

Our Revolution Maryland 2022 Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

Responses to Questions will be made Public

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ECOLOGICAL/CLIMATE CRISIS

We face multiple existential threats: a climate crisis with the unprecedented levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, an environmental pollution crisis caused by our extraction and consumption practices, and the limits to growth on a finite planet. There are so many crises in the world, but the threats to the environment and our climate are the most grave. So we begin here.

Our Revolution has endorsed the framework of the Green New Deal, with the twin goals of a transformation to renewable energy and promoting environmental justice and economic equity. Will you support the Green New Deal and any implementing legislation in the upcoming Congress? Describe your vision for moving to renewable energy and transitioning away from fossil fuels. What commitments can you make now to voters, to demand action in Congress where we have seen none for decades? *

I have been working on the Green New Deal, The Green New Deal For Schools and The Red Black and Green New Deal for the past two years in various capacities. I will push for these bills as a member of Congress and I will work to include aspects of these bills in other legislation and Executive Orders. During my time in the MD House I was able to pass more bills than any other member. I know how to use the full process of legislating to bring needed changes for my community.

In the face of a lack of Congressional action, and the Supreme Court now revisiting EPA authority, will you join Our Revolution in calling on President Biden to declare a climate emergency to take actions at the executive level? *

Yes

Are there policies you would favor to move to more sustainable levels of consumption and less environmentally devastating practices and products? *

Absolutely. We have started with the polystyrene ban that I helped write and then implement in Prince George's County. I'd also like to approach how we deal with food waste and looking at procurement processes that promote sustainability.

Besides anthropogenic global warming, what other environmental crises are we facing and how do you propose addressing them? *

Lack of clean water in our communities - we will need to utilize resources from the IIJA to rebuild ground water systems. Cumulative Impact - Looking at areas that have high concentration of air and water pollution and fund programs to remediate.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Will you commit to voting for passage of an increase in the federal minimum wage to at least \$15/hour now (indexed to inflation)? *

Yes

What is your plan for addressing the homelessness crisis? What are your ideas for addressing the crisis in the cost of housing which has many Americans paying more than half their income for housing? *

I have been homeless and understand how the cycle occurs and can be very difficult to break especially when you have children. We need to invest in affordable housing units that help families stabilize. Create national rent control, create a "just-cause" requirement for evictions, and ensuring the right to counsel in housing disputes.

Do you agree that wealth and income inequality are among the most significant problems we face? If so, why do you believe this is happening, and what specific steps would you take to redress this? Would you support changes in tax laws or rate changes? What other policy changes would you advocate for? Please be specific as possible here. *

Yes the wealth and income inequality are one of the most significant problems we face because it's the root of so many other societal problems from housing and food insecurity to education inequalities. The American system was built on inequality and exploitative labor and continues to thrive off that dynamic. I have always legislated from a restorative mindset. So I will work not just on bills but on budget items and how I can work with Federal Agencies to remediate policies and practices that are result from income inequalities. I would absolutely support changes in tax laws or rate changes to help redress the inequality.

What new or repealed laws or regulations would you impose or reinstate on the investment and commercial banking sectors? *

Reinstate Glass-Steagall Act. Implement postal banking.

What steps would you take to protect workers who are trying to organize a union? Do you support the Pro Act? Does it go far enough in your view? If not, what else must we do? *

Yes I support the Pro Act. I do believe that it's a great step in empowering workers. I believe we should work to get the major components passed and then see if work is needed to expand the protections.

Would you support or oppose the Congressional Progressive Caucus' plan to create fairer trade deals? (Read more here: https://progressives.house.gov/_cache/files/d/0/d06e29b1-a19e-48e5-8eba-7ca61b0bba94/D363B2756F3792BAEEC7A33B795604EA.cpc-fair-trade-agenda.pdf) *

Yes

HEALTHCARE/RETIREMENT

What steps do you support to strengthen Social Security and Medicare? *

Protect the retirement age.

Support increasing benefits for seniors to keep up with the high cost of living.

Hold healthcare providers and insurers accountable for cutting costs.

Make sure that seniors get every penny of the benefits that they worked for, and oppose efforts to slash Medicare and Social Security.

