

# Our Revolution Maryland 2022 Gubernatorial Questionnaire

Responses to Questions will be made Public

Governor Candidate Name \*

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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? \*

YES - one of my signature programs is called the "Maryland Now Plan". Part of this will fully legalize marijuana and expunging records.

Possession of 10 grams or less is already decriminalized in Maryland(so you can't be penalized criminally). But I want to expand this to make total possession (regardless of quantity) decriminalized, as well as make it legalized (to make it fully accessible and taxable).

Marijuana has proven to be significantly less dangerous than alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs/opioids. As such, I believe in legalizing it to generate significant revenue for our state, as well as to provide more racial justice in our criminal justice systems (since Black residents are arrested at higher rates and given harsher sentences than white residents for possession).

Part of this process will also be to expunge records from MVA files, police files and court files. Additionally, by beginning/increasing cultivation to arable land in locations like Frederick county, the Upper Eastern Shore and even urban farms in Baltimore City, we can boost our agriculture sector and increase revenues for our local and state economy. And to offset some of the very high production costs and ensure more small farmers are able to participate in this economic opportunity, we could expand Enterprise/Opportunity Zones (which include tax credits and incentives) to farmers who participate.

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? \*

When it often feels like cops are shooting black and brown people like its target practice, I don't think it's extreme to demand accountability. It doesn't diminish whatever good work is also being done. But we demand accountability in every field, and our criminal justice system should be no different.

It's also important to note that increasing accountability and transparency in our systems does not negate the great community work and safety provided by a majority of our officers. Rather, it improves the system so it works better for everyone.

We can all work together to make sure this happens, but it starts with community trust and community input. It must be made clear that our justice system is built upon the principle that justice is impartial and objective

That's why my Criminal Justice plan - shared in full transparency and accountability since last January 2021 - includes everything from treating opioid/drug abuse as a disease not crime; removing SROs from public schools; investing in more mental health professionals; ending the money bail system and for-profit prison contracts; ending extreme sentences for children; legalizing marijuana and expunging records; and preparing those in prison for life outside prison. Full details can be found here:  
<https://jainforgov.medium.com/criminal-justice-reform-42a0c6a91033>

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)? \*

We need to stop criminalizing poverty. I believe that we cannot end mass incarceration without first ending the money-bail system. I believe this is an ineffective, unfair, and racist way of approaching our prison system.

More often than not, the people most likely to spend time in jail awaiting trial are not the worst offenders, but the poorest ones. These are folks who do not necessarily pose a risk to society, and can lead to real negative effects for these individuals from lost jobs to predatory bail bond debt.

Instead of penalizing and further criminalizing individuals because of their ability to afford cash bail, we should require judges to rely more heavily on risk assessments in pretrial decisions. This will not only remove implicit bias that may occur when determining a defendants' status, but will ultimately provide greater transparency and accountability to the system.

These risk assessments will be more objective and mathematical in nature, using court and demographic records (that assess things as criminal history, job status, level of education) and assigning each a numerical value that add together to provide a final score (similar to how our banks determine our credit scores). Judges would then use this score to determine a defendants' risk factors.

Similar reforms implemented by D.C. have proven that defendant's rates of appearance for trial have either been similar or increased, thus negating the idea that removing the money-bail requirement would endanger the public or increase rearrest rates.

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

YES - Since launching in January 2021, I have not only committed to rejecting donations from all corporations and businesses, BUT am the only candidate who has also committed that every event I host is free and open to the public. Unlike other candidates, I don't charge residents to meet me. And with my mobile offices, I'm personally meeting voters in a different county each and every day of the week.

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)? \*

I would absolutely be open to that - but want more done so that EVERY elected official is fully transparent and accountable. That's why - unlike other candidates, I'm fully accessible because 100% of our events are free. I don't charge residents to meet me. And with my mobile offices, I'm personally meeting voters in a different county each and every day of the week.

Unlike other candidates, I'm fully accountable because 100% of our campaign is run by residents from every age, background and county. You already have a seat at the table from day one of my operation.

