

Our Revolution Maryland Questionnaire for U.S. Congressional Candidates, MD - District 8

All Our Revolution Maryland endorsements are based on the input from those that live in the community. An Our Revolution Maryland endorsement begins with a recommendation from one of the official Our Revolution Maryland local groups. All questions and candidate responses will be made available to the public.

1.Explain, based on life experiences and accomplishments, why you believe you are qualified to represent Maryland's 8th Congressional District in the House of Representatives.

Well, I've done it for more than a year now so I'm getting more and more qualified all the time! I serve as Vice-Ranking Member on the House Judiciary Committee, which is supposed to protect the Constitution and civil rights and civil liberties of the people, so I am well-prepared by my experience as a professor of constitutional law for more than a quarter-century at American University Washington College of Law and my decade of service as a Maryland State Senator representing District 20 and leading the floor fights for marriage equality, abolition of the death penalty, marijuana decriminalization, restoration of voting rights for former prisoners, reform of mandatory minimums in drug cases, the National Popular Vote, comprehensive gun safety (serving under Senator Brian Frosh), toughened drunk driving laws, bankruptcy reform and strong consumer rights legislation. I also serve on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, where I have been a staunch advocate for the besieged federal workforce, a relentless champion of public integrity against the pervasive corruption of the Trump Administration and a good friend to the disenfranchised people of Washington D.C., whose local government is constantly attacked and overridden by right-wing agendas pressed by other people's representatives. As a master of parliamentary floor procedure, I have been able to help the Democratic Caucus move things against the odds.

I also serve on the House Committee on Administration, which controls the budgets of the House Committees, oversees Congress and the Library of Congress and the federal museums, and also regulates election law, which has been one of my main focal points as a constitutional law scholar. I wrote a bestselling book on right-wing judicial activism and the assault on democratic rights called *Overruling Democracy: The Supreme Court versus the American People* (2003) and published and litigated widely in the field. I am a leading champion for the National Popular Vote, sweeping campaign finance reform and overthrow of *Citizens United*, replacement of the right-wing gerrymandering regime with independent redistricting commission and principles of proportional representation, and strong defense of voting rights against Republican efforts to deny, suppress and undermine them.

Despite the deep polarization in Congress and the absolute refusal of the Republicans to involve Democrats in a meaningful legislative process, I have posted some legislative successes in my first year in Congress. I was able to create a broad bipartisan coalition to reject Attorney General Sessions' outrageous efforts to promote manipulative and unconstitutional civil asset forfeiture policies by law enforcement across the country. I played an active part in a victorious coalition effort to stop the Trump Administration's attempt to slash \$6 billion in the NIH budget, replacing it with a \$2 billion increase. I worked with Republicans and my Democratic colleague Jackie Speier to pass a strong anti-sexual harassment bill for Capitol Hill employees and I have managed several bills successfully on the House floor. I have acted in general as a legislative strategist and political organizer for progressive opposition to the Trump agenda, including his campaign to wipe out the Affordable Care Act, and have been working hard both in Congress and in my district to press for passage of a clean Dream Act, to defend Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid and to stop the plunder of our budget for special-interest rip-offs and an unjustifiably gargantuan defense budget.

I am an avid practitioner of responsive and rapid constituent service and bring the same passion and commitment to that task as I do to my legislative priorities. In my first year in office, my district office has successfully closed hundreds of cases, whether Social Security or VA, Medicare or immigration, and I have organized or appeared at hundreds of community events in the 8th, including town meetings, rallies, speeches, lectures and school visits. I believe my office is setting a standard for excellence and commitment in constituent service.

As Congressional Progressive Caucus Vice Chair and its Liaison to New Members, I have helped to shape a strong fighting agenda for progressives and to mobilize a new generation of support for progressive values and priorities across the country. I have continued and expanded Democracy Summer and in 2018 plan to raise \$1 million to bring Democracy Summer, which educates and mobilizes high school and college-age students to be strong actors in Democratic campaigns, into a dozen swing districts across America to help win back Congress. I am also a Senior Whip for the House Democratic Caucus.

I feel that the combination I provide of progressive constitutional and political philosophy with relentless grassroots activism is what the doctor ordered for Democrats in 2018.

2a.If you are elected, what ethical principles or values will guide your public service? Support your answer with examples of how such principles or values have guided you in the past.

