



League of Women Voters 2008 General Election Voters' Guide For Montgomery County

[President and Vice President of the United States](#)
[Representative in Congress – The Office](#)
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Miscellaneous Voting Information

- POLLS are OPEN 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- EMERGENCY ABSENTEE BALLOTS may be obtained at your local Board of Elections office in the 7 days prior to and on election day. You may fill out the application form, obtain the absentee ballot and VOTE in one visit.
- POLLING PLACES are usually less crowded between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Try voting on your lunch hour.

[For More Information](#)
(Located at the end of this document)

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

About the office:

SALARY: \$400,000 per year

TERM: Four years. Limit of two terms.

HOW ELECTED: Every four years political parties nominate candidates to run for President of the United States in a general election that is held on the first Tuesday in November of years divisible by the number four. Although the parties use conventions to nominate their candidates, in most states the Democratic and Republican parties also run state-wide primary elections. The results of the primary influence how the delegates to their respective party's convention will cast ballots for candidates for President. The degree to which the result of the primary election influences the votes of delegates at conventions varies from state to state.

DUTIES: The President is the head of state of the United States of America and is the Chief Executive Officer and the Commander in Chief of all military forces. The powers of the President are described in the Constitution and federal law. The President appoints the members of the Cabinet, ambassadors to other nations and the United Nations, Supreme Court Justices and federal judges subject to Senate approval. The President, along with the Cabinet and its agencies, is responsible for carrying out and enforcing the laws of the United States. The President may also recommend legislation to the United States Congress.

Questions asked candidates for President:

The League of Women Voters of the United States posed questions to the candidates for President in accordance with the following criteria:

- All qualified presidential candidates were invited to provide biographical information and responses to five issue specific questions. Candidates were qualified if they met the following criteria: 1) the candidate must have made a public announcement of her/his intention to run for President; 2) the candidate must qualify for the ballot in enough states to win a majority of electoral votes; and 3) the candidate must meet the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act's minimum contribution threshold requirements for qualifying for matching funds, based on the most recent data publicly available on the FEC Web site as of August 8, 2008.
- Responses were limited to 50 words and truncated after the 50th word.
- Additional information on presidential candidates is available on the League's voter information Web site, www.VOTE411.org.

In Maryland Write-in candidates are allowed to file, after spending \$50.00 in pursuit of the office, until seven days prior to the election. If they file as write-ins, their names will be posted in each polling place on Election Day and votes for them will be counted. Their names will NOT be on any ballots.

BIOGRAPHY:

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: What, if anything, do you believe the federal government should do to control global climate change?

COST OF HEALTH CARE: What should be done at the federal level, if anything, to combat the high cost of health care?

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: What, if anything, should the federal government do about the growing economic disparity between the middleclass and the well-to-do?

EDUCATION: What, if anything, should the federal government do to create the world's best educational system for all children in America?

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: What should the U.S. strategy be towards rising global powers like Russia and China?

The responses to these questions are copyrighted by the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Vote for One:

Barack Obama (Illinois) -- **Joe Biden** (Delaware)

Party: Democratic

Website: www.barackobama.com

BIOGRAPHY: Obama began his career as a community organizer on Chicago's South Side and headed a voter registration drive. Obama practiced civil rights law and taught constitutional law. He served eight years in the State Senate before his election to the U.S. Senate. He graduated from Columbia University and Harvard Law.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: I believe the federal government should pursue multiple paths to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the threat of global climate change, including implementing aggressive cap and trade requirements to reduce U.S. emissions by 80% from 1990 levels and investing heavily in clean energy and advanced vehicle technologies.

COST OF HEALTH CARE: My healthcare plan will make aggressive investments in cost-cutting technologies and will place more focus on prevention and chronic care management. The net result will be to bring down the costs of healthcare spending by \$2,500 for a typical family, annually, and lower the expense of Medicare's services.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: I will cut taxes for the middle class and roll back some of the Bush tax cuts for those making over \$250,000 to restore fairness to the tax code. I will make long term public investments in R&D, clean energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing to create millions of good-paying jobs.

EDUCATION: I will strengthen public schools by expanding early childhood education, reforming and funding No Child Left Behind, recruiting and rewarding high-quality teachers, and expanding afterschool and summer learning opportunities. I will create a \$4,000 American Opportunity Tax Credit and expand financial aid to make higher education affordable for all.

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: We must enhance our abilities both to collaborate and compete with China, while being vigilant about China's military modernization and respect for human rights. As we seek a future of clear-eyed engagement with Russia, we must ensure Russia acts as a force for progress, not regression to past conflicts.

John McCain (Arizona) -- **Sarah Palin** (Alaska)

Party: Republican

Website: www.johnmccain.com

BIOGRAPHY: John McCain graduated from the Naval Academy and served for 22 years as a naval aviator. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1982 and the Senate in 1986. He has served as chairman of the Commerce Committee and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: I support developing a cap-and-trade system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2050, providing tax credits for alternative energy, promoting zero-carbon nuclear power, reducing the federal government's carbon footprint, funding research into clean-coal technology, and offering incentives for America's automobile industry to develop electric cars.

COST OF HEALTH CARE: Under my plan, American families will receive \$5,000 tax credits to purchase insurance, either through employers or the private market—insurance that can follow them if they change jobs or leave the workforce. I will work for reforms to lower costs and provide coverage to Americans with pre-existing conditions.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: We must spur growth, create jobs, improve educational attainment, and enhance financial security. My plan will keep income and payroll taxes low, reduce the price of gas, double the dependent exemption, bring down health-care costs, give deserving homeowners new fixed mortgages, slash our high business taxes, and expand trade.

EDUCATION: Our education system must focus on standards, accountability, and choice. My plan calls for recruiting highly qualified teachers in the neediest communities, empowering parents to choose the best schools for their children, expanding online educational opportunities, providing low-income families with access to tutors, and funding professional development for teachers.

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: As President, I will work to establish good relations with other nations. At the same time, I will stand up for democratic values and human rights, and I will oppose aggression and international lawlessness that threaten our security.

Cynthia McKinney (California) -- **Rosa Clemente** (North Carolina)

Party: Green

Website: www.mckinney2008.com

Did not meet LWVUS/EF criteria stated above.

Bob Barr (Georgia) -- **Wayne A. Root** (Nevada)

Party: Libertarian

Website: www.bobbarr2008.com

Did not meet LWVUS/EF criteria stated above.

Ralph Nader (Connecticut) -- **Matt Gonzalez** (California)

Party: Independent

Website: www.votenader.org

BIOGRAPHY: Attorney, author, and consumer advocate, named by Time Magazine one of the "100 Most Influential Americans in the 20th Century." Over 4 decades of public service. Helped establish the OSHA, EPA, Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Safe Drinking Water Act, Motor Vehicle Safety Act, and Freedom of Information Act.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: The government should stop subsidizing fossil fuels: oil, electric and coal mining interests. Invest in renewable energy that is efficient, sustainable, and environmentally friendly: wind and solar power. Encourage more efficient automobiles, homes and businesses. Ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Create an independent Oceanic Protection Agency. Adopt a carbon pollution tax.

COST OF HEALTH CARE: Adopt a private delivery, free choice of hospital and doctor, single payer public health insurance system. This would save \$350 billion annually by eliminating exorbitant executive pay, advertising, computerized billing fraud and abuse, and apply those savings to comprehensively cover everyone without increasing taxpayer costs. Lower costs through bulk purchasing.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: Unfair legislation allows the middle class to suffer while the rich entrench their status. To correct this we should enact a living \$10 wage, adopt a fair tax, and provide equal pay for women. We must end corporate subsidies and bailouts. Repeal NAFTA and the anti-union Taft/Hartley Law.

EDUCATION: Increase civic education and decrease standardized testing. Repeal “No Child Left Behind” Act. Do not tie test performance to school funding. Provide full funding for pre-school and nutrition programs. Get product marketing out of the schools. Ensure that the nation's crumbling schools are repaired within 3 years.

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: The US should be a humanitarian superpower. Our foreign policy must redefine global security, peace, arms control, an end to nuclear weapons and expand the many assets of our country to assist with major initiatives against global infectious diseases. Stop support of foreign dictators. Human rights come before trade, profit.

