

Our Revolution Maryland 2022 Gubernatorial Questionnaire

Responses to Questions will be made Public

Governor Candidate Name *

Peter Franchot

Lt. Governor Candidate Name

Monique Anderson-Walker

Website *

<https://www.franchot.com/>

Do you support legalizing cannabis possession and use in Maryland? If yes, If yes, what steps do you support to provide redress to those individuals and communities that were targeted by police and prosecutors in past years when attempting to enforce laws against the use and non-violent distribution of marijuana? *

In this answer and throughout the questionnaire, I am committed to providing you with answers that I will hold to concretely as governor, rather than saying yes to everything only to backtrack once in office. I have demonstrated a consistent and unequivocal candor in public conduct, and hope that gives you the assurance that these answers are offered in good faith.

With that being said, I support legalizing cannabis possession. Pending approval via a ballot initiative, I will ensure that the legalization of cannabis contributes to economic growth in communities that have disproportionately borne the brunt of enforcement for cannabis related offenses. This includes setting a floor of 40% participation for MWBEs, to make sure participation is, at a minimum, representative of Maryland's demographics. I will achieve this, in part, by creating an application process for cannabis licensing that is not unduly cumbersome. Application processes that require a significant amount of institutional access and financial largesse bias the process against small businesses, and MWBEs.

Moreover, I will seek to create vertical opportunities within the industry through growing, processing, and dispensing, so that small businesses who invest heavily in securing a license for one aspect of production are not boxed out of the marketplace by larger operations who may choose not to supply or distribute their product.

In conjunction with facilitating equitable participation in the cannabis industry, I will implement a strong regulatory framework that ensures revenue from the industry is spent as the public has been promised over the years so that we do not recreate the need for a "lockbox" as we saw with casino gambling. I will also explore similar opportunities for emerging markets such as sports betting and video lottery terminals.

Regarding the Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 on Police Discipline and Law Enforcement Programs and Procedure - What is your perspective on the final legislation which came out of last year's session? Does it represent real reform and create accountability and transparency? Are you satisfied with the progress at the state level and county efforts counties to respond to and implement the changes directed by the new law? What, if, any changes would you push for as Governor to strengthen the provisions enacted last year? *

The Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 was a critical stepping point to correct the wrongs of the past and develop best practices towards public safety. However, I believe that more work needs to be done. Addressing police misconduct is a defining Civil Rights issue and we cannot settle when it comes to keeping ALL Marylanders safe.

My administration has a dedicated policy within our dedicated Black Agenda, titled A Leveling Playing Field, to address police misconduct. As governor, I will take the following actions:

- Ending all use of no-knock warrants.
 - Study the feasibility of requiring officers who commit acts of aggression against civilians to be required to self-insure in order to reduce the financial burden of misconduct on the state and local government, and spur an end to excessive use of force.
 - Requiring the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to decertify any officer who was fired or resigned while under investigation for misconduct or excessive force.
 - Applying normal Maryland Public Information Act standards to all records on police misconduct, use of force, and civilian complaints against police officers.
 - Expanding independent review of civilian deaths involving police to include use-of-force incidents that result in hospitalization of civilians.
-

Currently courts are operating under a broad directive from the Court of Appeals to consider various options before imposing cash bail. But there is no legislation due to a concerted pressure campaign by the bail bond lobby. Would you prioritize a law limiting or eliminating cash bail for (most) non-violent offenses (with exceptions for clear flight risks)? *

Yes, for non-violent offenders. I am also committed to treating addiction as a public health crisis and will seek to pilot a statewide, pre-arrest diversion program for arrestees who suffer from addiction and have not committed a crime of violence.

Will you support public financing for all statewide offices and for the state legislature to enable everyday citizens to run for office? *

Yes. I am committed to empowering ALL of our citizens in the political process so their voices can be heard. Far too many Marylanders are alienated from the political process. This unfortunate reality takes multiple forms. Some choose not to participate because they feel unrepresented, or that their voices are not heard. Others experience barriers to participation despite their best efforts to avoid them. No matter the case, the alienation is exacerbated by Maryland-centric versions of national problems. Our voters deserve better, and I will ensure our state government rises to meet their needs.

In addition to supporting public financing for all statewide offices, I will introduce and champion legislation that creates a universal, well-run, transparent vote by mail system in which every Marylander receives a ballot via mail that can be returned by mail or drop box. Moreover, Maryland will continue to offer in-person early and Election Day balloting.

