

Our Revolution Baltimore City/County

Delegate and State Senate Endorsement Questionnaire

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1. How does your experience, along with your life experiences, qualify you for this position?

I've lived in District 10 all my life. I grew up in Reisterstown and attended Baltimore County Public Schools. My parents immigrated from El Salvador in the 1980s, fleeing the widespread poverty and violence of the Salvadoran Civil War. They travelled 2,000 miles in extreme heat, evading the cartels, and almost drowning as they crossed the Rio Grande. They arrived here with nothing except the hope of building a brighter future for me and my sister. As a first-generation American, my upbringing wasn't easy. When I was a child, I experienced the poverty and food insecurity that millions of Americans face today. My parents couldn't afford childcare, so I went to work with my mother every day and watched how hard she worked to provide for us.

But I would come to learn just how much my parents sacrificed for my future. My parents always told me "Just because you start with nothing, doesn't mean you have nothing to offer." Through the years, my dad worked multiple jobs while getting his degree from CCBC. My mom started as a janitor and worked her way up through various kitchens. Today, both of my parents are successful small business owners. But I know that my parents' success story is not one that is accessible to all. I know that many Marylanders continue to struggle in poverty and food insecurity, with indifference from our government. I'm running for state delegate to fight for working families just like mine, by strengthening public systems so the next generation of Americans don't share the struggle and hardship that my parents faced.

If elected, I would be the 1st Latino to hold state office in Baltimore County and the youngest Democratic legislator in state history. To me, this race is about what the future of politics can look like for our communities. There's a unique opportunity for Baltimore County to be more reflective of its population and to have the future

generations of leaders involved in our government. Today in Annapolis, the average age of a legislator is 53, which means they haven't attended a public-school class in 35 years. I understand what students are experiencing and am uniquely positioned to address these needs in Annapolis. I am also committed to using my elected office to organize young people around the state.

2. What will be the principles or values that guide your public service?

Leading with integrity and transparency will be my main values as a delegate. A functioning representative democracy requires leaders to listen to their constituents and answer solely to them. As delegate, this will always be what guides me in discussions, policy implementation, and when casting votes.

3. Do you identify as a progressive candidate? If so, what specifically makes you a progressive candidate for this political office?

Yes, I do, I believe there is an enormous sense of urgency to address the issues that face us today. It will require bold, progressive action that meets the moment of our time. As delegate, I will support and lead the progressive voice to ensure that working families and communities are at the forefront of every bill I vote on. It will require me to do the hard things that many politicians may think are costly, but as someone who has faced the uncertainty that many are facing today, there is no room for complacency from our elected officials, our future is at stake. Progressive candidates need to be community organizers, and I fit the bill.

Climate Change/Green New Deal

4. Do you acknowledge the existence of climate change and the sense of urgency to address this issue on state and local levels?

Yes, climate change is an existential threat to not just Maryland, but the world. Climate change needs to come front and center in democratic politics so we can preserve a future for the next generations. We have 8 years to prevent irreversible damage. I will bring this sense of urgency to Annapolis.

5. What is your position regarding a Green New Deal at the state level?

I absolutely support a Green New Deal for Maryland. By repairing our environment, we can revitalize our economy and tackle inequity—we can create hundreds of thousands of good-paying union jobs; we can replenish

marine life populations to stimulate our fishing industries; we can better support local farmers within the community; we can plant millions of trees and build green spaces and community gardens. A big idea like this isn't new for our country--we've done this before with the New Deal, and we can do it again with the Green New Deal. I'd like that to start with Maryland.

6. In the previous legislative session, House Bill 33, known as the Climate Crisis and Education Act, was not passed. If this bill or a similar bill is introduced in the next legislative session, what is your position?

I would support this legislation. Immediate climate action is dire.

7. What is your position regarding the electrification of renovated buildings as well as newly constructed buildings in Maryland?

The state government should be a leader in green energy, including how it constructs buildings. All buildings should be constructed without harming the environment and should meet standards that are eco-friendly and energy efficient.

8. How would you vote on the Climate Solutions Act?

I would vote in favor of the bill.