Chuck Baldwin (Florida) -- **Darrell L. Castle** (Tennessee)

Party: Constitution

Website: www.baldwin08.com

Did not meet LWVUS/EF criteria stated above.

WRITE-IN CANDIDATES WHO HAVE FILED IN MARYLAND:

Donald K. Allen (Ohio)

Party: Unaffiliated

Website: www.donaldkallenforpresident.com

Lawson Mitchell Bone (Tennessee)

Party: Independent

Theodis (Ted) Brown, Sr. (Missouri)

Party: Independent

James D. Criveau (Virginia)

Party: Non_Partisan

RaeDeen R. Heupel (Montana)

Party: Independent

Website: www.raedeen.com/

Ronald G. Hobbs (Pennsylvania)

Party: Independent

Keith Russell Judd (Texas)

Party: Non-Partisan

Frank Moore (California)

Party: Independent

Website: www.frankmooreforpresident08.com

Lynne A. Starr (Florida)

Party: Independent

Blaine Taylor (Maryland)

Party: Democratic

CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

About the U.S. House of Representatives:

SALARY: \$169,300 per year.

TERM: Two years, no term limit.

HOW ELECTED: The United States is divided into 435 Congressional Districts that are reapportioned after every decennial census. Following the 2000 census, reapportionment resulted in Montgomery County having parts of three Congressional districts located in its boundaries. All seats in the House of Representatives are up for election in every even-numbered year.

DUTIES: Representatives share responsibility with Senators for enactment of the nation's laws as provided for in the U.S. Constitution.

Questions asked candidates for Representative in Congress:

BACKGROUND: What are your qualifications for this office?

IMMIGRATION: What changes, if any, do you support in regard to immigration policy?

CLIMATE CHANGE: Describe Federal legislation you would support to address global climate changes.

ECONOMY: Identify a major challenge to the U.S. economy and how Congress should address it.

EDUCATION: What are your views on the No Child Left Behind legislation?

HEALTH CARE: What plans need to be put into place to meet the country's health care needs?

NATIONAL SECURITY: Identify a national security issue and how Congress should address it.

Vote for no more than one candidate.

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS – DISTRICT 4

(If you live in this district, vote for no more than one candidate)

Donna Edwards

Party: Democratic

Website: www.donnaedwardsforcongress.com

BACKGROUND: I graduated from Wake Forest University (B.A., 1980) and Franklin Pierce Law Center (J.D.,1989). I founded the National Network to End Domestic Violence and as Executive Director I led the fight to pass the Violence Against Women Act. I have served in the House of Representatives since June 2008.

IMMIGRATION: I support a tough, fair, and practical policy that moves undocumented immigrants toward citizenship, strengthens border security, and ensures that employers are accountable and workers are not exploited. I support fair trade policies to protect U.S. jobs, provide fair wages, guarantee workplace safety, and comply with international human rights laws.

CLIMATE CHANGE: I support long-term investments and incentives for clean, renewable energy and mass public transportation to provide real solutions to protect the environment for future generations. We must reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and end subsidies of polluting industries. Transitioning to a greener economy means good jobs and good business.

ECONOMY: As the mortgage crisis worsens and energy prices maintain record levels, the next financial crisis may be related to credit, as people struggle make ends meet. U.S. consumers already own nearly \$1 trillion in credit card debt. I support new, aggressive credit card regulations aimed to help protect consumers.

EDUCATION: While the law itself is not perfect, the goals of NCLB can still be achieved if corrective action is taken immediately. I support revising measures of adequate yearly progress for schools, measure student growth more individually, increase the number of highly qualified teachers, and provide full funding for these initiatives.

HEALTH CARE: I support long-term solutions that will provide affordable, accessible, quality, universal health care for all Americans—focusing on prevention and doctors making medical decisions. I will fight to enable states to negotiate prescription drug prices, and I will not take contributions from drug and insurance companies that block real change.

NATIONAL SECURITY: I support responsibly withdrawing from Iraq and refocusing military priorities on real threats in Afghanistan and Pakistan, while re-establishing our commitment to diplomacy throughout the world. As the daughter of a veteran, I am committed to providing quality medical, educational, compensatory and mental health services to veterans and their families.

Peter James

Party: Republican

Website: www.peterjames08.com

BACKGROUND: 53 years of life in the US. 25 years studying the monetary system. 35 years high tech knowledge of impact on privacy, environment, and our standard of living. 25 years public good projects. Fighting for rights such as jury trial rights and stopping distribution of citizen information to private entities.

IMMIGRATION: Hitler scapegoated the Gypsies while he enslaved Germany. We are told the illegals are causing our economic problems, when in reality trillions of dollars worth of our wealth is being stolen from us by the international banking cartel. Globalists want open borders. Enforce immigration laws but watch "Money as Debt".

CLIMATE CHANGE: This presupposes eminent global climate change is valid. Our money system requires a unsustainable 3% production growth rate to feed the debt monster. Fixing the money will reduce energy consumption to a sustainable level. Provide tax credits for geothermal home systems will cut power generation green house gases by 30%.

ECONOMY: Our economy is based on a flawed and unjust monetary system. Google and watch "Money as Debt". Our greatest leaders Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, Lincoln, Jackson, Garfield have all successfully stopped private money issuance monopolies and fixed the monetary system by returning the power to issue money to the Congress.

EDUCATION: Federal education mandates are nothing more than bribery at best and extortion at worst. You as a parent should control your child's education, not some bureaucrat. I would abolish the department of education and reduce taxes by a like amount. Local governments could raise additional taxes that would better spent.

HEALTH CARE: We have plenty of healthcare. What we lack is the money to pay for it. By fixing our money system and creating prosperity all Americans' will be able to afford quality healthcare. The money monopoly has impoverished America to gain monopoly control over all healthcare (30% of the GDP).

NATIONAL SECURITY: "Those who would give up Essential Liberty to purchase a little Temporary Safety deserve neither Liberty nor Safety" Fear mongering has been used to steal our liberty. I would repeal all unconstitutional nation security legislation. We can protect our society without giving up our essential liberties. Freedom makes America special.

Thibeaux Lincecum

Party: Libertarian

Website: <http://lincecum.us>

BACKGROUND: By consistently achieving goals, I was promoted to Petty Officer Second Class in the U.S. Navy, Vice Commander of Tulane AFROTC Cadets, then Captain in the Air Force, and received the Air Force Commendation Medal. I'm now an information technology consultant with experience at many federal agencies

IMMIGRATION: Make legal immigration easier by allowing entrance to any guest worker that doesn't represent a health or security threat and giving citizenship to all applicants who meet reasonable standards, with no quotas. Make illegal immigration harder and less desirable by improving border security and increasing enforcement of current laws.

CLIMATE CHANGE: The Declaration of Independence affirms our right to life, so government is obligated to restrict life-threatening pollution. However, carbon dioxide is not a pollutant, and climate change, although probably requiring adaptation, is not clearly life-threatening. Conditions may arise that would justify federal legislation, but they haven't yet.

ECONOMY: Our growing debt makes us a slave to other nations, as we are obligated to pay interest for decades to come. We must balance the budget by reducing spending on almost all government programs, and start paying off our debt. Every spending increase for any program conflicts with this priority.

EDUCATION: Attaching incentives to only a few subjects undermines the teaching of all other subjects. Standardizing education across the nation inhibits the freedom of local schools to innovate and find better ways to teach. I support repealing 'No Child Left Behind' legislation.

HEALTH CARE: Allow individuals to purchase health insurance and medical care for themselves with the same tax benefits given to employers and third parties, with any terms agreeable to themselves and the insurer. Lower drug costs by allowing doctors to rely on drug certification by multiple organizations, rather than only the FDA

NATIONAL SECURITY: By not trying to impose values or gain influence in other nations through the use of force, we remove incentives for others to attack us and can reduce our military spending. The best guarantee for continued peace between nations is economic interdependence, and that results from free trade.

Write-In Candidates

Bobby Broadus

Party: Republican

Website: <http://localpolitics.meetup.com/142>

No response by deadline.

Darryn O'Shea Jackson, Sr.

Party: Democratic

Website: www.darrynjackson.com

BACKGROUND: I am a United States Citizen, Resident in the state of Maryland, I am 44 Years old.