Moreover, although we often decry gerrymandering at a national level, Maryland's federal and state legislative districts demonstrate this practice is not some far away specter. By enacting an independent redistricting commission, I will end the practice of politicians picking their voters, and re-orient our politics so that voters pick their politicians. This goes hand-in-hand with my commitment to introduce legislation that would create single member districts for the Maryland House of Delegates - ending the system of nearly unbeatable four-legislator slates, which insulate incumbents from challengers.

Finally, unaffiliated voters, who register to vote but do not choose to affiliate with a political party, are a rapidly growing population in Maryland. This is true for young voters, whose ranks are growing thanks to Maryland's "universal" voter registration system. Under our current system, these voters are only able to participate in General Elections, effectively giving them half the civic voice of their counterparts in the Republican and Democratic parties. These voters, and our youth especially, deserve to be heard. I will introduce legislation that would allow unaffiliated voters to participate in Primary Elections by affiliating with the party of their choice for that election.

Will you support legislation that will enable all county-level offices to be eligible for public financing? *

Yes

Will you support a constitutional amendment to ban appointments and fill vacancies in the General Assembly by special elections as 25 states in the U.S. currently do? *

Yes

Will you advocate on behalf of an effort to establish a statewide office for Public Advocate (and a public fund for candidates)? *

Yes. As I have said, I believe that we need to remove any barriers that prevent the people's voice from being represented.

The last round of state elections raised examples pointing to the insular nature of our judicial elections and the slates which dominate the voting. Would you initiate an effort to reconsider the process for appointing and electing judges in Maryland? *

Yes. Our justice system is fundamental to upholding our democratic values.

Do you support Medicare for All at the federal level? *

Yes. Healthcare is most Marylanders' largest unplanned expense over the course of their lives. Unfortunately, the price tag it comes with often means that while Maryland is home to nation-leading health care providers, access to essential services that preserve health and provide pain-free living is not an option for the approximately hundreds of thousands of Marylanders living without health insurance or for the many more who are underinsured or unable to afford the cost of services even with insurance.

At the state level, I will pilot an expansion of Medicaid coverage to more Maryland residents, and incentives for more providers to serve this population.

I will also pilot an expansion of Maryland's total cost of care model for the commercial insurance market to control the ever-rising cost of premiums, make insurance cheaper, and get better outcomes.

Moreover, information is key to making sure that ALL Marylanders have the coverage they need. An aggressive communications campaign that informs Medicare and Medicaid eligible Marylanders of their eligibility, as far too many Marylanders qualify for coverage, but do not utilize it.

Do you support single-payer health care in Maryland? If elected, will you commit to ask for a legislative study or create an executive agency study of the feasibility of implementing single-payer health coverage in Maryland? *

I believe we need to secure healthcare coverage for every Marylander. I am not certain whether a single-payer health care model is the best model to fund and sustain accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare at a state rather than federal level.

Connecticut has shown that when a state administers Medicaid, administrative costs are slashed. Will you commit to request a federal CMS waiver to remove MCOs from our Medicaid program and have the State administer the program? *

I am open to this, but would premise requesting the waiver on collaborating with Connecticut to see what worked, and whether and how it can be implemented in Maryland. I believe that we need to overview our entire Medicare/Medicaid program to determine how to expand the number of providers who accept the program, and the number of services covered. This includes an expansion for abortion healthcare services.

Will you support corrective legislation to include all workers, including tipped and agricultural workers, in our state's minimum wage law? Do you support HB8 Maryland Family and Medical Leave Insurance program, or an alternative to provide paid parental or medical leave for Maryland workers? *

Yes. During my entire career in public service, my track record is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all people. We need to develop a pathway to finance paid family leave. It ensures that Maryland's workforce is equitable. We need to stop with the rhetoric to ensure that Maryland is a place where families can thrive. Eighty-eight percent of Maryland registered voters believe it's time for paid family leave. I fully support creating a paid medical and family leave insurance program in Maryland.

Do you support workers' rights to organize in the private and public sectors? Will you make it a priority that all public employees be covered by a public employees relations act, similar to the National Labor Relations Act, which has governed work in the private sector for over 80 years?

*

Yes. In my campaign pledges, I make a firm commitment to supporting ALL public employees in securing their right to organize. I have seen in my own agency that this improves communication and coordination across all employment grades, and believe doing so at scale will be a true source of insight and innovation fueled by guidance on state services offered by our state employees. I of course believe private-sector workers should enjoy the same freedoms.

