

Food & Water Action
Candidate Questionnaire
Maryland General Assembly

Candidate Information

Candidate Name: Marc Korman District Number: 16

Office Sought: Delegate Party Affiliation: Democrat Incumbent: Yes X No___

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A) Energy Policy

1) The evidence supplied by climate change science shows that we must stop emitting greenhouse gases, primarily from burning fossil fuels, as quickly as possible if we hope to avoid the worst effects of climate change. One area in which states can play an important role in transitioning away from fossil fuels is through retail electricity policy. Do you support legislation to require all retail electricity sales in Maryland to come from clean sources – wind, solar, small hydro, and ocean tidal – by 2035? What additional policies do you support for reducing Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions?

I am a co-sponsor of Delegate Robinson's 100% renewables legislation, HB 878. I believe we can achieve this ambitious goal, but it does require additional investment

and a commitment to energy storage (which I have successfully passed legislation on) that can be paired with intermittent renewables.

2) If we are to transition rapidly to clean energy sources, major investments will be required. We will need to build generation capacity from clean sources that is far greater than their current share of our energy portfolio. In aid of this effort, do you support public funding of construction of renewable electricity generation on public property?

Yes.

3) Under current law, Maryland counts a variety of electricity generation sources as “renewable,” including burning municipal solid waste and poultry litter. Do you support legislation that would restrict the definition of clean renewables to wind, solar, geothermal, and ocean tidal? If not, please explain why you believe these are sources should be counted as renewable energy.

Yes. As stated above, I support and co-sponsor HB 878 which would remove these dirty sources. I also co-sponsored Delegate Waldstreicher’s HB 1287 in the 2016 legislative session to clean-up the RPS.

4) There is increasing discussion in Maryland about addressing climate change through pricing schemes such as carbon taxes. However, pricing has not been shown to be an effective climate tool and in places where taxes have been implemented, like British Columbia, GHG emissions have not gone down, but actually have risen. Would you oppose efforts to expand carbon pricing in Maryland and, if so, why?

I will not pledge to oppose efforts to expand all carbon pricing policies in Maryland. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (“RGGI”) is a pricing “scheme” and I believe it should be continued. Expanding such policies should absolutely be explored in conjunction with other policies and I think it is unwise for those who care about the environment to rule them out. If the British Columbia approach has not, in your view, been successful, then we should learn where and how it failed and improve it. I am not saying that pricing is the only approach we should take, but I also do not believe it should be ruled out.

B) Agriculture Policy

5) It’s widely documented that agriculture in Maryland, and in particular the Eastern Shore poultry industry, is a major contributor to the decades-long

nutrient problems facing local waterways and the Bay. Communities near these factory farms are also concerned about the negative health effects from air emissions coming from the large number of animals concentrated at these operations, yet the Maryland Department of the Environment claims that large poultry factory farms do not need to receive air permits before operating. Do you support legislation that would require the MDE to perform air monitoring at CAFOs to determine what air emissions are being released and to report its findings to the General Assembly? What other policies should the state enact to help protect residents from the negative health effects of large factory farms?

I would support Delegate Robinson's HB 26 which I believe accomplishes much—if not all—of what the question asks.

6) Under current law, Maryland taxpayers subsidize the removal of excess poultry litter – a combination of manure and bedding – from poultry operations. Would you support legislation that would require the large poultry companies, such as Perdue or Tyson, to pay the cost of removing the litter from the farms with which they contract and from which they profit?

I would be supportive of making a change to remove any taxpayer subsidy, either by a requirement on the large poultry companies or some type of fee to cover the costs.

C) Water Affordability and Access

7) Across Maryland residents' water service rates are rapidly increasing. For many residents, especially lower income households and seniors on fixed incomes, the rates have become unaffordable. The United Nations defines affordable water service as costing no more than 3% of total household income. Do you support legislation that would require local water utilities to implement income based water service rates that cap the amount low income households pay for water service? What other measure would you support to assure residents access to safe and affordable water service?

I would be pleased to see that type of income-based approach. I supported Montgomery County local bill PG/MC 105-18 to expand the customer assistance program to assist low income individuals, and would support a more comprehensive approach. I have supported differential pricing for water utilities (see MC/PG 101-17) which could be used to help support some of these programs.

8) In some Maryland jurisdictions inability to pay your water service bill can lead to having a tax lien placed on your house. This allows the local jurisdiction to seize the home from its owner and sell it to developers or investors. Do you

support legislation that would ban tax lien sales of homes for unpaid water service bills?

Yes, I voted in favor of Delegate Washington's HB 1409 to address this issue in Baltimore. I would support a more comprehensive approach.

D) Tax Policy

9) Every state that levies a corporate income tax must determine, for each company doing business within its borders, how much of the company's profits it can tax. One factor that all such states use to make this determination is the percentage of the company's nationwide sales that can be attributed to the state. Ideally, all of a company's sales would be attributed to the states in which it operates, but, due to differences among states' corporate income tax rules, this is not always the case. Under these differing laws, some corporate income becomes "nowhere" income which is untaxed by any state. A popular solution to this problem, currently used in 29 states and the District of Columbia, is a "throwback" rule which mandates that sales into other states or to the federal government that are not taxable will be "thrown back" into the state of origin for tax purposes. Would you support efforts to adopt the throwback rule in Maryland?

Yes, I would support a change including Delegate Young's HB 1051 on this issue.

E) Democracy

11) Evidence from states that allow election day voter registration suggests that same day registration can increase voter participation in elections. Do you support efforts to allow election day registration in Maryland? What additional policies would you support for expanding voter participation in Maryland elections?

Yes, in fact I was proud to recently vote for HB 532 on this issue, which I also co-sponsored. Prior to joining the legislature, I helped expand access to the polls by championing legislation to shift the date a party change could be made to be the same as absentee ballot requests. I support continued expansion of early voting and would like to increase the marketing budget for the state and local boards of election so people are aware not only of the election, but also the opportunities to early vote or obtain absentee ballots.