IMMIGRATION: Comprehensive immigration reform.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Climate Stewardship and Innovation Act (CSIA) - S.280.

ECONOMY: Labor: Invest in U.S. Manufacturing, Create New Job Training Programs for Clean Technologies, Create New Jobs.

EDUCATION: Fund the law, Recruit, Prepare, Retain, Reward America's Teachers.

HEALTH CARE: Guaranteed Eligibility.

NATIONAL SECURITY: Strengthen our security; rebuild the Military, National Guard and boarder patrol.

Steve Schulin

Party: Unaffiliated

Website: <http://www.md4steve.org>

BACKGROUND: I've run nuclear.com since 1994. I'm disappointed at the miserable failure of our nation's dominant parties to offer a 100% pro-life candidate on the ballot, one who fears God, loves liberty, and will conserve our sovereignty. I'm a candidate because 'If you don't see a leader, be a leader.'

IMMIGRATION: I support immediate securing and continuous vigilant maintenance of our sovereign territory and borders. I oppose any private or governmental action that rewards illegal entry into the USA in any way, and demand speedy and full enforcement of our laws concerning all such activities. No amnesty.

CLIMATE CHANGE: After literally thousands of hours of reading science journals and discussing CO2-climate with a wide range of scientists, I strongly oppose the wrenching changes urged by the alarmists and global governance advocates. I support only commonsense actions like preventing homeowners associations from banning clotheslines. I'll debate anyone, anytime.

ECONOMY: I support abolishing the federal income tax. This will unleash an economic boom the likes of which we've never seen. A fair, simple, noninvasive, visible, efficient, consumption-based retail tax is my proposed replacement. The current tax system is destructive of our liberties in many ways.

EDUCATION: No child left behind is, sadly, an example of federal government abrogating the 10th amendment of our Constitution. If terrorists had caused the devastation of our education system, we'd declare war. I'll work to ensure parents have a real choice of schools, and I'll counter the secular humanists every day.

HEALTH CARE: We talk about health care, but our government has long been integral in misdirecting our resources into creating our current system of "sick care". This needs to change. I oppose the plans to nationalize this important part of our society.

NATIONAL SECURITY: "Peace through strength" is not a mere slogan. It is the means of our survival in a very dangerous and often hostile world. Our friendship should be a sought-after possession of all of good will everywhere in the world. Our enmity should be something that all rightfully fear.

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS – DISTRICT 6

(If you live in this district, vote for no more than one candidate)

Jennifer P. Dougherty

Party: Democratic

Website: www.jennifer08.com

BACKGROUND: As a small business owner for more than 21 years and a former Mayor of Frederick, I have experience setting priorities and balancing a government budget. I am the only person in the race who has balanced a government budget, created jobs and managed government contracts.

IMMIGRATION: I support legal immigration and will work to make federal law clear, enforceable and effective. I support improving electronic employment verification, raising penalties on employers who violate the law and create a method for immigrant to pay for immigration processing through a payroll deduction.

CLIMATE CHANGE: I support raising vehicle efficiency standards, adopting a cap & trade system for emissions and investing in pilot programs to encourage conversion to sustainable energy sources. I propose a bio-fuels refinery in central/western Maryland that will advance the best technology, create jobs and offer an All - American Alternative.

ECONOMY: The government budgeting process is one of the biggest problems. I support requiring new budgeting restrictions that encourage meeting the mission, controlling costs and rewarding creativity. Reckless spending, growing deficits and crushing debt is hurting our ability to invest in actual services.

EDUCATION: I support reforming No Child Left Behind by funding all federal requirements, reducing classroom size, hiring new teachers, addressing pay equity for teaching professionals, and funding Head Start.

HEALTH CARE: I support health care for all within 5 years. I support expansion of State Children's Health Insurance, allowing early retirees (over 55) to buy into Medicare coverage, allowing young people (18-24) to remain on family coverage. I support consumer choice – stay in current plan or buy into federal plan.

NATIONAL SECURITY: The endless War in Iraq has depleted the resources and strength of our military. First, support a plan for a responsible withdrawal from Iraq; guarantee the people in uniform have adequate pay, benefits, supplies; invest in restoring equipment for military; invest in adequate rehab facilities and treatment for veterans.

Roscoe Bartlett

Party: Republican

Website: <http://www.bartlettforcongress.org/>

BACKGROUND: I have been elected eight times to represent the Sixth District of Maryland in the U.S. Congress. Conservative, taxpayer advocacy and business organizations confirm that I have consistently voted for less taxes, less spending, less regulations, and to protect life and Americans' Constitutional rights.

IMMIGRATION: Our immigration system is broken. I have voted against amnesty for illegal aliens. My priorities are to secure America's borders, enforce laws against illegal immigration, prosecute those who violate laws and facilitate illegal immigration, establish English as our official language and improve resources for employers to find legal employees.

CLIMATE CHANGE: To counter mounting evidence that burning fossil fuels may contribute significantly to global warming and that world oil production may be unable to keep up with growing demand, I support energy efficiency, conservation and research and development to transition from dependence on finite fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy.

ECONOMY and NATIONAL SECURITY: Our increasing dependence upon imports for 2/3 of the oil we use is making Americans poorer. Our transportation is 95% dependent upon oil endangering both our economy and national security. We are transferring \$600-700 billion per year, more than we spend on defense, to oil producing countries such as Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Venezuela. As cofounder and cochairman of the bipartisan Congressional Peak Oil Caucus and Defense Energy Working Group, I am recognized as a leader in Congress promoting energy efficiency, conservation and research and development to transition transportation to electricity generated by alternative and renewable sources of energy.

EDUCATION: I voted against No Child Left Behind because I oppose decreasing local control of education by parents, teachers and administrators in the Sixth District. They know better than any bureaucrats in Annapolis or Washington, DC what aid will assist our youth to acquire the skills they need to compete globally.

HEALTH CARE: We have a sick care system, not a health care system. I support changes to increase and reward healthy lifestyle choices by individuals, increase competition by insurers and health care providers and limit malpractice awards unrelated to medical expenses to help reduce health care costs.

Gary W. Hoover, Sr.

Party: Libertarian

Website: www.hoover4congress08.com

BACKGROUND: I have been in the automobile business for the past 16 years. During this time, I have had to negotiate everyday. I believe that we need people in the congress that are willing to negotiate with others to get the peoples business done.

IMMIGRATION: I support greater enforcement of the current immigration laws, not just at the boarder but also at the factories and business that are hiring people that are not permitted to work in our country. There needs to be a total reform of Immigration policy but no amnesty.

CLIMATE CHANGE: We need to completely rethink our energy policy, along with our environmental policy

ECONOMY: 9.5 trillion dollar debt that Congress has strapped the future generation with. Stop spending money we do not have, any new spending has to be matched with cuts elsewhere. Balance budget amendment with emergency provision in case of war or major catastrophe. In addition, cut in programs.

EDUCATION: Failure !!Need to abolish the Department of Education and return schooling to the states, local school boards, and the parents. After watching how those in congress run this country why in the world we want them to educate our children.

HEALTH CARE: Complex problem, but I would start with opening up the health care program that is now enjoyed by members of congress and other federal employees. This would make health care much more affordable to many people. Then look at how we can help the private sector cover those without insurance.

NATIONAL SECURITY: We need to rethink our aggressive attitudes towards the world. Deploy troops only in case of direct attack, withdraw from outdated alliances. Regain the respect of the world.

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS – DISTRICT 8

(If you live in this district, vote for no more than one candidate)

Chris Van Hollen

Party: Democratic

Website: www.vanhollen.org

BACKGROUND: Member of Congress (2003-Present) Committee Assignments: Ways and Means; Oversight and Government Reform; Vice Chairman Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus, Co-Chairman, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Task Force, Maryland State Senate, 1994-2002; Maryland House of Delegates, 1990-1994; Senior Advisor on Federal Affairs, Maryland Governor (1988-1990) .