I have always run against the odds by standing up for strong progressive democracy and uncompromising ethical integrity. When I first ran for the State Senate in 2006, it was against a 32-year incumbent and President Pro Tem of the Maryland Senate who had worked to expand

the death penalty, pass a pro-Iraq War Resolution and deregulate electricity, driving everyone's bills up 70%. I said I wanted to run to change the Democratic Party with a sweeping progressive agenda, including abolition of the death penalty, restoration of voting rights to ex-felons, a minimum wage increase, passage of marriage equality, comprehensive gun safety and so on. At my kickoff, a woman said, "Great speech, Jamie, loved it. But one thing—take out all that stuff in there about gay marriage because it's never going to happen and even the gay candidates don't talk about it and it makes you sound like you're really extreme, like you're not in the political center." And I said, "it's not my ambition to be in the *political* center, which blows around with the wind; it's my ambition to be in the *moral* center. That's why I'm a Democrat and that's why I'm a progressive. Our job is to find the moral center the best we can and then bring the political center to us." And that has been the public philosophy I have brought with me both to Annapolis and to Washington.

When I ran for Congress in 2016, it was the most expensive Congressional primary in history, with more than \$21 million spent by David Trone, Kathleen Matthews, me and six others. I was outspent 9-1 and more than 25-1 on TV ads. But it made no difference because we ran a sweeping grassroots campaign everywhere based on my record in Annapolis and strong progressive values. My mantra was: "Public office is something you earn, not something you buy." In the face of unprecedented spending on TV ads, we had more individual donors and knocked on more doors than any candidate in the history of our district and we had 167 events in people's homes and backyards and rec rooms. This was a triumph for grassroots progressive politics.

I reject with every fiber of my being the Trumpian model of government as a money-making operation for one man, one family or one class. I believe public officials must act always with the public interest in mind and should forswear private profit as an activity and motivation while in public life.

I believe in intellectual honesty and political passion in public life. I favor diversity, integration and gender equality and fought successfully for a sweeping package of reforms to stop sexual harassment in Congress.

I believe in trying to bring out the best in everyone and not giving up on anyone. As a middle child, I try to bring people together whenever possible.

My father taught me this principle in life: when everything looks hopeless, you are the hope. When everything looks dark, you must bring the light.

2b. Will you support and work to adopt the Democratic Party Unity Reform Commission recommendations?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

2c. Do you support small donor campaign match legislation for all Maryland elections?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

As a Constitutional Law Professor for 25 years, I am a strong advocate for campaign finance reform at the both the state and national level. I am a passionate critic of Citizens United and the Roberts Court's systematic deregulation of big money in politics. I was the sole academic witness called by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on June 3, 2014 in favor of the Democrats' constitutional amendment, which every Democrat in Congress then voted to support. I have written numerous articles and reports for People for the American Way debunking the campaign finance dogmas of what I call the "corporate Court" in the Citizens United era. As a State Senator I successfully introduced legislation in Maryland requiring outside spenders to disclose their spending in Maryland races, and wrote a letter to Congress urging a constitutional amendment to reverse Citizens United that was signed by a majority of the General Assembly. As a member of Congress, I am a proud co-sponsor of the small donor-driven Government By the People Act which establishes a 6-1 matching-program and encourages small dollar donations. Additionally, I introduced 'Get Foreign Money Out of U.S. Elections Act' (H.R. 1615) which would close a campaign finance loophole that allows foreign-owned, foreign-controlled, and foreign-influenced business corporations to funnel unlimited cash into U.S. elections. I will continue to work to repeal special-interest sweetheart legislation that costs the public billions and will seek to rebuild a statutory wall of separation between corporate treasury wealth and public elections.

CIVIL RIGHTS

3a. Will you support HR 2840 (Automatic Voter Registration)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

As a State Senator, I was a key force in restoring the voting rights of ex-felons, successfully introduced legislation to lower the voter registration age to 16, and steered the nation's first National Popular Vote law to passage.

As a member of Congress, I support HR 2840 (Automatic Voter Registration) and all legislation that makes it easier for citizen to participate in the democratic process.

3b. Describe any other federal legislation and policy changes that you support in order to address the ongoing effects of slavery, racism, colonialism, and discrimination on people of color in America today.

I favor strong civil rights enforcement, repeal of gerrymandering and its replacement with systems of proportional representation, statehood for the people of Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico, universal higher education affordability and access and universal health care in a single-payer system.

