

2022 Baltimore Jewish Council Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE NAME: Jon S. Cardin

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)

I grew up in a family uniquely dedicated to public service in Maryland. I sit in a seat formerly occupied by my uncle, Senator Ben Cardin, great uncle, Delegate Maurice Cardin, and grandfather, the Honorable Judge Meyer Cardin. With no lack of powerful role-models around the table at weekly Shabbat dinners, I learned early the values of service and empathy.

I earned a Juris Doctor with Honors from the University of Maryland School of Law in 2001; received a Master's degree in Policy Sciences from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County along with a second Master's degree with Honors in Judaic Studies from Baltimore Hebrew University (now Towson University), both in 1996. I have a 1992 Bachelor's degree in International Relations from Tufts University, and I am an alumnus of The Park School.

Prior to studying law, I was recruited as executive director of The Project Judaica Foundation in Washington, DC from 1996-1998. I began my career teaching Spanish and coaching lacrosse and basketball as faculty at Mercersburg Academy from 1992 to 1994.

I live with my wife and daughters. We attend Beth Tfiloh and Beth Israel synagogues. We make Sabbath dinners a priority. I participate in a wide range of community activities, including serving on the board of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Baltimore. Previously I also served on the Boards of BHU, the National Association of Jewish Legislators and the MD Attorney Grievance Commission Peer Review Panel. My chairmanship of the National Conference of State Legislatures' Election Law Taskforce took me around the country speaking on election security and reform, and board leadership at The American Council of Young Political Leaders availed me of several international diplomatic missions. I enjoy coaching Dorothy and Micah, walking my dog, reading spy novels, cycling and competing in marathons and triathlons.

Since 2002, the Law Offices of Jon S. Cardin, P.A. in Baltimore has been representing clients before civil and criminal courts around the state as well as in federal tribunals.

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After teaching Spanish, receiving my Masters in Public Policy, my Masters in Judaic Studies, and my law degree, I realized that serving in the legislature is a perfect way to utilize my skills and experience. Furthermore, over the nearly 20 years that I have served the 11th District, I have found tremendous meaning in giving my life to provide public service to our community. Constituents' services, bond initiatives, anti-bullying legislation, anti-gay therapy legislation and no-knock warrant limitations are just a few of the issues that drive me to do my best and help me find meaning. It is my hope that my constituents feel and see that drive for a better quality of life that moves me to be available to the 11th.

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)

1 – Public Safety and Criminal Justice – we need to continue to evaluate smart and thoughtful policies that provide additional degrees of safety to law-abiding citizens while also considering racial justice, environmental justice and equity. As a member of the Judiciary committee and a practicing lawyer, I will continue to focus my efforts on making our community a place where people feel they are being treated fairly and they are safe.

2 – Climate Change and a new paradigm to think about how we live. If we are going to try to give a world and quality of life to our children that is at least as good as ours and hopefully better, we need to think about how we interact with our environment on many different levels.

3 – Online Safety for Children – Our children live in a brave new world of technology and we have to make sure we have policies that protect them from bullies, predators, advertisers, and the painful pitfalls of online experiences. I have been honored to have passed three landmark cyber bullying and revenge porn bills that make Maryland children safer. I will continue to fight this issue as technology keep challenging our imagination.

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.)

The various foundations (both giving and research) have a critical role in driving us to reach our goals that include environmental, economic, racial, social and juvenile justice. Furthermore, said foundation have an important role in combatting climate change, poverty and senior isolation. As a former executive director of the Project Judaica Foundation, I will continue to use my sphere of influence to foster partnerships that provide opportunities for government to accept meaningful professional guidance and grant funding. In that way, it is not isolated efforts that

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create redundancies, overlaps or conflicting objectives, but rather globally understood goals with cooperative engagement and meaningful positive outcomes.

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.)

I have and will continue to have stalwart support for security grant initiatives. In 2005 introduced the legislation to create a taskforce to create Maryland Center for Excellence in Holocaust, Genocide and Intolerance Studies. I was then appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve on said taskforce wherein we created the Center. It was put out on RFP and Towson University won the opportunity to house it. Since that time, insufficient funds have been allocated to what has become a vital part of a curriculum for every Marylander. Teaching about hate, intolerance and consequences of indifference to it will drive our moral compass in either the right direction or wrong. Furthermore, as our country and the world become more politically and culturally divided, the eruption of hate crimes increases and it impact both safety and the ability for quiet enjoyment of life and freedom without fear of violence. I will continue my efforts to bring about kindness at our best and respect at our least to forge a life for everyone where we can live in peace.

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.)

100%. Not only do I support these initiatives and have voted for them in the appropriations bills, but I have helped a number of our constituents in the 11th District who own said companies apply for and received contracts and grants to provide these important safety measures.

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 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?

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

I strongly support the executive order and would strongly encourage the next Governor to sustain it. I have been to Israel 16 times and each time my sense of a cooperative relationship with Maryland is reinvigorated. There is no doubt that Maryland has dramatically benefitted from the strong business relationship. Furthermore, there is a wave of anti-Israel rhetoric coming to the likes we have not yet seen and it is my belief that we need to do everything we can to maintain a strong relationship and use our success to demonstrate the misunderstanding and dis-information that is hurting the retention of an ally and democracy interested in making the world a better place.

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 have and I will continue to support this program if provided by the Governor. If not, we could set up another grant program through the budget process but we need to make sure that the budget language is predictable so it is not in question yearly. By the way, I think that my sponsorship of TI, TA, YTS, Jewel, and others, as well as my attendance of the Beth Tfiloh School demonstrates my commitment to assisting the religious education community.

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

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

Electrification of the grid; devaluing carbon-based energies; incentives to make commercial and residential real estate more efficient.

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