IMMIGRATION: We must strengthen border security, interior enforcement and prevent illegal immigration. Support overall approach (though not every provision) of the McCain-Kennedy bill to address issue of existing undocumented individuals and the comprehensive strategy once outlined by President Bush. Fix our legal immigration system to end huge backlogs.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Have sponsored legislation to: terminate taxpayer subsidies to oil industry and redirect tax incentives to renewable sources; boost federal research for renewable energy; raise energy efficiency standards for appliances and buildings; increase CAFE standards; implement a Renewable Electricity Portfolio standard; develop a cap and trade system for carbon emissions.

ECONOMY: Global competition presents both a challenge and opportunity. Need world class education system from pre-K through college. Boost federal investment in and incentives for basic R&D; reduce deficit through greater financial discipline including pay-go budget rules; major infrastructure modernization program; greater transparency and oversight of financial markets.

EDUCATION: Fully fund this Act. The first bill I introduced, the Keep our Promises to America's Children and Teachers (Keep our PACT) Act would require the federal government to fully fund both the NCLB Act and the federal special education law (IDEA). Modify some measures of academic progress to improve incentives.

HEALTH CARE: The lack of health coverage for 46 million people is unacceptable. I support universal health care coverage. I am sponsoring legislation to expand the Children's Health Insurance Program, allow earlier buy-in to Medicare, create a small business plan modeled after federal employees' health system, and provide for mental health parity.

NATIONAL SECURITY: In Afghanistan, prevent resurgence of Taliban and finish job against al Qaeda. Iraq war has strengthened Iran and the most radical elements in the region. U.S. cannot impose democracy by force. Lead not only by might of our military, but power of our ideas. Restore credibility. Implement 9/11 Commission recommendations.

Steve Hudson

Party: Republican

Website: www.stev HUDSON2008.com

BACKGROUND: I'm an independent citizen with skills that can help. I want to take the power away from politicians and deliver it back to you, where it belongs. If elected, I will serve no more than three terms in the House of Representatives at your discretion.

IMMIGRATION: Secure the borders and air entry points into the U.S. and enforce existing immigration laws. Reducing the illegal immigrant population will save billions in tax expenditures. Improve opportunities for legal residents, reduce crime, and strengthen our economy and our future.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Global warming is a serious threat. We should respond by increasing the capture of greenhouse gases and reducing carbon emissions into our atmosphere. Eliminating capital gains taxes on alternative and renewable energy investments will rapidly expand these sectors and propel us away from fossil fuels toward energy independence.

ECONOMY: To boost jobs and our economy, we need an energy strategy. Lower the federal gas tax and provide incentives for businesses to allow employees to work from home. Transition from foreign to domestic energy production through environmentally-conscious domestic drilling. Finally, convert from fossil fuels to alternative, renewable, and nuclear energy.

EDUCATION: Parents, teachers, and local school boards should play a much greater role in education than "One Size Fits All" government standards like NCLB. We must take care of our teachers. I support subsidized salaries for teachers who genuinely care and perform. I have four children in public school.

HEALTH CARE: Improve access and quality of health care by offering tax credits to purchase private insurance. Allow groups other than employers to offer individual policies and expand the health care insurance market. Allow re-importation of prescription drugs from countries with a high standard of care. Fully fund Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP.

NATIONAL SECURITY: Deficit spending threatens our security by making us dependent on countries like China. Foreign governments could easily wage economic war on the U.S. by dumping our treasury bonds, which would sink the dollar. I support a balanced budget amendment with a supermajority exception in times of war or national crisis.

Gordon Clark

Party: Green

Website: www.clarkforcongress.net

BACKGROUND: I am a lifelong activist, advocate and community organizer for peace, social justice and the environment. I have both founded and run organizations, including serving as Executive Director of Peace Action, the nation's largest grassroots peace organization. I am also a conflict-resolution trainer, and ten year resident of Silver Spring.

IMMIGRATION: Targeting 12 million undocumented workers, many of whom pay taxes, makes no sense. We must focus law enforcement on the large companies that employ them, often in dangerous jobs, and work to improve economic conditions in their home countries, reducing their incentive to come here for work.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Al Gore's goal to have 100% of our electricity from renewable energy in ten years; a government initiative for gas-free electric cars; re-investment in rail mass transit, both local and national; significant, direct federal investment in energy conservation and localized renewable energy generation; a moratorium on coal-fired power plants.

ECONOMY: Our greatest economic challenge is the inevitable end of cheap oil, along with severe climate change from burning fossil fuels. Investing in renewable energy, we can create millions of green jobs and protect our environment. This must be our New Deal, Marshall Plan and Apollo Project rolled into one.

EDUCATION: Accountability is a laudable goal, but the No Child Left Behind Act is too blunt and inflexible for national education policy. NCLB has forced schools to "teach to tests," often eliminating art and even social studies and de-enriching the educational environment. It's also used for military recruiting, which must end.

HEALTH CARE: We'll never provide adequate health care for 100 million+ uninsured and underinsured Americans through private insurance companies, whose financial incentive is to deny coverage. We must create a universal, single-payer national health care system with free choice of doctors and hospitals. Other countries have done this, why can't we?

NATIONAL SECURITY: The invasion and military occupation of Iraq has been a humanitarian, financial and national security disaster, creating far more enemies than friends. Congress must use its "power of the purse" to stop funding this catastrophe and bring our troops home - not simply downsize it while sending troops elsewhere.

Ian Thomas

Party: Libertarian

No response received by deadline.

Write-In Candidates

Deborah A. Vollmer

Party: Democratic

Website: <http://www.deborahvollmer.com>

BACKGROUND: B.A. in Government, Clark University, 1970; JD University of Maryland School of Law, 1973. Practiced law in California: United Farm Workers; Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance; sole practice. Currently semi-retired. Active in anti-war movement. Board member, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Coalition. Formerly a member of Social Justice Council at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church.

IMMIGRATION: We are a nation of immigrants, and immigrants contribute to our culture and our economy. We need humane policies that allow immigrants to earn legal residency and citizenship, and that promote family unification.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Limit the emissions of pollutants (both vehicle emissions, and pollution arising from industry); incentives for the manufacture of more hybrid vehicles, the development of more energy efficient vehicles; improving mass transit, especially the maintenance and expansion of our Metro system; renewable energy: wind and solar.

ECONOMY: The war in Iraq in particular, and military spending in general, has been a tremendous drain on our economy. We need to refocus our resources on domestic programs to alleviate the effects of poverty—in areas such as housing, health care, and education.

EDUCATION: There are serious flaws in this legislation. We should help struggling teachers and struggling schools, rather than penalizing them. Make adequate financial resources available. Get away from the emphasis on teaching to the test—encourage teachers to be creative, and to provide an atmosphere where children enjoy learning.

HEALTH CARE: I favor legislation sponsored by John Conyers and Dennis Kucinich for universal, publicly-funded, quality health care for all, with individual choice of health care provider. No American should be denied quality health care, which should be considered a human right.

NATIONAL SECURITY: End the flawed policy of the Bush Administration, the so-called "global war on terror." End U.S. funding for the war on Iraq; withdraw troops; and stop perpetuating drumbeats for war with Iran. Focus on promoting mutual respect among peoples and nations, and focus on diplomacy rather than warfare.

Lih Young

Party: Democratic

Website: www.Vote-USA.org/Intro.aspx?Id=MDYoungLih

BACKGROUND: Profiled in Marquis Who's Who. Reformer, advocate, activist, super-mom, -woman, victim-turned superhuman against "fraud-crime-injustice-system". Excellent expertise, commitment. PhD econ. Producer/host, numerous TV programs, Citizen Times, judiciaries, agencies, working class, faith revival, democracy, humanity, conscience, freedom, global affairs. Prestigious certificates: High, Special Exams. Testified frequently, 3 branches, law enforcement. Congress.org, archives

IMMIGRATION: Stop minorities bashing. Support civilian review board. Improve quality officials. race relationships, diversity in good faith, not rhetoric or abuse as often by "fraud-crime- injustice network". Clean-up; not relaying/shuffling at the expense of justice, productivity, good workers, minorities, immigrants. Investigate/prosecute/ eliminate: unjust appropriation, siphoning resources to benefit a few.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Address global warming and oil dependence; raising auto fuel economy; caps on carbon pollution; investing in public transportation, energy conservation technologies, alternative energy development; Eliminate abuse, waste, bad legislative bills, appropriations, abandonment of resources, land, government resources to benefit a few, victimize others or general public; opposite government function; cause ,,,

ECONOMY: Protect people's resources (public, private), rights, families. No unjust practices, manipulation, influence, bad proposals, hidden agenda, false excuses (public-private partnership, economic development, housing, MPDU...) to benefit/ facilitate "official misconduct- government gang- fraud- crime- injustice networks" =cruel tyranny= robbery machine; continuing, on-going, expanding, penetrating; false levies, liens, garnishment, foreclosures, evictions; vicious

EDUCATION: Promote merits, efficiency, accountability; no unjust practices, misleading, manipulation, conspiracy, cover-up, “official misconduct- government gang- fraud- crime- injustice networks”. Eliminate abuse, waste, bad legislative bills, appropriations, abandonment of resources, land, government resources to benefit a few, victimize others or general public; opposite government function; cause socio- political- election- media problems.