How will you address continuing inequities in school infrastructure and help redress persistent problems like undrinkable water, classrooms without climate control, and mold? *

No student should be in a classroom that does not have the best infrastructure to foster learning. Our education system can be one of our greatest tools for leveling the socio-economic playing field and equipping every Marylander, irrespective of zip code, with the tools they need to live a fulfilling, secure life. Unfortunately, Maryland's students experience significantly different outcomes from our education system for a number of reasons. Maryland's school facilities offer dramatically variable physical infrastructure, including undrinkable water, classrooms without climate control, and mold. If I am elected governor, no school building will suffer from mold, undrinkable water, or classrooms without climate control. I am committed to using the debt capacity of the state to ensure no child attends school in a substandard facility. Moreover, I believe these infrastructure projects should be a path to the middle class for the workers involved, which means pairing them with Community Benefits Agreements and Project Labor Agreements that provide quality of life guarantees and a local hiring focus for the projects.

Education stalwart Dr. Alvin Thornton has said that racism prevented the construction of schools in Prince George's County for 20 years. In order to address the backlog in school construction, the State legislature sanctioned a Public Private Partnership (P3) program for Prince George's - the first P3 program for school construction in the entire nation. Do you think a P3 program is an appropriate way to respond to racism in the county and the state? *

I was the first candidate to come up with a dedicated Black Agenda, titled A Level Playing Field to address the systemic racism within our state. Prince George's County, a majority-minority community has been neglected to receive investments in their infrastructure, school, and homes. That will end under my administration. P3 programs have the potential to be effective at improving immediate infrastructure issues, but a P3s alone do not acknowledge racism. It is a band-aid approach if not paired with a more comprehensive vision of how we allocate both capital and operating dollars from our budget, and as Comptroller, I promise that we will think deeply and widely about how we address racist practices within our state.

If elected, I will create an office for the Secretary of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, whose purview includes a far-reaching review of existing state policies, and within the first year of my administration, the Secretary will publicly issue a report outlining priority action items for the administration. This is a tangible starting point that my administration will take to acknowledge the wrongs of the past and work to correct them so that all Marylanders can share in the prosperity of the state.

As a member of the Board of Public Works, I am uniquely qualified to create RFPs for P3s, to build in accountability measures that ensure sound financials and community participation, and to set metric driven goals that allow us to monitor and address the health of the projects. P3s can be a tool for infrastructure, but as with any tool, they are only as effective as the carpenter who is using them.

What will you do to create a more progressive tax structure in Maryland? *

As Comptroller, I have always fought for the underdog, I extended the tax deadline, and successfully fought more than \$280 million worth of budget cuts that were proposed by Governor Hogan. The cuts would've impacted teachers' pensions, state employees' healthcare, state grants for underserved communities, state assistance for rental housing and child care providers, and funds for disability and mental health programs.

I have fought against single bid contracts for state procurement projects, because they unfairly stack the deck against Minority and Women Owned Businesses (MWBs). Since becoming Comptroller, the use of single bid contracts has fallen by 86 percent because of your advocacy.

I have voted for and approved more than \$19.2 billion in contract payments to MWBs during my tenure as Comptroller.

I have advocated for the creation of the Terra Maria Developing Managers Program, which creates asset management opportunities for minority and women money managers through the State of Maryland's Pension Fund.

I have long been guided by three pillars of customer service - respect, responsiveness, and results - the Maryland Comptroller's Office has become our nation's most effective and efficient comptroller's office. I have known to be the fiscal watchdog and ensure best and fair practices. As Governor, I will adopt the same principles to ensure that Maryland has the most equitable tax structure in the country.

My platform calls for tax credits for Maryland's seniors, especially those who participate in a state mentorship program in conjunction with our public schools, because seniors living on fixed incomes need help ensuring they are able to age in place and afford expenses like prescription drugs.

My platform also calls for the creation of a streamlined tax filing and payment process for Marylanders who have simple income-based tax obligations, which covers the vast majority of our residents. As many other countries do, we would use our data on the individual's assets and income to create a simple recommended tax bill for residents that they can sign off on, rather than going through the anxiety and expense of relying on personal or professional tax preparation.

I am also committed to cracking down on wealthy tax dodgers, which has been a hallmark of my time as comptroller, as we have recovered billions in back taxes or fraudulently prepared taxes from our state's wealthiest residents. Ensuring those with the most resources pay their fair share prevents us from having to increase the tax burden on lower and middle income Marylanders.

What can the State do to accelerate the construction of affordable and inexpensive housing as we seek to create walkable diverse communities in response to the pressing concerns of climate change? *

My platform calls for the creation of a state-backed mortgage program that creates paths to homeownership for those who have steady employment but may lack the credit history or cash for a down payment that securing a home loan normally requires. I also am committed to creating transit-oriented development at commuter hubs and incentivizing dense development that is more sustainable and environmentally conscious. Steps like these are vital to creating more livable, walkable, transit-friendly communities. Moreover, it helps us move more Marylanders from renters to homeowners, so that they can capture the equity they spend on housing each month and gain the financial and housing protections that homeowners have access to but renters lack.

