

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? *

For complete transparency, I do not and will not support and legislation related to the GND. I do not support continued government expansion. Instead, I would significantly reduce government involvement and allow free market innovation to guide energy legislation. I'm open to conversations around nuclear as the most sustainable and cleanest renewable energy source. But Wind and Solar are flawed.

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? *

No, I will not. I'm not comfortable with any Branch eschewing the legislative process. Particularly, federal legislation that comes straight from the Executive Branch is too close to autocracy.

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

The primary policies I would support are those that reduce the government's involvement in the private sector, including for energy. However, as I stated previously, nuclear energy seems to be the best source in which to invest.

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

In the face of growing war threats, and rising violent crime, I do not think we're facing any environmental crises. And I certainly don't think the Federal Government should be tasked with addressing global climate.

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)? *

No, I will not. The federal government needs to remove itself from private negotiations. Let each employer in each state negotiate fair pay with candidates.

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? *

First and foremost, the federal government needs to phase out assistance checks for able-bodied working-age adults who choose unemployment. Federal assistance should *only* go to those taking tangible actions to improve their circumstances. Otherwise, a check is little more than a handout that enables the behaviors that so frequently lead to homelessness -- evidenced by California's exploding homeless population despite their generous assistance programs. Essentially, don't make it objectively easier to be homeless. For housing, the second verse is same as the first! Government regulations on housing only contribute to skyrocketing home prices, and should be reduced significantly. Inflation caused by rampant government spending also contributes to high housing prices, so we must also drastically reduce government spending too.

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. *

No, I do not. Our \$30 Trillion dollar debt, and the accompanying inflation that every non-bureaucrat pays for, is by far the greatest threat facing our nation. I want to significantly reduce spending and cut tax rates -- Those two actions alone will improve wealth and income equality!

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

Few, if any...you may be noticing a trend. Nonetheless, I want to reduce as much federal interference in the Free Market as possible.

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? *

Shocker: I don't think the Federal Government should interfere in employer/employee relations. I see no reason that employees can't negotiate directly with their employer(s).

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) *

I would oppose the plan. Not because I like "unfair" trade deals, but because I have a different perspective on "fair" than the Progressive Caucus.

HEALTHCARE/RETIREMENT

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

Honestly...none. Social Security and Medicare are the largest spending categories for the Federal Government that's \$30 Trillion in debt -- far more than military spending! I think they both need to be significantly reworked and down-sized.

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? *

No, I will not -- the more we can shift to the private sector, the better! (Ya'll might be wondering why I filled out this Survey by now...)

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

For full transparency: I do not and will *never* support M4A. The Federal Government is a poor replacement for private medicine. Single-Payer Healthcare will lead to the biggest, most expensive federal government with the most oversight in human history. That's simply not an America I'm working to build.

LEGAL REFORM

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

Hey! Something we agree on! I absolutely support the total legalization of marijuana, and eventually all illicit drugs. The "War on Drugs" has been an abject failure, and it's time we stop warring against victimless crimes. If anything, the Federal Government's attention should be focused on the Southern Border, through which the vast majority of Fentanyl is smuggled into our country.

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 *

At the most basic level, individuals need to hold themselves accountable for their actions. They need to yearn to live clean, legal lives, earn "clean" money, and raise families. Then, we need Law Enforcement Officers and District Attorneys to crack down on violent crimes and property crimes with strong sentences. Those with non-violent drug offenses, who also did not plead down from more serious charges and are "model inmates", should be systematically reviewed for release from prison -- either to house arrest or a drug treatment program.

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? *

I would like more information before providing an opinion. Respectfully!

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? *

I would like more information before providing an opinion. Respectfully!

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? *

I do not support citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Doing so is a giant slap in the face to those who have waited years to immigrate legally. However, the immigration process should be streamlined, especially for those with highly marketable skillsets.

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? *

Nothing! I'm OK with the current level of spending, and generally support more military spending. But by no means am I a war hawk! I believe in Peace Through Strength, where we leverage a powerful military to de-escalate global conflict without casualties.

ELECTION & PARTY REFORM

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

Public Financing through individual donations is perfectly fine. I *do not* support the federal government allocating tax revenue to fund political campaigns.

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? *

Politicians needs to remember that they work for the People, not Lobbyists! I'm willing to consider legislation to ban lobbying altogether.

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? *

Like it or not, the GOP stance that parents control what their children learn is powerful and will be difficult to convince non-Progressives otherwise. Instead, Progressives need to re-affirm that they love this country as its foundation and want to teach as much history as possible as a means of preventing future atrocities. However, state-sponsored education *should not* be political in-nature -- children need to be taught HOW to think, not WHAT to think. I think Progressives could also do a better job of understanding the Conservative position, and that it's not rooted in hatred and discrimination. Heated rhetoric that demonizes any group only leads to more division.

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