HEALTH CARE: Support universal national health insurance (all, Medicare, Medicaid, prescription, uninsured, catastrophic); single payer (government); simple, effective, equal, quality, accountability, preventive, affordable, cost containment; public funded research; not to benefit a few; public education, consumer protection. Eliminate deceit, deprivation, victimization, unjust practices, “official misconduct- government gang- fraud- crime- injustice networks” operation.

NATIONAL SECURITY: Prosecute, eliminate, penalize: official misconduct- government gang- fraud- crime- injustice networks; conspiracies, cover-up fraud and crime; unjustly deprivation of resources (public, private); false excuses, falsification, tampering data, information; victimize, retaliate; damage, destruction, conceal truth, documents, witnesses; unjust manipulation, monitoring, influence; denial of filming, airing, TV, radio, media, copyrights, etc.

JUDGE OF CIRCUIT COURT

About the Office:

SALARY: \$140,352 annual base.

TERM: Fifteen years, no term limit.

HOW ELECTED: When there is a vacancy, the Governor appoints a qualified person to fill the office. Each newly appointed Circuit Judge then must stand for election at the first election that occurs at least one year later. The judge may be opposed formally by one or more qualified members of the bar. All candidates run on both the Democratic and Republican ballots. Independents vote only in the general election.

DUTIES: Judges preside in the Circuit Court which is a trial court of general jurisdiction covering major civil cases and more serious criminal matters. Circuit Courts also may decide appeals from District Court and certain administrative agencies.

Questions asked the Judges:

BACKGROUND: What education and life experiences qualify you to hold this office?

JUSTICE SYSTEM NEEDS: What is the area of greatest need in the Maryland judicial system?

LEGAL ACCESS: What can be done to provide individuals with wider and better access to legal help and the legal system?

JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT – CIRCUIT 6

(Vote for no more than two judges)

Robert Alan Greenberg -- Montgomery

BACKGROUND: I graduated from Wheaton High School, Washington College, and the University of Baltimore School of Law. I was a Montgomery County Assistant State’s Attorney, and also an attorney in private practice for nearly 25 years before being appointed to the Circuit Court bench two years ago by Governor Ehrlich.

JUSTICE SYSTEM NEEDS: We need to continue our efforts at finding alternative means to resolve disputes. Court dockets are already overcrowded, and our physical facilities limited. Many cases both civil and criminal can be effectively settled without judicial intervention, through trained mediators and facilitators.

LEGAL ACCESS: Montgomery County lawyers already provide legal representation to the indigent, through the Public Defender’s Office (criminal cases), the Legal Aid Bureau (civil cases), and our county bar association’s pro bono program. More government funding would ensure continued access, by all citizens, to these vital services.

Mary Beth McCormick – Montgomery

BACKGROUND: I have been a judge since 1997 and have worked in the legal field for 32 years. Before becoming a judge, I practiced in civil and criminal law, as a partner in a law firm and in the Public Defender’s Office; also as law clerk for a Circuit Court judge....

JUSTICE SYSTEM NEEDS: Developing more cost-effective ways of resolving disputes. Due to the increasing costs of litigation, many people decide to represent themselves in matters where they would be better served by having an attorney.

LEGAL ACCESS: The Maryland courts have worked very hard to provide access to the legal system. There is a tremendous amount of on-line assistance, particularly for District Court cases. The Court continues to train its personnel, including judges, to guide the self represented litigant, while still remaining impartial.

JUDGE OF THE COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS AT LARGE

About the Office:

SALARY: \$149,552. annual base

TERM: 10 years – no term limit

HOW ELECTED: The Governor appoints judges to the Court of Special Appeals. The State Senate must confirm these appointments. At the end of a ten-year term, these judges' names must appear on the ballot. Voters vote "yes" for retention, or "no" to remove from office. Judges may not be opposed by other candidates in retention elections. Maryland is divided into 7 Appellate Judicial Circuits. One judge is appointed from each of these circuits and six members are appointed from the state at large. There are a total of 13 judges in the Court of Special Appeals.

DUTIES: Judges preside over The Maryland Court of Special Appeals, which is the intermediate appellate court for Maryland. It was created in 1966 in response to the rapidly growing caseload in the Maryland Court of Appeals. The Court of Special Appeals originally could hear only criminal cases. However, its jurisdiction has expanded so it now considers any reviewable action of the circuit court, unless otherwise provided by law. Judges sitting on the Court of Special Appeals generally hear and decide cases in panels of three.

Questions asked the Court of Appeals candidates:

BACKGROUND: What are your qualifications for this office?

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: What is area of greatest need in the Maryland judicial system?

LEGAL ACCESS: What can be done to provide individuals with wider and better access to legal help and the legal system?

Vote "yes" for continuance in office or "no" for removal.

Deborah Eyler

BACKGROUND: In 11 years of service as a judge on the Court of Special Appeals, I have authored more than 1,000 case opinions. From that experience, I have gained in-depth knowledge of all aspects of Maryland law and have become skilled at producing case opinions that are thorough, fair, and timely.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: In the criminal justice system, additional "drug court" diversion programs because the vast majority of crimes in Maryland are rooted in the distribution and use of illegal drugs. In the civil justice system, affordable legal representation, especially for parents and children in contested custody cases.

LEGAL ACCESS: More outreach by courts and the judiciary's local pro-bono committees, which exist in each county, to link up, early in a case, a party who cannot afford representation with a pro bono lawyer who can handle the matter for free or at a substantially reduced rate.

Robert A. Zarnoch

BACKGROUND: Before my appointment, I served 30 sessions as the Attorney General's Counsel to the General Assembly. I reviewed 20,000 bills and authored thousands of advice letters. I argued in the Supreme Court and participated in 39 cases in the State's highest court, including one making the Camden Yards stadiums possible.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: A 2008 Harris Poll discloses that only 16% of the public has a great deal of confidence in the courts and the justice system. Such numbers will never be reversed until judges demonstrate by performance that the system is accessible, deals fairly with all, and reaches just results.

LEGAL ACCESS: Studies note that a citizen is more likely to go to court than be hospitalized. Greater support for legal aid and pro bono lawyering is needed. Promotion of pre-paid legal plans and self-help, expanding small claims courts and streamlining legal procedures would also help citizens obtain affordable legal assistance.

BOARD OF EDUCATION – MONTGOMERY COUNTY

About the Office:

SALARY: \$18,500 annual base

TERM: Four years, no term limit

HOW ELECTED: The Board of Education is composed of five members who must reside in the districts that they represent and two at large members who may live anywhere in the county. Elections for Board of Education are non-partisan. Three seats will be filled in the general election in November. Candidates are running for one at-large seat and for two seats that represent districts. All voters, regardless of the district in which they reside, may vote for one at-large candidate and one candidate from each district.

DUTIES: Members of the Board of Education determine and enforce policies that govern the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Among other responsibilities, the Board of Education appoints the Superintendent of Schools; initiates, reviews and discusses educational issues; reviews and submits to the County Council annual capital and operating budgets; and receives funding from county, state and federal sources.

Questions asked the Board of Education candidates:

BACKGROUND: What are your qualifications for this office?

PRIORITIES: What are your priorities for serving on the Board of Education?

TESTING: What should be the role of standardized testing in the school curriculum?

BUDGET: What is your view on teacher salary negotiations?

