

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MARYLAND STATE-OFFICE CANDIDATES

Eric Luedtke

1. Healthcare

1A. As an individual or an elected official, did you take any actions last year to advance the national issue of universal, single-payer healthcare solution, and if so, what were those actions (to include taking a public stance and making contributions, *etc.*)?

I supported efforts to pass universal single-payer legislation through repeated phone, e-mail, and mail contacts with legislators.

2 Environment

2A. Do you support increased funding for mass transit, as well as the Purple Line, and do you oppose the Inter County Connector (ICC) in particular?

I have been a long-standing opponent of the ICC since I became active with the Sierra Club and the Campaign to Stop the ICC in the mid-1990s. Ironically, I now live less than a mile from where it is being constructed. I believe we need to make transit our highest transportation priority, constructing not only the rail Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway, and Green Line extension to BWI, but also supporting local construction of bus rapid transit networks.

2B. Do you support limiting the Maryland pollutant runoffs reaching the Bay?

Yes, and I am excited that the EPA is finally taking a more proactive role in restoring the Bay.

2C. Do you support legislation that places stricter State-limits on gasoline consumption to force auto makers to create more efficient vehicles?

I actively lobbied and organized in support of the Clean Cars Bill, and would support continued improvements in fuel efficiency standards and an increase in the gas tax to help reduce gasoline consumption.

3. Taxation

3A. Do you support a full, graduated income taxation solution for Maryland residents, including the "Millionaires' Tax; and eliminating tax breaks for wealthy individuals?

I do, and I actively lobbied in support of a more progressive income tax during the legislature's special session two years ago.

3B. Do you support combined reporting for corporations, and imposing higher corporate tax rates in line with neighboring states?

Yes.

3D Do you support an increase in the alcohol tax?

Yes, as do an overwhelming majority of Marylanders.

4. Courts & Imprisonment

4A. Do you support the repeal of the death penalty in Maryland?

Yes.

4B. Do you support policies/legislation to strengthen gang prevention in Maryland without punishing young victims of gang violence and intimidation, and further eroding communities where gangs dominate?

Yes. As a teacher in a community impacted by gangs, I've seen the challenge we have firsthand and worked to keep kids out of gangs. Maryland is not doing nearly enough to fight gangs, and too often we are not investing in the mentoring programs and early interventions that help keep kids out of gangs in the first place.

5. Immigrant Rights

5A. Do you support granting of Maryland drivers' licenses without any restrictions dependent on immigration status?

Yes.

5B. Do you have a history of support for legislation to make Maryland a "sanctuary state" and/or are you willing to support it in the future? (In a sanctuary state, no agent, officer or employee of the state, may assist the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the investigation or arrest of any persons for violation of the U.S. immigration and nationality laws.)

I've been an advocate for Montgomery County to be a sanctuary county, and would support similar efforts at the state level.

6. Women's Rights

6A. Do you support enacting state laws that require equal pay for equal work irrespective of gender?

Yes.

6B. Do you support women's access to government-funded abortion under MHIP, or have you opposed restrictions on those rights?

I support full access, and am proud to have been endorsed by NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland.

7. LGBT Rights

7A. Do you have a history of advocating for legalizing same-sex marriages in Maryland, and for opposing restrictions on recognizing same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions?

I have advocated for marriage equality and directly lobbied Attorney General Gansler concerning his recent ruling recognizing out of state same-sex marriages.

7B. Do you support Montgomery County's Gender Identity Law, and have you taken any actions to defend it when it was under attack, and if so, what actions; in addition, do you support a similar State-wide law?

I support the law. During the fight to preserve it, I lobbied in support of it, worked to get MCEA to take a position in support, and actively blogged in defense of it.

8. Labor Rights

8A. Do you support the rights of Maryland's private and public-sector workers to have collective bargaining and union representation?

Yes. I am proud to be a union member.

9. Human Rights

9A. Outside of the context of health insurance reform and the other "rights" cited above, as an individual or an elected official, did you take any actions over the last six years to advance the needs of what is sometimes called "the underprivileged" (*e.g.*, economically disadvantaged, mentally ill, developmentally disabled, *etc.*); and if so what were those actions?

I teach in a school with many economically disadvantaged students, and have advocated for great attention to the issues that affect them and their families. I have also lobbied and written in support of more services for the developmentally disabled.

10. Education

10A. Do you support full funding of the Thornton Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence, and for opposing public funds being used for private schools (including the use of vouchers or the BOAST Bill)?

Yes. As a public school teacher and MCEA activist, I have long advocated for full funding for education and against the use of public tax dollars to support private schools.

10B. Do you oppose the current level of reliance on standardized test scores as the measure of student success and evaluating schools, or would you make changes, and if so, what changes would you make?

Over-reliance on standardized tests has done tremendous damage to our schools and our students. We need to eliminate high-stakes standardized tests and move towards a portfolio system similar to that used in IB programs.

10C. Do you support the right for undocumented residents and their children to have equal access to the public school systems at all levels as apply to other State residents; for applying the same in-state college tuition, and for using the same formula for scholarships as applied to other State residents?

Yes.

11. Elections

11A. Do you support enacting State campaign finance reform and laws that curtail corporate influence on elections, and laws that enable voluntary public financing of campaigns for state offices in a way that would allow candidates to receive funding after demonstrating significant community support?

I am a strong supporter of public financing and stronger limits on contributions. I also believe that Maryland should become more active in advocating for a constitutional amendment that would prevent the Supreme Court from defining campaign contributions as political speech and thereby wrest our political system back from the special interests. We need the best politicians money can't buy.

11B. Do you support the right enfranchisement for all residents of Maryland, regardless of legal status.

I support enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to create resident suffrage, if they so choose. I do not support it statewide, however.

12. Peace and Anti-War

12A. Do you have a history of opposing the use of the Maryland National Guard in non-humanitarian military assignments in other countries?

I have never actively lobbied on the issue, and I believe that the decision of whether to use the National Guard should be made on a case by case basis. I do believe we should bring our Guardsmen home from Iraq and Afghanistan.

13. Good Government

13A. Do you support enacting open government and transparency legislation that would include the public web-posting of the entire record and votes of all meetings/hearings of General Assembly official bodies at every level, including subcommittees; and the posting and sign-up sheets for all General Assembly hearings?

Yes.