



AFSCME Maryland, Council 3, is the union for state and university workers. We represent the more than 28,000 hard-working women and men who provide the vital public services that make Maryland happen!

Please answer these questions as concisely as possible. Please send completed questionnaires in by June 10 to Lance Kilpatrick at LKilpatrick@afscmemd.org.

AFSCME Maryland Questionnaire for Gubernatorial Candidates

Candidate Name:

Questions:

1. Solving the State Staffing Crisis
 - a. Our members have seen Maryland state employee staffing levels decline significantly over the last decade. In January 2018, the Department of Legislative Services reported to the General Assembly's Spending and Affordability Committee that Maryland's state government needs to fill 1,200 vacancies and create another 1,200 new positions to carry out the critical services our members provide. As of July 2020, vacancies had actually *increased* to over 4,300, a vacancy rate of 11%.
 - i. Would you fill these positions and hire additional staff?
 - ii. Over what period of time would it take to meet the DLS recommended staffing levels?
 - iii. How would you fund this increase in staffing levels?

2. Securing Sustainable State Revenues & Protecting Vital State Services
 - a. How do you propose, in some detail, expanding state services, eliminating the structural deficit, and making Maryland's tax system fairer?
 - b. The 2017 tax law passed by Donald Trump and Congressional Republicans unfairly penalized Maryland residents. What steps should Maryland take in response to ensure that we maintain appropriate funding for vital state services?
 - c. Do you believe Maryland needs to raise additional revenue and taxes or make additional cuts? Please explain your answer and identify specifics of potential cuts or increases and how you would accomplish these goals.

3. Health & Safety

- a. Despite a raging pandemic, Maryland stood by while Virginia took the lead in setting COVID-19 health and safety standards. During the 2021 legislative session AFSCME's attempt to create basic labor/management injury and illness prevention programs was unsuccessful. This even though states as diverse as California and Louisiana have instituted these program effectively, saving money for employers and decreasing lost time. MOSH is severely underfunded with only a handful of inspectors to cover the entire state. What steps will you take as Governor to improve workplace health and safety for both public and private sector workers? What will you do to enhance public health? What reforms at MOSH would you consider priorities as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic?

4. Upgrading State Facilities

- a. State facilities are crumbling. From the State Center in Baltimore, which is full of toxic air, to the Metropolitan Transition Center, with nonfunctional cell doors, our state facilities are dangerously behind on scheduled maintenance and repairs. What is your plan to permanently upgrade state facilities?
- b. Governor Hogan recently announced moving state employees from State Center and other facilities to other locations. What is your vision for State Center?
- c. Governor Hogan has also closed a number of state facilities including Department of Corrections pre-release units and Department of Juvenile Services facilities. Do you think this was the right move? If not, would you reopen those facilities?

5. Solving the Forensic Bed Crisis

- a. Maryland's seriously mentally ill population in State facilities has increased in numbers and severity of illness. Yet facilities remain understaffed, under-resourced and decaying. The state has done little to address MDH's crumbling infrastructure, other than close Crownsville with no replacement. A master facility plan was last done in 2015, with little action. How will you address the lack of beds and staff at state mental hospitals? What are your solutions and how would you pay for it?

6. Strengthening Workers' Rights

- a. How would you expand workers' rights in Maryland for public and private employees? How would you make it easier for workers to organize? What concrete policies and/or legislative initiatives would you take?
- b. The State Labor Relations and State Higher Education Relations boards are understaffed and slow to hear cases and render judgements. These boards also have little enforcement power. Would you reform them? If so, how? If not, why?
- c. What should be done with the thousands of contractual, contingent, and long-term seasonal state employees who work at our agencies and universities side by side with our members but are treated as "at-will" employees with limited rights, pay and benefits year after year?
- d. Do you support raising the Minimum Wage to \$20 per hour? Why or why not? Do you support updating or changing the state living wage law? If so, what would you do and how?
- e. AFSCME Council 3 was unable to resolve a contentious bargaining session with Governor Hogan over our State Employees' contract. Thankfully Maryland's "evergreen" law allows for the articles of the previously negotiated contract to remain in force. But when the Administration can effectively refuse to negotiate a new contract with its employees once the old one expires, clearly there is an imbalance of power. As a new incoming Governor, would you re-open our current contract to full negotiations? Would you support a new law in Maryland to require binding interest arbitration if labor and management can't come to an agreement, to ensure a contractual resolution is reached through a neutral professional arbitrator?
- f. A neutrality agreement is an agreement between an employer and a union where the employer agrees to not oppose the union's efforts to organize the employer's workers. Would you approve of a requirement that state contracts be awarded only to employers that sign union organizing neutrality agreements? Would you agree to allow "card check" (also called majority sign-up) as a method for employees to organize into a labor union?
- g. In giving out raises to employees, would you pay/support giving a flat raise vs. a percentage raise? If so, why? If not, why not?

7. Retirement Security

- a. What is your plan for retirement security for all Marylanders? Do you have a policy or plan? Should the current pension system change at all? How and why?
 - i. Specifically, for public employees do you believe we should have a defined contribution plan, a defined benefit plan, or move to 401ks?
 - ii. How would you stabilize the pension fund for Maryland public employees?

- iii. How would you address the exorbitant fees hedge funds charge our pension funds?

8. Making Higher Education Fairer and More Accessible

- a. How would you propose to ensure that every Maryland resident has access to quality, affordable higher education? Specifically how would you fund this?
- b. How would you ensure that University System of Maryland employees have a stronger role in determining University policy?
- c. How would you prevent state public colleges and universities from circumventing collective bargaining?
- d. How would you ensure that our public colleges and universities fairly compensate its employees across all campuses?

9. Winning Affordable Healthcare for All

- a. How would you reduce the cost of healthcare for Marylanders? How would you do this for state employees? How would you pay for it?

10. Winning Elections

- a. Why do you think you are the best person to beat Kelly Schultz?
- b. How do you plan to win the Primary election? What are you doing to win? How many votes do you need to win and from where?
- c. How do you beat Kelly Schultz? What strategies and tactics will you employ to defeat her? Where do the votes come from for you to beat her?
- d. Will you campaign with AFSCME members around the state? Will you tour state facilities with us?

11. Governing with Labor

- a. Would you appoint AFSCME members to your transition team? If so, what role do you envision for them?
- b. Will you confer with AFSCME about key appointments in state government and accept our recommendations?
- c. Would you appoint AFSCME members and/or allies to boards and commissions in state government, including at our public universities?
- d. Would you bar union busters/anti-labor campaigners/union avoidance consultants (attorneys or consultants) from all State entities and contracts?