OPTIONS: Does MCPS provide enough options for the non-college bound student? Please explain.

SUPERINTENDENT: What qualifications would you look for in a superintendent?

At Large:

(Vote for no more than one candidate regardless of where you live.)

Phil Kauffman

WEBSITE: www.philkauffman.com

BACKGROUND: I am a parent of two MCPS graduates. I have been active at all levels of PTA: school, cluster, and countywide. With a degree in Economics, I understand the financial complexities of the MCPS budget. As an attorney, I know how to read and draft policies for maximum effectiveness.

PRIORITIES: Develop a fiscally responsible budget that is transparent to taxpayers. Ensure that the middle school reform effort is successful by designing a curriculum that challenges every student. Encourage student achievement through meaningful programs, involve parents and engage the community. Eliminate unnecessary testing to provide more time for teaching.

TESTING: Standardized tests can gauge whether students' mastery of curriculum is consistent across schools. However, as MCPS aligns curriculum with state tests, it must not lower standards. A coherent and content-rich curriculum must be developed that emphasizes complete mastery of basic facts and skills as well as concepts

BUDGET: It is important to the success of our schools that we continue to attract and retain highly qualified teachers. Competitive salaries are necessary to meet that goal. However, it is equally important to balance the needs of taxpayers to ensure that agreed upon compensation for employees is fiscally affordable.

OPTIONS: No. MCPS needs to improve its career preparation programs for students who are interested in job opportunities upon graduation. The Edison program is very successful and similar programs should be included along with countywide career pathways to create more options for our students in every high school

SUPERINTENDENT: The Superintendent must possess strong interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to articulate clearly the district's vision to all stakeholders. He/she must be able to build consensus among individuals and groups. The Superintendent must be an effective advocate for the interests of MCPS in Annapolis.

Tommy Le

WEBSITE: **None**

BACKGROUND: I have a formal education in engineering and am a licensed engineer in Maryland. I had taught schools [vocational school and college]; I have served on career/technical advisory committees to MCPS & Montgomery colleges, as well as citizens boards to advise County Executive and County Council. The School Board currently ...

PRIORITIES: (1) Hold MCPS to be more fiscally accountable in this time of economic uncertainty and yet will maintain our public schools academically excellence in reading, writing, math, science, and information technology. (2) Improve vocational training; emphasize civic education and responsibility to family, society, and country.

TESTING: I concur that all students must demonstrate acceptable academic performance via some types of testing - Test results also reflect the teaching skills and instructional ability of teachers. Test results also bear the proof of whether the curriculums taught by MCPS to our students at the different levels are meeting ...

BUDGET: The teachers union has the right to negotiate for the basic annual increase for their members; however these increases should at the level commensurate with what the community's resources can accommodate. I also would call for some reserved fund to award those good teachers who would go beyond their duty.

OPTIONS: No. Our country will need more technicians and trained workers than ever to manage our technical machineries and upgrading our national infrastructures. MCPS seems to dwell on getting students academically-prepared for colleges and had neglected other technical/vocational education needs for students who want to learn non academic skills.

SUPERINTENDENT: He/She should come from our own county, who is well respected by peers and stakeholders, who understands our schools system and all its ills and great-nesses. The superintendent will respect the wills and needs of all spectrums in our community and will dedicate 100% time running the schools system in...

District 2:

(Vote for no more than one candidate regardless of where you live.)

Stephen N. Abrams

WEBSITE: **None**

BACKGROUND: Both my experience as a 3-term member of the Board of Education as well as my professional background is my best qualification for a 4th term. I bring a common-sense, problem-solving approach to the Board, and I am able to think outside the box for innovative solutions to new challenges.

PRIORITIES: My priority has been maintaining MCPS's outstanding performance while undergoing dramatic demographic changes. It will continue to be focused on raising the educational outcomes for all students and institutionalizing the change in MCPS culture as a result of the Weast reforms.

TESTING: I favor testing that leads to certification. For example, I am a strong advocate of both AP and IB exams where students can earn college credits or course exemptions. I would like to see the state and federal tests that our students are required to take to adopt similar criteria....

BUDGET: I was one of two Board members who did not support the current teachers' contract. I opposed it because I didn't believe the County's budget could accommodate it, particularly the third year. We will see next year if I was right.

OPTIONS: We need more. Our reforms have been based on the realization that the vocational skills of the 21st Century require communications skills and competency in math, English and computers. We need to make sure we teach the skills needed for a high tech, bio-science workplace that will produce most of...

SUPERINTENDENT: I believe the next superintendent needs to have the same passion for rigor and high expectations for all students that has been the driving force behind Dr. Weast's reforms. The next superintendent need not be a change agent. Rather, he or she needs to be able to help our institution ...

Laura V. Berthiaume

WEBSITE: www.laura4boe.com

BACKGROUND: Current MCPS parent; Former Cluster Co-Coordinator, Rockville Cluster, MCCPTA; former Delegate to MCCPTA, Beall ES; Former Board Member, Baptist Home for Children (now the National Center for Children and Families); President, Friends of the Library, Rockville Chapter, 2007-2008.

PRIORITIES: Improve communication at every level; 2) Address the needs of every child for exercise, good nutrition, and safe and modern schools; 3) Adopt a common sense, transparent budget that respects local parent and student concerns; 4) Hire a dynamic, proactive Superintendent as Dr. Weast's contract expires in 2011.

TESTING: Testing should deliver timely results so teachers can customize their approach to a particular child within the school year. Testing that tracks each child from grade to grade will provide better accountability than the current statistical game-playing that often wastes instructional time and crowds out art, music, PE, and recess.

BUDGET: The Board should not have approved such a generous contract in the face of a foreseeable economic downturn, but having now created those expectations, we should honor the contract. Nevertheless, classroom instruction - including class size - should always be the last place to suffer any budget cuts. Kids always...

OPTIONS: No. Vocational education is not currently a viable option for far too many students. Given our almost twenty percent drop-out rate, we must improve our vocational education offerings county-wide to give all children a path to a successful life, especially those who will not go to college.

SUPERINTENDENT: Bold drive to make MCPS a cutting edge leader in curriculum, the use of technology, and the school year calendar; Experience running a large organization; Political savvy; Background in education; Deep commitment to student academic, social, emotional, and critical thinking skills achievement; Attitude of respect for all persons; Inclusive approach.

District 4:

(Vote for no more than one candidate regardless of where you live.)

Christopher S. Barclay

WEBSITE: None located.

BACKGROUND: In December of 2006 I was appointed to the Board of Education. The experience that I have gained in the last two years has allowed me to understand how to balance the needs of the students, the parent community and the school system.

PRIORITIES: My priorities are equity and excellence. We need to ensure that each and every classroom has a high quality teacher.

TESTING: Standardized tests should be used as one of many tools to assess student progress in a subject area. The federal No Child Left Behind Act has forced too many school systems to over emphasize the importance of standardized tests as assessment tools.

BUDGET: Teachers are the most valuable assets of our school system. During the FY 2009 budget process I strongly supported maintaining the negotiated agreement.

OPTIONS: MCPS does a great job providing options for students who may not be looking at college after graduation from high school. Even with that, we need to examine ways to expand the offerings in the automotive trades, construction trades and information technology.

SUPERINTENDENT: Strong communication skills. A commitment to equity and diversity. A history of effective staff management. Excellent political skills.

STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Question 1 - Constitutional Amendment

(Chapter 513, Acts of 2007)

Early Voting; Polling Places; Absentee Ballots

Authorizes the General Assembly to enact legislation to allow qualified voters to vote at polling places inside or outside of their election districts or wards and to vote up to two weeks before an election. This amendment also authorizes the General Assembly to enact legislation to allow absentee voting by qualified voters who choose to vote by absentee ballot, in addition to voters who are absent at the time of the election or who are unable to vote personally.

(Amends Article I, §§1 and 3 of the Maryland Constitution)

- For the Constitutional Amendment
- Against the Constitutional Amendment

Origin of this Ballot Question – Legislation that would allow early voting and “no-excuse” absentee voting was passed by the General Assembly in 2006, but a court decision found the legislation to be in conflict with the Maryland Constitution. Therefore, in the 2007 session, the General Assembly passed SB 1 - Elective Franchise - Early Voting and Polling Places which amends the Maryland Constitution to allow the General Assembly to pass legislation that will establish early voting sites and allow voters to vote by absentee ballot without having to give a reason. All Constitutional Amendments must be passed by a majority of voters statewide.