EDUCATION

4a. Will you support HR 1880 (College for All Act)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

Yes, I am a proud co-sponsor of HR 1880 (College for All Act). As a Constitutional Law Professor for over 25 years and father of three, I believe strongly in the value of higher education and the importance of making it available to all even if everyone does not want to participate.

4b. What other legislation or other policy changes do you support in order to make college and graduate school affordable for poor, working-class, and middle-class Americans and to alleviate the crushing loan debt that many students and alumni are facing?

Student loan debt should be dischargeable in bankruptcy; we need to increase the minimum wage to \$15; and federal aid to universities and colleges should be conditioned on their submission of plans to make tuition affordable and accessible to all students.

HEALTH CARE

5a. Do you support a single-payer universal health care system?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

I have been a long-time champion of single-payer health care. I believe in a modern democracy, good health care is not only a basic right of citizenship, it is a precondition for effective citizenship. While I believe the Affordable Care Act is a significant and historic breakthrough, and I will continue to defend the ACA against Republican's attacks, I believe we can do better and should work for a more democratic and cost-effective system that reduces serious health inequities in the country, upholds women's reproductive freedom, and promotes healthy nutrition and diet, exercise, and preventive health care for all Americans.

5b. Will you support HR 676 (Medicare for All)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

Yes, I am a proud co-sponsor of the HR 676 (Medicare for All). I believe that all people should have access to affordable quality healthcare, which should be a universal social good and a right of citizenship.

If you answered no, what other legislation or other policy changes do you support in order to ensure that all Americans have access to quality affordable health care?

5c. What legislation will you support or introduce to prevent and treat opioid abuse, as well as punish irresponsible pharmaceutical purveyors of opioid and other addictive painkillers?

Just a few weeks ago, I joined my colleague Jerrold Nadler in sending a letter to Chairman Bob Goodlatte urging him to hold a real hearing to appropriately examine the ongoing opioid epidemic in America. We requested a hearing “to comprehensively examine the ongoing opioid epidemic. In 2016, more than 42,000 people died of opioid overdoses, which equates to 115 people dying every day of preventable causes. On October 26, 2017, President Trump declared the opioid epidemic a Nationwide Public Health Emergency. At the time, you stated that ‘the House Judiciary Committee will continue to review our nation’s laws to determine if more resources are needed to address this crisis.’ Shortly thereafter, on November 1, 2017, the President’s Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis released its final report setting forth 56 specific recommendations to address the ongoing epidemic. It is long past due that the Committee held a hearing to examine these issues and how we can work in bipartisan manner to consider comprehensive measures to combat the opioid epidemic.” The GOP has little or nothing to advance the 56 recommendations in the report, most of which are excellent but remain simply words on paper now. We need to act.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

6. Will you support HR 771 (Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance [EACH Woman] Act)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

Discuss your stance on reproductive rights, including access to contraceptives and abortion services.

Yes, I am a proud co-sponsor of HR 771 (Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance [EACH Woman] Act).

In the Maryland General Assembly, when anti-choice legislators tried to eliminate Medicaid funding for abortion, I went to the floor, blew the whistle on this outrageous sneak attack, and led the successful effort to defeat the bill. During my time in the state legislature, I

also introduced a bill to require that so-called pregnancy centers that fail to refer patients for abortion services or provide comprehensive contraceptive services must disclose that they are not offering medical advice and that the information they provide may not be factually accurate.

As a proud member of the pro-choice Caucus, I am pleased to be able to continue to build upon my pro-choice record in Congress and believe that all women should have access to contraceptives and abortion services. When reproductive rights come under attack in the Judiciary or Oversight Committees, I am the first Member on my feet to object and blow the whistle.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

7. Will you support HR 3227 (Justice is Not For Sale Act)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

Yes, I am a proud co-sponsor of HR 3227 (Justice is Not For Sale Act).

What other federal legislation do you support in order to make the American criminal justice system fairer, less costly, and more effective at rehabilitation?

Throughout my political career I have been a passionate champion of criminal justice reform. In the Maryland General Assembly, I sponsored and was the Senate floor leader for abolition of the death penalty in 2013; and, working across the aisle with Republican colleagues, led the Senate in passing a series of historic criminal justice reforms in the 2015 Session, including reform of mandatory minimums in drug cases and the Maryland Second Chance Act, giving people convicted of nonviolent misdemeanors the opportunity to shield their convictions from public view if they have been clean for a period of at least three years. As the vice-ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, I regularly and passionately defend civil rights and voting rights, civil liberties and reproductive freedom, the rights of citizens and the rights of immigrants, criminal justice reform and access to justice for all. I am a strong critic of the abuses of our interminable and repressive War on Drugs and have been a powerful advocate of marijuana policy reform.