9. How would you vote on the Environment Human Rights Amendment?

I would vote in favor of the bill.

Health Care

10. What is your position regarding a single-payer system (such as Medicare for All) at the state level?

Healthcare is a human right. I will support such a system. Every Marylander deserves healthcare that includes dental, mental health, hearing, vision, and childbirth. Medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy. Absolutely no one should go into debt for medical issues beyond their control. Additionally, I will fight to hold insurance and pharmaceutical companies accountable and push to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

11. Would you vote for paid sick leave?

Yes

Police Reform

12. Johns Hopkins University (JHU) is moving forward with establishing a private university-based police department. What is your position regarding the establishment of a private university-based police department at JHU?

I do not support this measure.

13. What proposed legislation or action will you take to address police reform on a state and local level?

I will champion criminal justice reform measures such as legalizing cannabis, eliminating cash bail, ending the school-to-prison pipeline, automatic expungements for misdemeanor offenses, ending qualified immunity, and the demilitarization of state and local police forces.

14. Would you vote to end debtor prisoners?

Yes, it is appalling to imprison anyone for failing to pay a debt.

Drug Policy Reform/Legalization of Marijuana

15. What is your position regarding the decriminalization of marijuana possession and use in Maryland?

It must be decriminalized, and misdemeanor possession charges must be expunged.

16. What is your position regarding the legalization of marijuana for recreational use in Maryland?

I am in favor of legalizing cannabis and investing its revenue into communities ravaged by the War on Drugs.

17. What is your position regarding the decriminalization of psilocybin and legalization for therapeutic use in Maryland?

I am in favor of decriminalization and legalization for therapeutic use.

Immigrant Rights

18. In the previous legislative session, House Bill 0016, known as the Dignity Not Detention Act, was vetoed by Gov. Hogan. If this bill is reintroduced in the upcoming legislative session, what is your position?

I would vote in favor, and I am glad that it is now law!

19. According to the 2010 US Census, Asian-Americans make up 6.1% of Maryland's population. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in hate crimes nationwide and locally against Asian-Americans. What proposed legislation and action will you take to protect these individuals on a state and local level?

There must be better allocation of funding to support those who are victims of hate crimes. I will support legislation that establishes immediate investigations of instances of hate crimes or discrimination, including measures to create better procedures and training to identify bias in investigations.

20. In recent months, Maryland has become a 'welcome state' in supporting the transition of refugees arriving from Afghanistan. What proposed legislation and action will you take in meeting the immediate needs of Afghan refugees on a state and local level?

Refugees seeking asylum in our state deserve a foundation to grow on. This includes access to healthcare, economic benefits, and housing for them to provide for families and create a new life in our state.

Public Transit

21. In 2018, Gov. Hogan canceled the Red Line. Being that Maryland will have a new governor in 2022, there may be an effort to revive legislation for the Red Line. What is your position regarding the Red Line as a viable transit project in Baltimore?

I support the Red Line.

22. In a 2021 study conducted by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition, it showed racial disparities in Baltimore's transit system. What proposed legislation and specific action will you take to address this issue?

Access to free and expanded public transportation is critical to provide working families with economic opportunities and addressing the climate crisis. We must expand bus, rail, and subway access, to reduce traffic, pollution, and commute times.

Housing

23. In August 2021, Maryland's moratorium on residential eviction expired. What proposed legislation or action will you take to address the issues related to tenants who have fallen behind in paying rent?

I support fighting for rent control to give more power to tenants, raising standards for maintenance & service, and ending water shutoffs. I will also reject developer influence and fight to bring all stakeholders to the table when development is discussed. Building sustainable affordable and public housing is vital and important so that immigrants can have stability and a better chance at succeeding in life. I will also fight to make sure tenants have the legal resources to fight back against exploitation from landlords. Amid this economic crisis, I will fight to prevent working families from evictions.

Consumer Rights

24. How would you vote on auto insurance prices not being tied to zip codes?

I am in favor of eliminating this practice in Maryland. Companies should be required to consider factors like a driver's record and years of experience not their ZIP code.