Present Practice – Article I, Section 1 of the Maryland Constitution states that a voter “shall be entitled to vote in the ward or election district in which he resides.” As currently interpreted, this means that a voter cannot vote at an early voting location outside the voter’s election district and that a provisional ballot cast by a voter outside his or her election district cannot be counted. Article XV, Section 7 of the Maryland Constitution designates the “Tuesday after the first Monday of November” as the date of the general election. This has been interpreted by the Court of Appeals to mean that early voting is not permissible. Absentee ballots are only for use by voters who are absent at the time of an election or who are unable to vote in person at the assigned voting precinct. The absentee ballot application requires a voter to affirm this fact.

Proposed Change – If the amendment passes, the General Assembly may enact laws to establish early voting sites. Early voting would allow registered voters to vote, in person, up to two weeks before a state-wide primary or general election at polling places outside of their normal district or precinct. Early voting sites can accommodate voters from multiple precincts or even from the entire state. However, passing this amendment only allows the General Assembly to establish an early voting process. The details of how many early voting sites will be established and how the locations for them will be determined will come in future legislation. Passage of this amendment will also allow the General Assembly to pass legislation that enables any qualified voter to vote by absentee ballot if they choose to do so. The enabling legislation could remove the requirement to sign a statement telling why the voter wants to vote by absentee ballot.

Pros: Allows for in-person voting by voters who, due to work hours, long commutes or other reasons, are unable to vote during the limited hours on Election Day. Early voting should ease long lines and lengthy wait times at precincts on Election Day and should ease the workload of precinct workers. This measure also increases the likelihood that a voter’s provisional ballot will be counted by allowing a provisional ballot cast outside the voter’s election district to be counted for eligible races.

Cons: There will be increased costs associated with providing polling locations prior to Election Day. Voters who vote during early voting may not have access to late campaign information on which to base their election decisions. By encouraging more voters to use absentee ballots or early voting sites, some of the community interaction that takes place at precinct based polling places may diminish.

Question 2 - Constitutional Amendment

(Chapter 5, Acts of 2007 Special Session)

Authorizing Video Lottery Terminals (Slot Machines) to Fund Education

Authorizes the State to issue up to five video lottery licenses for the primary purpose of raising revenue for education of children in public schools, prekindergarten through grade 12, public school construction and improvements, and construction of capital projects at community colleges and higher education institutions. No more than a total number of 15,000 video lottery terminals may be authorized in the State, and only one license may be issued for each specified location in Anne Arundel, Cecil, Worcester, and Allegany Counties, and Baltimore City. Any additional forms or expansion of commercial gaming in Maryland is prohibited, unless approved by a voter referendum.

(Enacts new Article XIX of the Maryland Constitution)

- For the Constitutional Amendment
- Against the Constitutional Amendment

Origin of this Ballot Question – For several years, efforts to enact legislation that would authorize Video Lottery Terminals (slot machines) as a way to raise revenue for state expenditures failed in the legislature. The governor proposed, and legislators agreed, that the decision of whether to significantly expand gambling in

Maryland should be decided by the voters. The Maryland Constitution allows only two ways for citizens to vote on laws. The first is to gather enough signatures on a petition to place a law that has been passed by the General Assembly on the ballot for voter approval. The second is to place a constitutional amendment, approved by three-fifths of the legislators, before the voters in a General Election. In the 2007 Special Session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 4, which would add a new article to the Maryland Constitution to authorize video lottery terminal gaming (slot machines) in Maryland. A majority of voters, *statewide*, must vote in favor of the amendment for it to go into effect.

Present Practice – Currently, the annotated code of Maryland prohibits video lottery terminal (slot machine) gambling except certain fraternal, religious or war veterans’ organizations in a few counties may operate no more than five individual slot machines, and the revenue from them must be used for the charitable purposes of those organizations. Public education is currently funded through Maryland’s General Fund. State funding for primary and secondary education is about \$5.35 billion for this fiscal year. The three main sources of revenue for the General Fund are income tax, retail sales tax and the State Lottery. School construction may be funded by the General Fund but is primarily funded by borrowing through the issuance of State bonds.

Proposed Change – If the amendment passes, Maryland may operate up to 15,000 video lottery terminals in five locations: Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Allegany, Cecil and Worcester Counties. No more than one gambling facility would be allowed in each of the authorized jurisdictions. Another bill related to gambling, SB 3, was also passed during the 2007 Special Session. It will go into effect contingent on the passage of this constitutional amendment. As defined by SB 3, 33% of proceeds from video terminal gambling would go to the licensed operators, 9.5% to the horse racing industry; and approximately 48.5% to education. The remainder would be used for lottery expenses, local impact grants and administrative costs. Included in the latter is money to fight gambling addiction. The amendment also states that no additional video lottery terminals shall be authorized without another approval by voters.

Pros: In 2007, the Department of Legislative Services estimated 2010 state revenues will increase by approximately \$86 million from video gaming receipts and by as much as \$565 million by 2013. This additional revenue could reduce tax increases that would otherwise be necessary to fund projected education expenses. Maryland residents who gamble in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Delaware may choose to spend their gambling dollars here instead of taking them out of state. New jobs will be created in construction and the gambling industry. Jobs in the horse racing industry may be saved. Unlike taxation, gambling is a recreational choice and not a mandate.

Cons: In order to generate enough revenue to reach the projected increases to state funding, gamblers in Maryland would have to lose over \$1 billion per year. To generate this level of revenue, the state will have to urge its citizens to frequent slots parlors. Gambling, like other addictions, frequently leads to social (and government) costs associated with lost productivity, increased crime, broken families and even suicide. Disposable income that currently generates sales tax revenue could be spent on gambling resulting in a loss to the General Fund. The referendum would put a specific revenue source, gambling, in the state Constitution. A constitution should be clear, concise and confined to fundamentals of the structure of government.

LOCAL BALLOT QUESTIONS – MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Question A -- Charter Amendment by act of County Council

Repeal of Legally Ineffective Provisions

Repeal Sections 311A, 311B, and 311C of the County Charter, regarding use of County funds to operate a landfill system on residentially zoned land; burying or trenching sewage sludge on residentially zoned land; and telephone service offered by the C&P Telephone Company.

- For the Charter Amendment
- Against the Charter Amendment

Origin of this Ballot Question – This question was recommended by the Charter Review Commission and placed on the ballot by the Montgomery County Council.

Present Practice – The County Charter provides a framework for the governance of the county. Three provisions in the County Charter: 311A, 311B, and 313A currently have no legal force and do not affect how county government operates. The Maryland courts blocked implementation of 311A and 313A because each directly conflicted with some aspect of state law. More fundamentally, neither of these provisions are proper “Charter Material” because they do not address a fundamental aspect of the form and basic structure of county government. In addition, they attempt to legislate through a charter amendment, which the Maryland Constitution prohibits. Although the Maryland courts have not blocked the operation of 311B, a consistent line of Court of Appeal opinions makes clear that this provision, like the ones above, is in conflict with the Maryland Constitution’s prohibition on legislating through a charter amendment.

Proposed Change – The ballot question proposes removing these three provisions from the Montgomery County Charter.

Pros: The county charter will no longer contain provisions that are unenforceable and that are not essential to defining the basics of how county government is structured. Leaving them in the charter could create confusion because the charter would not be an accurate reflection of the form and structure of county government.

Cons: These provisions were placed in the charter by petition and reflect a vote of the people. Because of this vote, these provisions should not be removed from the charter even though they are legally ineffective.

Question B -- Charter Amendment by petition

Property Tax Limit - Votes Needed to Override

Amend Section 305 of the County Charter to require a unanimous vote of 9 Councilmembers, rather than the 7 out of 9 votes currently required, to levy a tax on real property that will produce revenue that exceeds the annual limit on property tax revenue set in that section.