ENVIRONMENT

8.What federal legislation or other policy changes do you support in order (A) to reduce America’s carbon footprint and (B) to protect and maintain America’s remaining wilderness, parks, open spaces, and wetlands and (C) recognize, ameliorate, and reduce the sources of Climate Change?

I believe climate change isn’t just a public policy issue but the entire context in which we have to make all our public policy decisions. In the State Senate, I worked hard to pass tough legislation to increase the renewable energy standards in our state energy portfolio, most recently cosponsoring and pressing for passage of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act to set a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2030; to pass the Green Maryland Act, which requires state agencies and departments to use recycling and composting plans and green purchasing and acquisition rules; and to create a state Climate Change Commission to take action to deal with the looming perils and profound damage already caused by climate change.

I believe we must call for a dramatic systematic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to slow and halt climate change while investing in alternative clean energy technologies like solar and wind power that will permit us to break our dangerous carbon addiction.

I believe carbon pollution can be reduced most cost-effectively through market-based approaches that put a price on carbon. Therefore, we need a carbon tax along with market-based solutions to stimulate renewable energy development and steadily and dramatically reduce carbon fuel consumption. We must have a tax-and-dividend policy and invest the newly generated revenue into the green economy.

We must also work aggressively to preserve our open spaces, parks, and wilderness through further legislation.

9.Do you support or oppose TransCanada’s proposed pipeline under the C&O Canal and Potomac River at Hancock, Maryland?

_____ Support

____X____ Oppose

Please elaborate.

Environmental safety must be the first thing we consider. I do not support activities that may harm the people and communities of Maryland.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

10a. In order to reduce wealth and income inequality and poverty - including unemployment, homelessness, and food insecurity – (A) Do you support raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour or above? (B) What additional steps do you believe the federal government should take to reduce income and wealth inequality?

Yes, I support raising the Federal minimum wage and am a co-sponsor on current legislation to do so. Additionally, during my time in the Maryland General Assembly, I helped lead the fight for the long overdue minimum wage increase.

I believe we must continue to protect and strengthen entitlement programs. We need to reinvigorate the right to organize and strengthen the power of working people to join unions and to engage in collective bargaining. My website has a complete plan on how to do that. I am a serious champion of labor law reform and a revitalized labor movement.

10b. Will you support HR 15 (Raise the Wage Act)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

Yes, I am a proud co-sponsor of HR 15 (Raise the Wage Act) and believe it is important to ensure that all Americans are provided a living wage.

10c. Will you support HR 1144 (Inclusive Prosperity Act) tax on Wall Street?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

Yes, I am a proud co-sponsor of HR 1144 (Inclusive Prosperity Act. I believe we must hold Wall Street accountable.

10d. Provide **specific** details of how you would attack the on-going economic and social disparities which continue to impact women, including the gender pay gap, inadequate Social Security benefits particularly for elderly women, the lack of paid family leave in many cases, the lack of adequate child care, and discrimination in all of its forms against Women of Color.

I am a strong champion of equal pay legislation, and led the floor fight for Maryland's new equal pay law in 2016 with my colleague Susan Lee. I fought hard to pass anti-sexual harassment legislation in Congress this year. I am a champion for paid family leave. I am working with Cynthia Terrell and Project 2020 at FairVote to dramatically increase the number of women in Congress and public office across the country. As State Senator and leader of the District 20 delegation, I was proud that we went from being an all-white delegation to one with the first African-American woman Delegate from our district (Jheanelle Wilkins), the first Asian-American Delegate from our district (David Moon), the first woman Delegate ever to serve as House Ways and Means Committee Chair (Sheila Hixson), and the first African-American State Senator in the history of Montgomery County. If you talk to any of these officials, you will find that I was an active leader in promoting this kind of diversity, inclusion and solidarity within our delegation.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE/CORPORATE INFLUENCE

11. Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to repeal the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*?

Yes

No

Explain your answer above and include any other solutions that you propose for the problem of undue influence over legislators exercised by large corporations and the very wealthy.