How will you improve public transportation in the state? What can the state do to promote or support efforts to develop low-cost or free public transit alternatives? Will you rebalance the transportation budget away from car dependence with highway construction to more public transportation all across Maryland? Why or Why not? *

World-class transportation would give all Marylanders the freedom to experience everything the state has to offer. The strength of any economy is in the number and quality of its connections. That reality is especially evident when it comes to transportation. To achieve a fast, safe, sustainable and reliable world-class transit system I will make the following investments:

In Baltimore, I will break ground on a transformational East-West mass transit line, while ensuring it is part of systemwide improvements that improve transit service for everyone in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region.

In the I-270 corridor, my administration will explore innovative new connections between Frederick and the Washington region including rail and a WMATA line that runs adjacent to the new American Legion Bridge.

I will bring Baltimore and the Washington region closer together through upgrades to the MARC commuter train, as well as support for transit-oriented development (TOD) and connections at key commuter hubs.

I will ensure that the Purple Line light rail is completed, while improving suburban transit service, including WMATA and local transit services.

I will explore new rail and mass transit connections for Western Maryland, Southern Maryland, and the Eastern Shore to ensure every community has access to the full range of Maryland's opportunities and services.

I will pilot a statewide version of the "DrivingItHome" campaign that was introduced to Prince George's County by my running mate, Monique Anderson-Walker, to change the driving culture in Maryland and reduce the number of accidents, particularly those that harm bikers and pedestrians.

Within my first term as governor, the entire fleet of state vehicles will convert to electric.

Finally, I will ensure greater access to bike and scooter share stations, particularly at a local level where bike and other pedestrian infrastructure is a vital part of the connectivity not just for work commutes, but for entertainment, trips to the grocery, etc..

Additionally, one of the reasons I chose Monique Anderson-Walker to serve as my running mate is because of her work to holistically modernize the transit grid. As vice-chair of the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment (TIEE) committee and a member of the Transportation Planning Board sub-committee at Council of Governments (2019-2020), Monique advocated for the prioritization of transit to connect National Landing in Arlington, Virginia (an Amazon HQ) to major travel arteries in Prince George's County – enabling business retention, growth, expansion, and attraction. Her focus on regional connectivity – transporting commuters over the Woodrow Wilson Bridge into Prince George's County, and extending access to Oxon Hill and Allentown Roads – creates viability for transit-oriented live, work, and play hubs. I look forward to working with Monique to expand some of these efforts statewide.

Maryland's economy is poised to lead in the 21st century, but until a world-class sustainable transit grid

reaches every corner of the state, we lack a key driver for that economic growth and a means through which all communities can benefit from it.

Governor Hogan has proposed rebuilding the American Legion Bridge, widening connecting highways, constructed and managed by a public-private partnership will derive revenue from added variably-priced lanes that will serve only a fraction of drivers, primarily those who can afford the high tolls we can expect. What is your stance on the Hogan proposal? If elected will you use your position on top of Maryland's administrative agencies to revisit the Hogan plan? *

I know that the I-270/I-495 project is not without its challenges. However, I am confident that there is a way for this project to be done right. I've made the conditions for my support of this project clear from the beginning-it will put transit at the center of the traffic relief strategy, it will promote buses and carpooling by making them free in the toll lanes, and it will have a PLA so good jobs are created for Marylanders. Moreover, the partners involved must demonstrate that the project is financially sound for Marylanders.

I am monitoring the project closely as the litigation resolves and Accelerate Maryland Partners and MDOT prepare to bring the construction contract to the Board of Public Works in the summer. As with every other step in the process I will continue to do thorough due diligence to ensure that Marylanders get a good deal. Moreover, as a current member of the Board of Public Works, to receive my support and recent vote to move forward with transportation improvements in this corridor, I demanded that no shovels go in the ground until a full environmental review was complete, that a portion of toll revenue goes to mass transit projects, that buses be able to use the toll lanes for free and other ways to make this project infinitely better for the environment and commuters.

Marylanders need a governor who can balance this tension-someone who has the experience working on these issues, fiscal knowledge, and is driven to make socially conscious decisions in the best interest of the people. The reality is we are not going to be able to meet our transportation needs over the next few decades without cars. We are talking about a century of planning and real estate development that has prioritized cars - it simply won't change overnight. I believe we have to be honest about that reality and not make blanket policies that will not effectuate sustainable positive change for ALL Marylanders.