- For the Charter Amendment
- Against the Charter Amendment

Origin of this Ballot Question – The Maryland Constitution allows amendments to any charter adopted by any county to be placed on a general election ballot if a petition in support of the amendment has a minimum of 10,000 signatures. The Montgomery County Board of Elections certified that Robin Ficker collected the required number of signatures to place this measure on the ballot.

Present Practice – Under Charter Section 305, Approval of the Budget; Tax Levies, tax revenues from real property may not increase more than the rate of inflation. The charter defines which property tax revenue is included in this calculation. Under current practice, if tax revenue growth exceeds the rate of inflation, the Council must reduce the real property tax rate to bring the overall revenue growth in line with inflation. However, a supermajority (7 out of 9 votes) of the Council may override the charter limits and approve revenue growth that exceeds the rate of inflation.

This option has been used four times since it was adopted in 1990. In Fiscal Year 2003 (FY03), by a vote of 8 to 1, the Council maintained the tax rate although, due to increased property assessments, the revenue generated by the previous year's tax rate exceeded the charter limit by \$4.3 million. In FY04, the Council voted unanimously to maintain the current tax rate, when again, due to increased property tax assessments, the revenue generated exceeded the charter limit by \$29.2 million. In the following fiscal year, 2005, a unanimous Council voted to reduce the current tax rate by 1 cent, but the revenue generated still exceeded the charter limit by \$48 million. In FY06, 07 and 08, the property tax rate was reduced and the revenue generated was at the charter limit. For FY09, the Council adopted (8 yes votes, one position vacant) tax rates that were the same as the previous year but are expected to generate more revenue than the charter allows without the supermajority vote.

Proposed Change – To increase property tax revenues above the rate of inflation, all nine (9) members of the County Council instead of the current seven (7) would have to vote in favor of adopting a tax rate that would generate more income than the previous year's income plus a percentage of the previous year's property tax revenue that equals the increase in the Consumer Price Index as defined in the County Charter.

Pros: The amount of revenue collected by the county would not exceed the rate of inflation without a unanimous vote of the County Council. This might slow the rate of growth of county expenditures and reduce the impact of increased property tax assessments by making it more difficult for the Council to raise more revenue.

Cons: Requiring nine votes to exceed the charter limit could be problematic if a Council position is vacant when the tax rate needed to be approved, as occurred in this fiscal year. In addition, it gives veto power to a single member of the Council. County expenses such as education, health care for employees and transportation do not necessarily grow at the same rate as inflation. Passage of this measure could result in a reduction of county services. Restricting the Council's fiscal options could jeopardize the county's AAA bond rating, which means it would pay higher interest rates to borrow money for capital projects.

VOTING INFORMATION
To Accompany the On-Line
2008 GENERAL ELECTION VOTERS' GUIDES

General Election: Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Polls open - 7 am to 8 pm

Voter Registration Deadline: Tuesday, October 14, 2008

[Find Your Local Board of Elections](#) – From the Maryland State Board of Elections Website.

[Legislative and Congressional District Maps](#) – From the Maryland Department of Planning Website.

[Absentee Ballot](#) Application Deadline: Tuesday, October 28, 2008

[Emergency Absentee Ballot](#) Procedure:

[Provisional Ballot](#) Procedure:

[The Electoral College](#): An explanation.

THE VOTERS' GUIDE and THE LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in public policy debate and governmental decision-making. The League has a long tradition of publishing the verbatim responses of candidates to questions important to voters. The League offers this Voters' Guide to assist citizens in their decision-making process as they prepare for the general election. **The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.**

The candidates' answers in the Guide appear as submitted. If answers exceeded the word limit, an ellipsis indicates words were cut from the end of the statement. No write-in candidates will appear on the ballot but the list of filed write-ins will be available at each polling place.

In most areas of Maryland, the Local Leagues have been able to have Voters' Guides printed for distribution. For those voters who need On-Line access, this version has been prepared.

The League thanks all candidates who submitted answers to its questionnaires.

VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS and POLLING LOCATION

[Check with your Local Board of Elections](#) to verify your registration status and polling location. The registration deadline is Tuesday, October 14.

COME PREPARED TO VOTE

1. Read your **sample ballot** from Board of Elections mailed the last week of October.
2. Note your polling place location on the front; polling locations change!
3. Use this *Voters' Guide* to become informed on candidates and issues.
4. Mark your candidate selections and ballot question decisions **ahead of time**.
5. Bring your completed sample ballot with you on November 4 to vote confidently and reduce waiting times. Shorter lines are expected from 10 am to 2 pm.

DON'T PANIC IF THERE'S A PROBLEM

1. Check the signs for directions and/or ask the poll workers for assistance.
2. Depending on your jurisdiction, language assistance may be available.
3. If your name is not on the precinct register, you may be directed to another polling place or given the option of a **Provisional Ballot**. Provisional ballots are verified following the election for voter registration accuracy. Votes of verified registrants are included in the final election tally.

POLLING PLACE RESTRICTIONS

No cell phone, pagers, cameras or computers may be used by voters in the polling place.
Up to two children, 13 or under, may accompany a voter into the voting booth.

LONG WORK HOURS? KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

On Election Day, polls are open from 7 am to 8 pm. State Law requires Maryland-based employers to release you with pay for up to two hours **only if** you do not have two continuous hours off during the time the polls are open.

ABSENTEE BALLOT

1. Apply in writing for an absentee ballot if you “will be absent or unable to vote in person in the election.” Applications are available from your local Board of Elections upon request in writing, by telephone, or in person.
2. Return completed application form by 4:30 pm October 28 to the Board of Elections by mail or in person.
3. Absentee ballots are usually mailed approximately three weeks before an election.
4. Return completed absentee ballots by mail, postmarked no later than Election Day, Nov. 4 or in person at the Board of Elections by 8 pm on Election Day.

EMERGENCY ABSENTEE BALLOT

If the need arises from October 29 through Election Day, request an Emergency Absentee Ballot. Apply in person at the Board of Elections:

1. Complete Late Application for Absentee Ballot,
2. Receive an absentee ballot and
3. Vote on the spot or return to the Board yourself by 8 pm on Election Day.

If unable to complete this process in person (e.g. hospitalization)

1. You or someone acting for you must obtain a Late Application for Absentee Ballot.
2. Complete the Designation of Agent section on the Late Application.
3. Your agent then obtains an absentee ballot from the Board of Elections on your behalf, brings it to you to vote, and returns it prior to 8 pm on Election Day.

The Electoral College

The selection of the President and Vice President of the United States is more complicated than simply counting up the number of votes that each candidate receives on Election Day. When the United States Constitution was written, the country’s founders created an institution call the “Electoral College”. Part of the goal of establishing such an institution was to give power to the less populous states and to insure that candidates for President and Vice President had sufficient distribution of support from all areas of the nation to govern.

Each state is allocated one elector for every representative that they have in Congress. In Maryland, we have two Senators and eight members of the House of Representatives so we have 10 electors in the Electoral College. The smallest states have two senators and one member in the House so they have only 3 electors. Even though the District of Columbia has no members in Congress they were given the right to have electors following the ratification of the 23rd Amendment in 1961. California, the most populous state, has 55 electors. No member of Congress may be an elector.

In the beginning, the Electoral College had considerable power in making an independent choice among the candidates for President and Vice President. At one time, their names appeared on the ballot during a Presidential election. Now, only the names of the candidates appear. However, voters are actually casting ballots for electors who are pledged to the ticket they just voted for. The candidate with the highest number of votes in each state will be represented by electors who will all cast their vote for the winning candidate. The exceptions to this “winner take all” practice are the states of Maine and Nebraska. In those states, the winner of the statewide vote gets 2 electoral votes (equal to the number of senators from the state) and the candidate with the highest popular vote in each Congressional District receives the one electoral vote that is allocated for that district.

On the Monday after the second Wednesday in December, all of the electors chosen as a result of the General Election in November meet in their respective state capitals to cast two ballots – one for President and one for Vice President. The Electoral College includes 538 electors (one for every member in Congress plus 3 from the District of Columbia). In order to be elected, the candidates must receive 270 electoral votes. If no candidate for President receives that many votes, the House of Representatives picks the winner from the top three vote getters. Each state receives only one vote, regardless of its size. The Senate chooses the Vice President if no candidate receives 270 votes. Senators cast their votes as individuals, not as states.