Unlike other candidates, I'm fully transparent because we've shared the most detailed and comprehensive policy agenda since last January 2021.

And unlike other candidates - we've been able to create a winning campaign with the most volunteers from each of our 24 counties without needing to constantly fundraise.

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 - we need more transparency and accountability in all branches of our government. Anyone (including judges) who make decisions that impact the lives of residents need to be able to defend their decisions. We must also make the process - including the electoral process - more transparent and accountable.

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

I support expanding on Obamacare and doing more at the state-level to ensure everyone has full access to healthcare.

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? \*

As a cancer survivor, someone who works at a healthcare non-profit, someone who previously worked as the Associate Director of External Affairs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and as then Vice-President Biden's Director of Outreach for the Cancer Moonshot, affordable healthcare is a personal issue.

I want everyone to have access to affordable and high-quality healthcare. That's why my comprehensive plan includes Medicaid Eligibility Expansion; creating new Health Enterprise Zones; investing in more Community Health Clinics; reproductive justice; easing medical debt; investing more in mental health professionals; creating a statewide Caregivers Program; improving at-home care; ensuring clean drinking water; increasing accessing to childcare; reducing food insecurity; and guaranteed paid family and medical leave. Full details at <https://jainforgov.medium.com/healthcare-8bbeaeaa522>

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? \*

Yes - as long as we have full transparency and accountability, and if it proves to reduce administrative costs.

I will also work to raise Maryland's Medicaid income limit to 200% of the FPL, which would correspond with approximately \$25,800 for a one-person household. This would help ensure that nobody slips through the cracks and misses an opportunity for meaningful health coverage, because it would more comprehensively bridge the gap between those who can and cannot afford health insurance. Another crucial solution to this problem would be to expand the Emergency Medicaid 'loophole' that already enables periodic, selective coverage for undocumented immigrants. Unlike other policy proposals, this one does not inherently entail additional costs: This policy purely expands Medicaid eligibility for those who desire it – instead of automatically enrolling people and increasing spending; and It will not only help us reduce healthcare costs in the long-term, but the lion's share of this financial burden will still belong to the federal government.

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 - Coming from a small business background, I understand the value they bring and the challenges they face. Likewise, I understand that there's a false notion that what's good for business must be bad for the employee and vice-versa. Each can benefit.

When employees are invested in and taken care of, they help a business's bottom line by being more productive, more loyal and more focused. In other words, it helps both the employee AND employer. That's why I advocated—and helped get pass—a \$15 minimum wage in 2017/2018 for Montgomery County (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GicczsaBUFI>)

I am also in strong favor of creating a Paid Family Leave Insurance Fund for all businesses to guarantee all workers up to 12 weeks of partial wage replacement should they need to take a leave for personal or familial reasons.

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?

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YES - I oppose "Right To Work" and "At-Will" policies that either prevent employees from joining a union or where terms of employment can change without just-cause or proper notification.

Furthermore, one of the key tenets of building up the workers in Maryland is protecting and expanding access to collective bargaining and union rights. Not only do collective bargaining rights help ensure our workers have a seat at the table when it comes to ensuring safe working conditions, access to healthcare, and living wages, but they make companies places where employees want to work — allowing employees to stick around longer and be more productive.

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

As a product of Maryland Public Schools – including a Title 1 Elementary School– I understand the importance of providing quality and accessible education for every student across this state. Even when I was battling cancer at the age of 13, I remember how the entire network of staff at my middle school - everyone from the bus driver, the food service staff, the custodians, my guidance counselor, my teachers, and even the building itself - became my safe place where I was able to find emotional support, push my worries from the hospital aside, and feel like I wasn't alone.