Do you support or oppose the proposed Maglev project for the DC-Baltimore corridor? Why? *

I believe that special consideration needs to be given to the implementation of Maglev. It is for this reason that I do not support the current proposal, but I am willing to revisit the issue and find a solution that will be in the best interest of the people.

Will you commit to funding MARC expansion to make it a 2-way commuter rail system? *

Yes. I have pledged to bring Baltimore and the Washington region closer together through upgrades to the MARC commuter train, as well as support for transit-oriented development (TOD) and connections at key commuter hubs. I am committed to implementing the provisions set forth in the Maryland Regional Transformation Act.

I will also ensure that the Purple Line light rail is completed, while improving suburban transit service, including WMATA and local transit services.

I have pledged to create 100,000 family supporting jobs in 100-weeks. Just as important it is to create those jobs, it is important that every Marylander can access these new jobs without barriers. I have also pledged to make Maryland the first net-zero state in the U.S. and a net supplier of renewable energy. Both of these initiatives go hand-in-hand. We cannot reduce greenhouse gasses emissions and achieve our broader environmental goals without a quality transportation system. Maryland's economy is poised to lead in the 21st century, but until a world-class sustainable transit grid reaches every corner of the state, we lack a key driver for that economic and environmental growth and a means through which all communities can benefit from it.

Do you support the removal of trash incineration and other dirty technologies from Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (HB11)? Why will you do in your four years to scale up the amount of clean renewable energy being used by Marylanders? *

Environmental justice is vital to creating A Level Playing Field, one of my campaign's flagship agendas. One of my goals is to reduce illnesses such as asthma by 20 percent by 2030. Polluters like the Baltimore incinerator are disproportionately placed in communities of color and exacerbate many of these types of illnesses. I am committed to removing these polluters and properly classifying renewable energy so that incineration is not included, and that ALL Marylanders have an improved quality of life. Moreover, as we shift to a green State, I am also committed to providing job training and placement for those who work in industries that will become increasingly obsolete in the new economy. No Marylander should be left behind in our path forward.

Do you agree with the goals of the Green New Deal Resolution in Congress? What will you do to advance each or any of the goals listed in the resolution, for example energy efficiency in existing and new buildings, sustainable land use and reduce agricultural pollution and emissions, reducing waste and disposal of hazardous materials, and protecting fragile ecosystems, all while still creating a fair and just transition for all communities and workers? *

Addressing environmental issues will be a top priority for my administration. Although I have specific pledges to address this issue, which can be found on my website it is important to note that I will adopt an integrative approach, and all of the policies I will implement will be evaluated based on their sustainability.

I have pledged to make Maryland the first net-zero state in the US and a net supplier of renewable energy. On Day 1, I will sign an executive order that requires all energy consumed by state government entities to be created by one-hundred percent renewable energy where possible, with a mandate for full conversion by the end of my first term.

I will also sign an executive order that requires more renewable energy to be created within Maryland than all energy consumed within the state. Additionally, within my first term as governor, the entire fleet of state vehicles will convert to electric.

Finally, as the federal government does with its Climate Envoy, I am committed to creating a cabinet level position that will work hand-in-hand with our state agencies to develop a vision for Maryland's environmental health and aid in the implementation to tackle climate change both in the state, and regionally.

As the largest estuary in the United States, and one of Maryland's most prized natural resources, the Chesapeake Bay runs across six states in the East Coast. It is vital that our climate change policies reflect the geographical range of one of our State's most prized resources. Within the first year of my term, this appointee will also be responsible for publicly issuing a report on Maryland's environmental health, and outlining priority action items for the administration. The report will include details on the state's sustainable land use and reduce agricultural pollution and emissions, reducing waste and disposal of hazardous materials, and protecting our ecosystems. Moreover, this cabinet level appointee will work hand in hand with our Secretary of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to ensure that our practices are fair. This will position Maryland to be a leader in best practices that will secure a sustainable future for generations to come.

While corporations make huge profits through industrialized agriculture on the Eastern Shore, families face bankruptcy via the franchise model, and taxpayers are left holding the impossible task of cleaning the Bay. How would you address these interrelated issues in a way that creates a fair livelihood for farmers and addressing pollution on the land in the Bay? *

The agricultural and poultry community are key to the State's economy and cultural identity, particularly on the shore and we need to ensure that the entire sector is protected. Those engaged in the franchise model will have greater responsibilities towards helping Maryland achieve its environmental goals. I will explore strategies that would require franchise farmers to diversify land use and encourage sustainable practices. I believe the crux of the issue is creating clear emissions and run off standards for farmers, and providing funding that helps them transition their operations to a point where they can meet these standards proactively, so that we are not instead funding the fix on the backend by cleaning the Bay.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms