

2022 Baltimore Jewish Council Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE NAME: Jennifer White

Briefly tell your personal story and why you are seeking this elected public service position. (Please limit your answer to no more than 250 words)

All throughout my life, I witnessed my family work tirelessly to provide for our family, serve our community and give all they had to make someone else's life better. My grandparents were domestic workers and my grandfather a minister, who were a part of the great migration, moving to the north in search of better opportunities. My parents are retired public school educators, who touched hundreds of lives over the course of their decades of service to students, families and their community. Their example fueled my passion to serve and to make systemic change in an impactful way. I am running to work for and alongside my community to get the results District 10 needs. I want our community to thrive! I believe my lived experience, 10+year career in public health focusing on state and local policy paired with years of community service makes me the best candidate to serve District 10. I am an advocate and champion for public health who will lead with equity, address root causes and prioritize our community's voices to be at the decision-making table.

What are the 2 or 3 biggest challenges facing Maryland (or your district), and briefly describe how would you address those challenges over the next four years? (Please limit your answer to no more than 250 words)

Two of the biggest challenges facing our district are education and traffic. The pandemic exposed persistent inequities and the weaknesses across our systems, especially as it relates to access to mental health in our schools. I will work to expand access for enhanced in-school mental health services and support for students and educators, strengthen community partnerships to provide wrap-around support services for students and their families, work to provide universal pre-k and improve working conditions for our teachers. Additionally, I often hear from my neighbors and voters about speeding and the need for traffic calming measures, which also is tied to public safety. While we are fortunate to have a complete streets policy in Baltimore County, we must do more to invest in our bike and pedestrian infrastructure to avoid building wider lanes that produce excessive speed. I will work to secure additional funding for these investments that will reconfigure our streets to be safe for all users. Because county and state roads overlap in certain parts of our community, I will work collaboratively with county officials to ensure community needs are elevated and prioritized in capital projects.

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Baltimore and Maryland are blessed to have so many committed foundations and non-profits. How can government better support the work of these non-profits in providing the care and services needed by vulnerable Marylanders?

(Please limit your answer to no more than 100 words.)

As someone who has worked in non-profit service for more than a decade, our non-profit community are trusted partners to meet the needs of those most vulnerable in our state. Two ways the government can support the non-profit community are: 1) increase the number of grants awarded to support operations; and 2) support bond bills that will utilize spaces for community programs.

Over the past several years, we have seen a rise of hate and antisemitism in schools, college campuses, and the general community. What could you as an elected official do to help combat this alarming trend?

(Please limit your answer to no more than 100 words.)

To combat the rise of hate and antisemitism, I will champion efforts that will strengthen State Board of Education standards that will improve U.S. History and World History curriculums. I will also work in collaboration with the Baltimore County Board of Education, teachers, parents, students, community members and community stakeholders like the Baltimore Jewish Council to identify and advance solutions that are tailored to meet the needs of our community.

Do you support continuing the initiatives begun by the state over the past several years to provide security grants to faith institutions, schools, and other entities that are threatened by hate crimes?

(Please limit your answer to no more than 100 words.)

Yes, I support the continuation of the Protecting Against Hate Crimes (PAHC) initiative that provides security grants to non-profit organizations and faith-based institutions that continue to be targets for hate crimes. Mass shootings in houses of faith from synagogues, mosques, churches and violent threats at our HBCUs and other learning institutions continue to shake our communities. Providing these grants to non-profit organizations will yield greater collaboration and build trust with law enforcement, community service providers and community members.

For more than three decades, Maryland and the Jewish community have jointly invested in developing a flourishing business relationship between our state and Israel – creating jobs and economic activity both here and there. As part of that relationship, Governor Hogan signed an executive order in 2017 prohibiting all executive branch agencies from entering into contracts or conducting official state business with any entity unless they certify that they will not engage in a boycott of

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Israel during the duration of the contract.

<https://governor.maryland.gov/2017/10/23/governor-larry-hogan-signs-executive-order-strengthening-marylands-opposition-to-bds-movement-against-israel/>

Do you support maintaining and enforcing this executive order?

(Please limit your answer to no more than 100 words.)

Indeed, the Maryland and Jewish community have a mutually beneficial relationship that provides economic, commercial, academic and cultural exchanges. I would support maintaining this executive order.

Over the past several years, Maryland has created the BOOST program – a scholarship opportunity to assist low-income families in attending non-public schools. Do you support continuing the BOOST program?

(Please limit your answer to no more than 100 words.)

I do not support continuing the BOOST program. I believe public funding should be protected and used to support our public schools.

What are your 2 or 3 biggest priorities to help protect the environment?

(Please limit your answer to no more than 100 words.)

My top priorities are the following: 1) advance equitable access to clean energy for all and achieve net zero emissions by 2045; 2) champion greater investment in complete streets and bike and pedestrian infrastructure to yield transportation that is healthy, affordable, and sustainable; and 3) ensure that environmental justice is a factor in all bills that come out of Annapolis.

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