



# 2024 MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION

## U.S. SENATE CANDIDATE SURVEY

Early voting: May 2-9 | Primary Election Day: May 14

**ABOUT THIS GUIDE:** The Maryland Catholic Conference sent candidates a survey covering policy issues of interest to Catholics. Their responses (agree/disagree and more detailed responses) are below. Before you vote, please review the responses and reflect upon the document Faithful Citizenship (see [mdcatholic.org/parish-elections](https://mdcatholic.org/parish-elections)) as you form your conscience and prayerfully discern your vote.

*The Maryland Catholic Conference does not endorse or oppose any candidate, under any circumstance, and no inference of endorsement or opposition should be concluded as a result of the information provided here.*

| PARTY | U.S. SENATE CANDIDATES |            | 1. Poverty | 2. Abortion | 3. Immigration | 4. Education | 5. Environment | 6. Family | 7. Conscience Protections |
|-------|------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| D     | Angela                 | Alsobrooks |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| D     | Michael W.             | Cobb, Sr.  |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| D     | Marcellus              | Crews *    | ✓          | ✓           | ✓              | X            | ✓              | ✓         | X                         |
| D     | Brian E.               | Frydenborg |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| D     | Scottie J.             | Griffin    | ✓          | X           | ✓              | ✓            |                |           |                           |
| D     | Robert K.              | Houton *   | ✓          | X           | ✓              | ✓            | ✓              | X         | X                         |
| D     | Joseph                 | Perez *    |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| D     | Steven Henry           | Seuferer   |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| D     | David J.               | Trone      |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| D     | Andrew Jaye            | Wildman *  | ✓          | X           | ✓              | X            |                |           | X                         |
| R     | Moe H.                 | Barakat    |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| R     | Chris                  | Chaffee *  | X          | ✓           | ✓              | ✓            | ✓              | ✓         | ✓                         |
| R     | Robin                  | Ficker *   | ✓          | ✓           | X              |              | ✓              | ✓         | ✓                         |
| R     | Lorie R.               | Friend *   | ✓          | ✓           | ✓              | ✓            | ✓              | X         | ✓                         |
| R     | Larry                  | Hogan      |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |
| R     | John A.                | Myrick *   | ✓          |             |                | ✓            | ✓              | ✓         | ✓                         |
| R     | Laban Y.               | Seyoum     |            |             |                |              |                |           |                           |

**KEY** D = Democrat R = Republican

\* = additional information below | ✓ = agree X = disagree blank = no response

1. **Poverty.** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other similar initiatives provide funding for millions of poor Americans who cannot afford to adequately feed themselves or their families. Congress should oppose restrictions on SNAP that prevent the most vulnerable from receiving these benefits.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus   | Crews   | I believe we should upskill our disadvantaged. Currently, 75% of employers struggle to fill their workforce due to a lack of qualified individuals. Most employers seek certified professionals. Obtaining certifications not only validates one's expertise but also provides valuable experience. By offering free community college education, allowing adults to acquire certifications in their desired fields, along with financial literacy and life skills courses, we change poverty as we know it |
| Robert K.   | Houton  | I fully support the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other similar initiatives provide funding for millions of poor Americans who cannot afford to adequately feed themselves or their families.  |
| Andrew Jaye | Wildman | SNAP is not a solution, but it helps millions of Americans every day.   |

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | The most vulnerable are elderly and infants that need the nutritional assistance.  |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | Agreed: These supplemental funds are necessary now more than ever to support vulnerable members of society. With the increasing economic struggles of American families caused by dramatically rising inflation, especially the rising cost of groceries, the need for such programs is growing such that Federal restrictions would be harmful. |
| John A.  | Myrick  | Food insecurity is a major issue among the elderly and low-income citizens of Maryland. No one should want for food, especially in the most prosperous nation on earth. I believe that SNAP serves a vital purpose in ensuring that the most vulnerable among us have the means by which they can be fed.  |

2. **Abortion.** Congress should enact legislation permanently banning the use of taxpayer funding for abortion and banning abortion in federal healthcare facilities or from being performed by federal employees.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus | Crews  | The Hyde Amendment has banned the use of any federal funds for abortion. Only exception is for pregnancies that endanger the life of the mother along with rape or incest. |
| Robert K. | Houton | I believe a woman's body and reproductive rights are her own.  |

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | God gave each of us life and we must protect this precious gift.   |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | Some taxpayers have moral and ethical objections to their tax dollars being used for abortions. Similarly, the involvement of federal employees in providing or facilitating abortions can be a contentious issue as it may conflict with personal beliefs and professional roles. |
| John A.  | Myrick  | While I personally oppose abortion in nearly all circumstances, I believe that the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision in Dobbs places the issue of abortion as a State issue - not a Federal one.  |

- 3. Immigration.** Congress should pass legislation to reform immigration policy to protect children and young people, such as the Protect Vulnerable Immigrant Youth Act, to provide humanitarian protection to abused, neglected or abandoned youth.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus   | Crews   | Illegal border crossing should be prevented. I believe in clear paths to entering our country for work, school, sports, entertainment and citizenship. Comprehensive legislation with all stakeholders involved is needed.  |
| Robert K.   | Houton  | I believe children must ALWAYS be protected. Period. I initiated, and have championed, the only federal advocacy in the 118th U.S. Congress to legalize Fentanyl Test Strips nationwide which would save tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands of unsuspecting teens, children, and students from accidental fentanyl poisoning. I have summoned the US Conference of Catholic Bishops to support this legislation. |
| Andrew Jaye | Wildman | Only if the Biden administration immediately enacts an absolute closure of our borders and thru 2025. We will sort conduct a National Citizen ID Registration and all non-citizens will also be registered and some will be deported. We need to clean up after decades of the migrant flood.   |

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | I agree and disagree we have all witnessed the abuse going on at the borders from the magnet to draw undocumented to America for work and a better life at the same time we see drugs sex trafficking and a type of slavery from the cartels. We must close the borders return to a legal system anyone committing a felony must be deported this is a burden on the legal Americans that are fighting their way to survive each day. Today I celebrated Palm Sunday and I pray the crow does not crow twice. |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | As I understand this legislation, it will provide much needed humanitarian protection to children and young people who have experienced neglect, abuse and abandonment, by giving them assistance and support to rebuild their lives. This would also help protect the wellbeing of undocumented children who have suffered exploitation by human traffickers.  |
| John A.  | Myrick  | Immigrant youth should enjoy the same protections under the law as do all persons in the United States. I support revising the current legal immigration statutes for a number of reasons, and would support the protection of abused, neglected, or abandoned youth - subject to them being in the care and custody of a lawfully admitted immigrant or a U.S. Citizen. I fear that removing all restrictions would subject the U.S. to a new flood of unaccompanied minors.                                 |

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See next page for question 4 responses.

- 4. Education.** Congress should enact legislation, such as the Educational Choice for Children Act, which empowers parents in every state with expanded educational options through federal tax credit incentives that will fund scholarships for K-12 students, including those attending Catholic schools.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus   | Crews   | Despite being a product of private school education, I strongly advocate for all public schools to enrich their K-12 curriculum by integrating STEIM, Life Skills, and Financial Literacy as standard subjects. I propose that by 6th grade, certifications and apprenticeships should commence, providing an additional pathway to success. I term this initiative the Prepared Professional (PP) Standard. |
| Robert K.   | Houton  | I fully support, and will work to ensure Congress enacts legislation, such as the Educational Choice for Children Act, which empowers parents in every state with expanded educational options through federal tax credit incentives that will fund scholarships for K-12 students, including those attending Catholic schools.  |
| Andrew Jaye | Wildman | Catholic schools are private schools.  |

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | Americans must be allowed to choose the education system that best suits for their children with this we all pay taxes those taxes have been going higher and out of control they must receive educational vouchers to help them and their children find the education they need. Especially Catholic Education.   |
| Robin    | Ficker  | Undecided  |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | As parents, it is our utmost duty to provide our children with the best education available in today's society. I firmly believe as parents, we have the right to make educational decisions that shape our children's future. This legislation would empower parents and give them freer choices through scholarships and the option of their children attending private and charter educational institutions.  |
| John A.  | Myrick  | I fully believe that education dollars should follow the student, and that Parents should have a right to choose how and where their children are to be educated. If the public school system has failed to properly educate a child, then it is the responsibility of the Parents to seek out alternatives. I fully support tax credit incentives to offset some of the costs associated with sending a child to a private school - including those attending Catholic schools. |

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See next page for question 5 responses.

5. **Environment.** Congress should pass legislation to encourage the responsible stewardship of the environment and its natural resources by protecting and promoting our national parks and wildlife preserves.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus | Crews | Our actions impact the planet in profound ways. As responsible stewards, it's imperative that we heed the warning signs and take action to prevent further pollution, deforestation, and the extinction of millions of species. |
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| Robert K. | Houton | Congress should pass legislation to encourage the responsible stewardship of the environment and its natural resources by protecting and promoting our national parks and wildlife preserves. |
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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris | Chaffee | We should reward good stewardship state by state by how they perform and impact the environment. |
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| Lorie R. | Friend | Yes, we should preserve the beauty of America's natural resources for future generations to enjoy. Our national parks and wildlife preserves are natural treasures that are a blessing and gift from God, and it is our sacred duty to protect them through responsible conservation of our wilderness habitats and wildlife. |
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| John A. | Myrick | Protection of our National Parks and Preserves is of critical importance. These areas need to be maintained as refuges from the advances of our highly industrialized society. Protection of our environment is necessary and must be done in a responsible, thoughtful manner. That having been said, we also need to responsibly balance our need for energy independence and economic stability with protection of the environment. |
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6. **Family.** Congress should enact legislation to support families, mothers and children, such as increasing and extending the child tax credit to include unborn children, extending the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and providing increased funding for childcare programs and foster programs.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus   | Crews   | Childcare plays a crucial role in family development. Therefore, the presence of reliable, safe, and accountable childcare programs is paramount. This principle extends to foster care as well, highlighting the importance of robust and trustworthy support systems for children in need. |
| Robert K.   | Houton  | I support Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and providing increased funding for childcare programs and foster programs.   |
| Andrew Jaye | Wildman | When will the Church learn to stay out of people's business. The Catholic and other Christian churches need to worry about saving people's souls like Christ does. Preventing pregnancies in the first place is advantageous.  |