Will you join in support of Rep. Jayapal's petition effort to end the Trump/Biden program allowing Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to move Medicare enrollees to for-profit Direct Contracting Entities? *

Yes

Do you support single-payer healthcare - Medicare For All? Please explain your answer. *

Yes, I support Medicare For All.

I support legislation to allow for the importation of drugs from nations that we trust.

I support legislation to allow Medicare to negotiate for more reasonable drug prices.

I support legislation that will allow Americans below the age of 65 to buy into Medicare.

I will fight to reduce pharmaceutical, insurance and hospital fee costs. I previously passed legislation to hold Big Pharma accountable.

LEGAL REFORM

Do you support legalizing marijuana? Why or why not? *

Yes. It's the sound thing to do.

The United States has 5% of the world's population, but 25% of those incarcerated worldwide. Roughly 90% of those in prison have taken plea deals, and even those who get new evidence later are unable to get hearings or convictions overturned. Private prisons further incentivize arrests and incarceration. What steps do you support to reform our Criminal Justice system - police, prosecutors, courts, jails and prisons *

I have worked on Defund The Police projects and advocate moving away from the carceral system.

Our Revolution Maryland has advocated for justice for the human rights attorney Steven Donziger, who is being persecuted by oil and gas 'Goliath' Chevron through the federal court system. See this link for a discussion of the timeline of events in his case:

<https://www.freedonziger.org/timeline-of-the-case>. What steps will you take to rebalance the scales of justice so that 'Davids' like Steven Donziger can bring suit against mega-corporations to seek redress for victims of corporate misconduct, without risking their own freedom? With respect to Donziger, in particular, do you support Congressional hearings and/or Justice Department investigation into possible corruption of process in the Southern District of New York? *

Yes I support Congressional hearings and a DOJ investigation into corruption of process. When prosecutors abuse discretion and corrupt the process it is one of the greatest failures of our system and must be fully addressed.

The federal judiciary is largely composed of pro-corporate/anti-consumer and labor judges appointed by Presidents from both parties. We see this in recent bankruptcy decisions allowing profitable corporations to claw back pension funds from employees and retirees. There are also high-profile abuses of bankruptcy protections, such as the 'Texas Two-Step' to shield assets of billionaire owners and Fortune 500 companies from deserving plaintiffs and claimants. What reforms and court oversight would you support to prevent predatory corporations from abusing judicial process to evade responsibility for egregious conduct injuring thousands and even millions of Americans? *

We have to create a more diverse judiciary.

IMMIGRATION

If you support a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in our country today, please set forth your vision briefly. What other reforms to our immigration system would you advocate going forward? *

Reforming the H1B1 application system.

FOREIGN POLICY

The United States spends more on its military than the next 10 countries combined. That enormous expenditure incentivizes conflict over diplomacy and lobbying by our military-industrial complex to maintain the status quo. In Congress, would you work to reduce our annual military spending? *

Yes we spend far too much on military spending.

ELECTION & PARTY REFORM

Do you support public financing for every election? Why or why not? *

Yes, it opens up the process to allow for a truly representative government.

Do you support or oppose ending the revolving door for elected officials and staffers becoming lobbyists? What will you do about the influence of fossil fuel executives and other industry front-groups on policy-making and elections? *

Yes. I will vote to limit influence.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Two decades into the 21st Century, intolerance and discrimination are still plaguing us, and now, incredibly to many of us, activists on the right are trying to purge our schools of any books or curriculum which would involve an honest accounting of our troubled history of social, racial and ethnic strife, prejudice and even exploitation and genocide. Can we address disparate treatment and intolerance without openly confronting our troubled history and persistent injustices? Looking at the 2021 election in Virginia, it seems that GOP's main electoral talking point this year will continue to be a refusal to even discuss racial inequities, as well as creating new forms of oppression of women and LGBTQ people. As a society and as progressives, how should we formulate a response to these political talking points, and going forward to ensure we can equip each generation to discuss difference and discrimination? *

I don't think we need a response to all of these talking points. We have to stop responding and allowing Republicans to set a tainted agenda. We have to teach our children and each other the truth about the history of this country. We can not back down from mistakes of the past. Our children understand the issues we face today and we can not shrink back from discussing truths with them. There will always be power in truth. We can never let liars set the narrative.

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