As stated previously, I am a passionate critic of *Citizens United* and the Roberts Court's systematic deregulation of big money in politics. I was the sole academic witness called by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on June 3, 2014 in favor of the Democrats' constitutional amendment, which every Democrat in Congress then voted to support. I have written numerous articles and reports for People for the American Way debunking the campaign

finance dogmas of what I call the “corporate Court” in the “the Citizens United era.” As a State Senator I successfully introduced legislation in Maryland requiring outside spenders to disclose their spending in Maryland races, and wrote a letter to Congress urging a constitutional amendment to reverse *Citizens United* that was signed by a majority of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, I introduced ‘Get Foreign Money Out of U.S. Elections Act’ (H.R. 1615) which would close a campaign finance loophole that allows foreign-owned, foreign-controlled, and foreign-influenced corporations to funnel unlimited cash into U.S. elections. I believe strongly that we must continue to work to repeal special-interest sweetheart legislation that costs the public billions and seek to rebuild a statutory wall of separation between corporate treasury wealth and public elections.

I support the small donor-driven Government By the People Act (Rep. Sarbanes) which establishes a 6-1 matching-program and encourages small dollar donations.

12.To your knowledge, have any lobbyists, CEOs, or corporate lawyers contributed to your campaign? If so, please identify them and the steps you have taken to ensure that you will not vote on any matters in which they or any such donors have a financial interest.

All information is publicly available on the Federal Election Commission website; I don’t know off the top of my head and it would take me hours to find this info and it has taken me hours already to answer this far and you are demanding my questionnaire! My governing passion is always the common good and the best interest of my constituents, some of whom may belong to those three groups, but I can assure you that, if there are any, they are a small minority of my thousands of donors.

SEXISM/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

13.What federal legislation or policy changes do you support in order (A) to address the disadvantages that women face due to the ongoing effects of sexism and (B) to stop sexual harassment in the workplace? Include in your answer actions that Congress should take to protect staffers, employees and interns.

I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of The Member and Employee Training and Oversight On (ME TOO) Congress Act. This bill requires more transparency, revamps the flawed complaint process, and ensures better support for victims and whistleblowers.

As a State Senator, when the U.S. Supreme Court made it harder for women to prevail under federal law when denied equal pay for equal work, I introduced and moved to passage the Lilly Ledbetter Civil Rights Restoration Act of 2009, which reformed the statute of limitations for victims of gender discrimination to start only when the victim learned of the discrimination.

HOMOPHOBIA

14. Describe or identify federal legislation that you would support in order to address the discrimination faced by the LGBTQIA community.

I support the Equality Act which calls for the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the nondiscrimination protections provided by the federal Civil Rights Act. We must ensure that the rights of LGBTQ Americans are protected. I led the State Senate floor fights for marriage equality and for equal civil rights for transgendered people in 2013 and 2014 and was named local Pride Hero of the Year in 2013 and rode at the head of the parade in Washington! I am always there for the LGBTQ community in every context.

FOREIGN POLICY

15a. Identify changes to our foreign policy that you would support in Congress. Include in your thoughts on (A) America's recent and continuing military actions in the Middle East, (B) the number and size of American military bases in foreign countries, (C) international trade deals, (D) providing emergency humanitarian aid versus nation-building.

I favor diplomacy and peace-building over militarism and war. I favor reduction of our bloated military budget. I favor free trade when it is fair trade and I believe that we should use trade policy to uplift, rather than undermine, our environmental, labor, workplace, consumer protection, and human rights laws and standards. Trade should bring the world together around a common agenda of uplifting humanity rather than driving us into a permanent race to the bottom that impoverishes and degrades domestic populations, including our own.

15b. Do you support or oppose President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and his order that the U.S. Embassy be relocated to Jerusalem?

_____ Support

_____X___ Oppose

Please elaborate.

Although Jerusalem is obviously Israel's capital and the site of the Knesset and always will be, I believe that this was a characteristically rash, provocative, ill-advised and premature move by President Trump simply meant to score political points without any serious planning as to what its practical implications and political consequences are. It does nothing to advance the peace process and the coming of a two-state solution, and therefore forfeits and undercuts American moral authority and diplomatic leadership in the Middle East.

15c. Discuss actions and positions you would take which would be designed to reduce or eliminate the United States' reliance on military force.

We need to defend and reinvest in the State Department, the Peace Corps, the National Institute of Peace, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and other agencies that promote diplomacy, human rights and international cooperation and commerce.

CONCLUSION

16. What additional information would you like Our Revolution Maryland to consider when we are making our endorsements decisions? Check out my voting record and record of political leadership in our state.

Is there anything you would like to add?

I would be honored to have your endorsement.