use this time for paperwork.

District 4

Shebra Evans



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

The superintendent needs to be a visionary leader. I believe this is an important attribute at this critical time. In this moment, MCPS employees need to know the path ahead and feel inspired and empowered to do the work. The strategic plan includes the vision, but clearly articulating it shows where interests and values align. Good communicator, instructional leader and relationship builder. Building back trust will include a variety of things. Just a few are: budget needs to be as easy as possible for people to read and understand. Communication needs to be done early and often. Two-way with adequate input from community members to know and respond in a way conducive for them. Monitoring student progress needs to continue openly with honest dialogue. This will indicate if the system is receiving a return on investment in programs and at the same time allow for any course corrections, if necessary.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

It's important to take the feedback of community members into consideration. We hear from a variety of people including staff, families and students around policies, practices and programs. The Montgomery County Jewish Educators Alliance gave great feedback on a few areas concerning their members and Jewish community as a whole. One was to hire an individual that could solely devote time to serious incidents not just limited to antisemitism. In addition, they offered the suggestion of creating a policy on hate and bias because it is not specifically addressed or called out as explicitly in Board Policy ACA: Nondiscrimination, Equity and Cultural Proficiency. Another idea was to create a group that could regularly give feedback and recommendations around the particular experiences of various community groups being targeted or with additional expertise to the school system.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

I believe hate and bias training that includes antisemitism is necessary for all employees, including board members. It would be good to include as part of the mandatory employee training given prior to the start of each school year. Every employee has to take the training before being able to enter a school building. The training will be offered beginning in the summer of 2024.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

The social media best practices clearly lay out the code of conduct, user responsibilities for computer systems, electronic information and so on. It specifically lists all social media platforms and how to use them in your personal and professional manner. It even gives examples of what could have an adverse effect

on employment. I do believe the system can go a step further and add the policy to the mandatory compliance training. The training is offered and required before the start of each school year.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

The school system can always do more to strengthen the education for students in the area of social studies. Many of our students don't see themselves in the history being taught and MCPS can and must do better.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

It is always important to have a curriculum that meets the needs of all students. I am not in favor of opting out of curricula that builds a child's empathy and respect towards an experience that might be different from their own. That includes books or any other materials used in a classroom or library.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

Using the internal accountability model to measure student progress at the classroom, district and for state assessments will allow frequent monitoring at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Couple this information with the systems ability to disaggregate data by race and poverty and you unmask disparities that exist for Black and Brown students impacted by poverty and all other students impacted by poverty. MCPS is one of a handful of districts disaggregating data by both race and poverty. This provides a targeted approach for determining if students are learning, are they learning enough, how do we know and if not, why not. The Board is more frequently monitoring the progress of both math and literacy. This will help ensure we are seeing how changes being implemented around differentiation of resources, building staff capacity and implementing accountability structures are leading to improved outcomes and practices.

Bethany S. Mandel



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

No response.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

MCPS requires several critical reforms to address the alarming surge of antisemitism. In the short term, implementing stricter consequences for those engaging in antisemitic behavior is imperative, as the current reliance on restorative justice approaches has proven insufficient. Enhanced incident tracking and unequivocal condemnation from school leadership are also essential steps to reassure the community. In the longer term, it is imperative to integrate Jewish history and heritage lessons into social studies and English curricula, alongside accurate presentations of Israel's history and societal contributions. Lastly, establishing an advisory group comprised of Jewish stakeholders would facilitate the development of district-wide programs and offer insights into methods of combating antisemitism.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

To effectively combat antisemitism within MCPS, staff must possess the ability to recognize it and effectively address it. This necessitates a clear definition of antisemitism, encompassing its deep-rooted historical tropes, demonizing stereotypes, and the application of double standards to Jews and Israel. Providing comprehensive training for educators and staff on these matters is crucial for fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

Free speech, while valued, is not without limitations, especially when considering that individuals often represent the institutions they belong to, even in

their personal capacities. This responsibility weighs particularly heavily on school employees, given the potential impact on students. It is imperative for staff to refrain from sharing anything that could be construed as prejudiced, divisive, or inciting, as it risks disrupting the safe and inclusive atmosphere of the classroom.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

Maryland stands among the minority of states not mandating Holocaust education, despite evidence showcasing its positive impact on fostering positive attitudes towards Jewish communities. It is, therefore, no coincidence that Maryland ranks near the top in the country for antisemitic incidents. The onus falls on local boards of education to implement substantive Holocaust curriculum, a step long overdue for MCPS. Beyond recounting the atrocities faced by Jew during WWII, lessons should delve into the historical context leading up to the Holocaust and its link to the antisemitism of today. Alarming, even our elementary schools are not untouched by rising antisemitism, emphasizing the urgent need for age-appropriate, comprehensive Holocaust education even for our youngest learners. This should involve dedicated lessons, required books, educational documentaries, and the inclusion of Holocaust survivors and their descendants as guest speakers.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

Schools have always had to make choices regarding the academic merit as well as the appropriateness of books in terms of age level and content to include in the curriculum and the library's holdings. This current debate about books is not about banning as all these books are readily available either in public libraries or for purchase. Reasonable people can disagree about whether certain books are appropriate or not for school usage, but MCPS needs to ensure that all necessary stakeholders in our children's education, teachers, administrators, and parents, are part of the review process in selecting books that are academically rigorous and appropriate age-wise for our children.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

MCPS made the unprecedented decision to close schools for over a year, a move that disproportionately affected minority and low-income students as well as those with disabilities. The ramifications of this prolonged closure exacerbated existing educational inequities and widened the achievement gap. Now, more than ever, we require a leader who will champion fairness, prioritize merit-based policies, and ensure accountability within our education system. It's imperative that every student, regardless of their background, has equal access to quality education and the opportunity to thrive academically.

Laura M. Stewart



What qualities are most important in a new superintendent? How can the new superintendent and the Board rebuild families' and employees' trust in MCPS leadership?

The new superintendent must first be a clear and honest communicator. It is paramount that the new leader rebuilds the trust that has been broken. The new leader needs to have an open door policy so that employees have the assurance that ongoing problems will not be hidden from the top of the management chain. We also need an unbiased individual that can assess the talent we have in the central office and MCPS, and where we have opportunities to attract experienced administrators from outside the county. These first qualities concentrate on management capabilities. MCPS also needs a leader that is an expert in effective curricula and committed to equity initiatives. We need a proven leader that has been able to reduce achievement and opportunity gaps while raising all tides.

What, if anything, do you think the Board should be doing to address rising antisemitism within MCPS that it has not done thus far?

MCPS should promote and have goals to implement the ADL No Place for Hate program at all of our

schools. It is also imperative that we require training on antisemitism at our schools. See the answer below. In order to address antisemitism in school culture and other forms of hate and violence, I suggest that each school have Safety and School Climate Action Teams. These should include representation from all segments of the school community. They should have a checklist, conduct surveys, and address the individual issues at their school. The report should be sent to the Superintendent and the BOE with requests for action which would inform budgeting.

What is your position on mandatory training on antisemitism and anti-Zionism for MCPS teachers and for members of the Board of Education?

It is important to have mandatory training on antisemitism in order to inform teachers and the board about the history of bias and tropes that exist in our society. I do not believe that criticism of Israel or showing support for Palestinian people should be considered as antisemitic, but vilifying the very word "Zionism" can cause a harmful climate for Jewish students. Students speaking up for peace need space to do that, especially since many have family in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. There needs to be training on how to speak for peace in a way that does not cross over into a place that voices against Israeli or Palestinian people's very existence.

What is your position on MCPS' current employee social media policy?

The current employee social media policy is too vague to be useful. I would recommend a more comprehensive policy so that teachers have clear guidance. The policy must be enforced evenly. The guiding principle for MCPS must be that all staff and students feel safe in school, no matter their religion, nationality, gender, sexuality, or race. There must be adequate employee training as mentioned above so that there isn't inadvertent harm done via social media. Staff must also be afforded free speech within certain boundaries which would be expected when serving in a public position.

Do you think Holocaust education should be strengthened within MCPS and if so, what practices can be adopted to promote improved consistency and accountability?

Yes, it needs to be strengthened. Work with JCRC and other Jewish organizations to develop a required training, to be delivered every year. MCPS central office should track and follow up with principals to assure that training was delivered with fidelity. There is an attempt in online spaces to spread disinformation on the Holocaust. Youth are drawn to these spaces through "edgy" humor and MCPS should teach how disinformation is spread. There should be a multipronged approach including student lead activities and professional development.

What is your position on banning books based on content, and allowing student opt-outs related to certain books read or discussed in class?

I do not support banning books nor do I support opt-out policies. I support a common inclusive curriculum for all students and do not support opting out beyond what is required by state law. A truly inclusive curriculum should include depictions of our diverse community and cultures, including religion, nationality, gender, LGBTQ+, and race. I believe that exposure through the curriculum will promote greater understanding.

Education equity continues to be an enormous challenge for MCPS. What policies would you advocate in order to address the deep-rooted, significant academic disparities experienced by Black, Brown, low-income and disabled students?

We must implement best practices to significantly shrink the achievement and opportunity gap, focusing on third grade literacy, more professional development for delivering math content, quality tutoring using private-public partnerships, fully implementing community schools, and expanding CTE and magnet programs. We need to work on developing MOU's so that MCPS can take advantage of available grants. I agree with the Black and Brown Coalition's call for an early warning system and learning plans for children who fall below grade level. I have been an advocate of shifting the burden of proof to MCPS when parents or guardians are attempting to receive special education services. We need to hire more paraeducators and look at enhancing their compensation. It is also important to have a diverse MCPS workforce. I would prioritize "grow your own" programs for current employees and students in order to take advantage of our diverse talent.

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