That's why my education plan (full details at <https://jainforgov.medium.com/education-d7f9773dea75>) includes fully funding the Blueprint; ensuring parents, students and educators have a real seat at the table; investing in school maintenance and construction in lower-income, diverse and rural neighborhoods; expanding access to broadband; easing student debt for educators; reducing barriers to becoming an educator; protecting collective bargaining rights at our community colleges and universities; making community colleges more affordable and accessible; universal Pre-K; removing SROs from public schools; focus more on performance-based testing and not standardized testing; and opposing school privatization efforts.

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? \*

It can be one tool we use to respond to racism, but we must also look at how we elect our leaders (who will then appoint those who run our state agencies); how we create the budget; how we enforce our policies; and how we include those impacted by those policies in the decision making process.

This means ensuring we have inclusive curriculums (including from "CRT" so students are able to learn about the history and prevalence of racism that still impacts our society today); to including people of color at the highest levels of decision making in a campaign (and subsequently an Administration); to being transparent in the policies we propose.

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

We can be both financially responsible and socially progressive. We already have the funds to support business, employees, community members and our society, but need to tackle issues in a comprehensive way and disclose how we plan to pay for our proposals.

Part of this means to be held accountable for promised revenue streams (ex. if we promise that funds from slots will be used for our education systems, we must ensure that money actually gets allocated appropriately).

Part of this means we include the voices of every community member in the budget process (before, during AND after).

And part of this means increasing revenue streams for our state by keeping people in our state and encouraging more to move into our state. My "Maryland Now Plan" can significantly help us accomplish this.

By eliminating the state income tax for 95% of Maryland workers - my plan saves the average Marylander about \$2,000 a year; Increases your take-home pay and disposable income (and ties into creating more jobs through my Guaranteed Jobs Program); Enables greater economic mobility and stability for Marylanders who are struggling to get by; Strengthens our economy by encouraging more people to move here and retirees to stay here; and does all this without increasing property taxes.

By guaranteeing jobs for every Marylander - my plan will have our state government serve as an employer of last resort and ensure all unemployed residents in our state have the opportunity to access a decent job with living wages, safe working conditions, healthcare and union protections. And while this would be the first program of its kind in the United States, my plan will help us: Increase our state revenues – with the potential of 200,000 newly employed individuals who will now be able to pay taxes and have greater disposable income; Increase employability and economic inclusion for those experiencing challenges or discrimination finding work (including veterans, spouses of those in active-duty, women, those who are LGBTQ+, those with disabilities, those impacted by the justice system and people of color); Reduce poverty levels and social safety net costs for all taxpayers; and Improve the overall health and sustainability of our economy.

And by imposing anti-corruption measures - my plan will ban the Governor, Lt. Governor and agency heads from personally owning a business or stocks (retirement savings are exempt) while in office; ban the Governor, Lt. Governor and agency heads from serving on for-profit corporate boards while in office; and impose a 4-year lobbying ban for the Governor, Lt. Governor and agency heads after they leave their positions.

Full details can be found here: <https://jainforgov.medium.com/the-maryland-now-plan-eliminating-the-state-income-tax-and-a-guaranteed-jobs-program-8ed25788ec47>

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? \*

As one of President Obama's White House Liaisons at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, I helped build a team that worked on expanding eligibility and availability of affordable housing programs; improved housing data collection; and implemented the National Housing Trust Fund (which provided Maryland \$3 million to increase and preserve the supply of affordable housing during my tenure).

During my advocacy work, I learned firsthand how there is a false notion that what benefits renters and homeowners is bad for landlords or our economic development – and vice versa. Each can benefit if we tackle this issue in a comprehensive way and look at both short-term and long-term solutions.

That's why my full housing plan (found here: <https://jainforgov.medium.com/housing-e1415e20d0b5>) details how we increase Affordability (immediate relief so no one is being evicted; expanding the MPDU program; dedicated funding for nonprofits); Availability (smart growth and mixed-use development; prohibiting discrimination based on source of income); and Sustainability (improving forbearance notifications; increasing the eviction filing fees; requiring "Just Cause" protections; and the "Maryland Now Plan" to provide residents more disposable income, decreased cost of living and access to jobs).

