

2022 MGA candidate questionnaire

Our Revolution Howard County - state delegate & senate endorsement requests

Name *

Clarence Lam

Campaign Website

www.clarencelam.com

Why are you running for state legislature? What have you done in recent years to benefit your district (e.g. civic engagement, testimony, activism, etc.)?

I am running for reelection to the State Senate. I have been engaged in multiple efforts to benefit my district, and this includes: supporting educators and schools (via the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, protecting our environment (supporting the Climate Solutions Now Act), strengthening our election systems, expanding healthcare for families/women/babies and undocumented individuals, and other progressive policies.

What actions would your office take on any of OR's 6 platform issues? <https://ourrev.us/Platform2022>

I have voted in strong support of past legislation expanding OR's six platform issues, and I will continue to do so in the future.

Do you support a bill for public campaign financing? If not, why not? Are you accepting campaign contributions from corporate interests, such as property developers or their associates?

Yes, and I have voted in support of public financing bills before.

Please identify a few serious challenges facing Maryland that your office would address over the next two years. What steps would you take, what obstacles do you anticipate, and how can we overcome them?

- Improving pay for state employees, and bringing talented employees back to the state workforce
- Ensuring additional funding for our aging infrastructure, including expanded mass transit options
- Improving healthcare by reducing co-pays, expanding required coverage, broadening coverage under Medicaid

What changes would you make to state taxes and/or constitutional limits for county taxes?

I will work to ensure that our tax policies are more progressive (less regressive). This will include support for combined reporting of corporate taxes.

What would you do to make housing more affordable for low-income residents?

I would support greater eviction protection for tenants and also ensuring that low-income residents have access to appropriate counsel if they are taken to court/trial.

How would you improve transportation and reduce traffic congestion in an equitable and sustainable manner? What are your views on public-private partnerships in transportation, such as variably-priced toll lanes?

I oppose variable-priced toll lanes. I believe they are inherently unfair and work against low-income drivers and communities. I support ensuring that our Transportation Trust Fund has adequate funding from tolls and the gas tax. I support improvements to mass transit that allow for greater access and expanded services. I support reconsideration and reinstatement of development of the Red Line in Baltimore.

How would you increase police accountability, decrease racial disparities in policing, and maintain public safety? Do you support full LEOBR repeal?

Yes, I support and have voted for greater police accountability and decreased racial disparities in policing. I support repeal of the LEOBR.

How would you engage racially and economically marginalized communities to address inequity in our society? How would you ensure more impacted communities have a voice in state government?

Over the past 4 years in the Senate and 4 years in the House, I have supported many bills to improve equity in health, education, transportation, and the environment amongst our most racially diverse and economically marginalized communities in our state. I will work with other legislators and advocates to ensure that these marginalized communities will have a strong and steadfast voice in the Senate of Maryland.

What should state government do to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and job opportunities?

I would support filling funding vacant positions in state government and ensuring appropriate funds to attract strong talent back into our state agencies. I would support automatic raising of the minimum wage that corresponds to inflation and rises in cost of living. I would support improved mass transit so lower-income communities have access to adequate transportation to get them to well paying jobs. I would support more workforce development programs that help workers learn new skills and knowledge. I have supported and voted in favor of many bills that helped promote sustainable and equitable economic growth throughout the last four years.

What should Maryland do to improve healthcare beyond what the federal government does, in the short-run and long-run?

As the only physician in the Senate, I have sponsored and passed many bills to expand coverage to undocumented individuals, pregnant women, LGBTQ individuals, and many others. I will continue to support legislation that seeks greater federal government funding/coverage, expansion of our state's Medicaid program, and greater equity in our healthcare system.

Do you support changes to state voting methods, such as ranked choice, approval voting, or proportional representation?

Yes, I support these changes to state voting methods.

What are your top priorities to address environmental justice, sustainability, and nature conservation?

I served on the state's Environmental Justice Commission, and supported legislation to increase environmental sustainability such as the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022. I've also supported legislation to increase planting of trees, reduced deforestation, promote more open space, and to advance environmental conservation efforts.

What changes would you make to state minimum wage law, including tipped and agricultural workers?

I would support including tipped and agricultural workers in the state minimum wage. I would support having the minimum wage pegged to inflation and cost-of-living increases so raises in the minimal wage are not dependent on legislative action.

Would you support legislation to enable public workers to have the right to form a union and bargain collectively for contracts statewide?

Yes, I will support legislation to enable public workers to organize and collectively bargain.

How would you change cannabis policy, including retail sales, distribution, and past criminal convictions?

I would support decriminalization of cannabis, and I have supported legislation in alignment with the provisions described above.

Do you support legislation to require special elections instead of appointments for vacancies in elective offices?

I have sponsored and passed through the Senate for the past three years a bill that does exactly this. Every year, it has died in the House of Delegates, but I will continue to sponsor this important bill.

What should the state do regarding insurrectionists and conspirators against our democracy?

I think the state should seriously consider whether insurrectionists and conspirators should be qualified to run for and serve in elected office.

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