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? \*

I support a comprehensive infrastructure plan that reduces congestion, pollution, and provides greater security, accessibility and connectivity for all around our state. This will also connect people to jobs (thus fostering greater economic security) and connect businesses to their employees (thus helping our local economy).

My full plan (found here: <https://jainforgov.medium.com/transportation-c96c3f396c1>) goes into detail my plans to making public transit FREE for every resident; ensuring environmental impact studies for all transportation projects; expanding Metro (Red and Purple lines, in addition to the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project); expanding MARC Train services; expanding ridesharing; more designated bus lanes; smart growth and mixed-use development; and sustainably expanding the Bay Bridge (using the findings of the environmental impact studies that were conducted).

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 am strongly opposed to widening connecting highways. I am also strongly opposed to plans to privatize, widen and create multi-directional toll lanes on I-270. We need to use funds better in the same area and need to look at maximizing existing lanes and modes of transportation (as noted earlier).

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

I do not support the MAGLEV project as it doesn't address environmental costs; it is too expensive to use (would be around \$60); and would not even stop in Prince George's County (even though its residents would endure years of construction).

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

Yes - Expanding MARC services to Western Maryland (via expanding the Brunswick MARC and adding a third rail) would allow individuals living in Western Maryland to take part in job market growth in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia metropolitan area. MARC train services can also be improved for the rest of the state by ensuring we have all day/weekend services.

I've also committed to making Maryland the first state to guarantee free public transit for every resident. As detailed in my "Maryland Now Plan", public transit should be accessible to all Marylanders and financial barriers should be eliminated. It will help our economy by providing better accessibility to ideas and labor; will reduce the cost of living for employers and employees; will help students – especially those in underserved areas – get to and from school; will benefit seniors and retirees better age-in-place; will help low-income residents, many of whom do not have access to private cars, and therefore rely on public transportation to get to their jobs; will increase mobility and access in our communities for those in the disability community; and will play a critical role in combating climate change by making mass transit a more accessible, convenient, and viable alternative to private cars, helping reduce emissions and our state's overall carbon footprint.

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? \*

YES - As detailed in my full Climate Change policy memo shared since last January 2021 (<https://jainforgov.medium.com/climate-change-f3a093f3b9bf>), I would focus on everything from Climate Justice; stopping the subsidization of trash incinerators and paper mills; mandating Environmental Impact Studies; Protecting and Investing in the Bay; Investing in Clean Energy (solar, hydro and wind); Improving our state's RPS; making public transit free; increasing access to public transportation projects; smart growth and mixed-use development; ban single-use plastic bags; ending state funding of synthetic turf on playgrounds; and improving composting throughout the state.

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? \*

YES - but obviously want to focus more on local, state-wide actions. As detailed in my full Climate Change policy memo shared since last January 2021 (<https://jainforgov.medium.com/climate-change-f3a093f3b9bf>), I would focus on everything from Climate Justice; stopping the subsidization of trash incinerators and paper mills; mandating Environmental Impact Studies; Protecting and Investing in the Bay; Investing in Clean Energy (solar, hydro and wind); Improving our state's RPS; making public transit free; increasing access to public transportation projects; smart growth and mixed-use development; ban single-use plastic bags; ending state funding of synthetic turf on playgrounds; and improving composting throughout the state.

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 agriculture sector is vital to the Maryland economy not to mention the daily needs of our state and our nation's hungry consumers. That's why plans (fully detailed here: <https://jainforgov.medium.com/agriculture-122fa5cd80ac> ) include everything from providing more small business support; expanding enterprise and opportunity zones; the "Maryland Now Plan" which will eliminate the state income tax for 95% of workers; providing Conservation Assistance; addressing climate change (including increasing poultry farm inspections, investing in stormwater detention systems and assisting with oyster restoration); establishing an Office of Innovation within our Department of Agriculture; supporting Right To Repair laws; increasing hemp cultivation on farms; increasing regional farming; and enforcing agricultural zoning laws.

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