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | This should never be allowed or Reallocated to be used for a magnet drawing non citizens to our nation.   |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | I disagree with legislation that would give child tax credits for the unborn for the simple reason that some pregnancies do not result in the birth of a child. Please do not misinterpret, I completely believe that it is a life, it is just that there are extenuating circumstances that may threaten the life of the unborn and the life may therefore end before birth. I do completely agree with the continuation of programs such as WIC and child healthcare and well being programs. |
| John A.  | Myrick  | I agree, in principle, with the statement, however, I would most likely not be in favor of extending the child tax credits to the unborn. I see this as an area of potential abuse through fraud; costing the taxpayers far more than anticipated. I do support extending the WIC program and increasing funding for childcare and foster programs. I think this can be done responsibly and with little impact to the Federal budget.  |

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**7. Conscience Protections.** Congress should pass legislation to ensure religious freedom and rights of conscience for healthcare workers and other government employees.

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus   | Crews   | While I advocate for the protection of everyone's rights, I am currently engaging in discussions regarding conscience protections in the public square. Recognizing the complexity of this issue, I believe further information and dialogue with fellow citizens are essential to navigate this matter thoughtfully.   |
| Joseph      | Perez   | Conscience protection laws must be strengthened and enforced. The Government was one of the biggest violators of conscience during the COVID pandemic. Federal and military employees filed lawsuits to keep their jobs. They were manipulated and intimidated to comply and assume all the risks of a new drug. Even after putting American workers through a faith inquisition, religious exemption requests were denied by many employers. This should never happen in the land of the free. |
| Andrew Jaye | Wildman | Quit mixing church and state, PLEASE. Render unto Caesar...   |

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | Your religious beliefs are very special to each individual; you also have a moral responsibility with your religious beliefs you and you alone can only make that decision. The hatred running through America must be healed.   |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | I believe this should be passed because it safeguards the freedoms of healthcare and government workers to act in accordance with their conscience, while also ensuring that individuals continue to have access to services and support. It helps in that they are not compelled to participate in activities or provide services that conflict with their moral convictions. |
| John A.  | Myrick  | I fully support all of our Constitutional rights, including the free exercise of religion. I find it unconscionable that our Government continues to attempt to force individuals and religious organizations to perform services that are contrary to their religious beliefs.  |

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8. Why should Catholics vote for me? (2 pages, one for Democratic candidates and one for Republican)

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**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES**

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| Marcellus   | Crews   | As a man of faith, I advocate for common sense government, recognizing that education is fundamental to solving any issue. Through my platform, I have interconnected various societal challenges such as crime, poverty, welfare, mental health, and social safety nets, aiming to break the cycle by prioritizing education with an additional pathway to workforce participation. This vision not only transforms lives but also underscores the value of every individual's trajectory. It's time for policies that bridge education to small businesses allowing young people and adults opportunities that would have been realized in our current College Career Readiness Standard. For people who are fed up... I say Let's go!!!  |
| Scottie J.  | Griffin | Catholics in America should vote for me because the executive leadership skills and experiences I have attained and executed during twenty-plus years of services in leadership employment positions are highly comparable to those required for successfully performing the duties of a United States Senator including the following: Introducing, proposing, passing and executing legislative policies; creating and passing budgets; securing funds for proposed initiatives; and developing, organizing and implementing leadership directives and transformational plans for activation in the United States and underprivileged countries.  |
| Robert K.   | Houton  | My faith in Jesus Christ is lived each day through being a loving father to my children in my parish community. I fought for the marginalized and the innocent throughout my advocacy in Congress, including my leadership in championing the Fentanyl Safe Testing and Overdose Prevention Act (S.2569) and the STRIP Act (H.R.3563). No one else did, until I began this legislation nationwide. I answer one question each day from Christ: "Do you love me?" "yes, Lord, you know that I love you." "Feed my sheep."  |
| Joseph      | Perez   | The will of the people should inform policies promoted by the national Democratic Party, not the other way around. Unlike some candidates, I have zero experience imposing lockdowns, mandates, and closing places of worship & small biz. (vote them out). Growing up in the DC area, I avoided politics my entire life. Today I feel called to serve in Congress. I have background in healthcare, tech, and Government. My education, work and faith experience have prepared me to represent Marylanders for such a time as this. I was in Camden Yards when Pope JP2 said, "Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought." His teachings have guided in my intellectual and spiritual life. I go to daily mass & adoration. Please see my website for my stance on critical issues. Christ is my light. |
| Andrew Jaye | Wildman | First because I won't lie to try and get your support. And, because I am doing this for you, those you Love and otherwise care about. And the other 340,000,000 of our fellow American men, women, and children that you and I shall never, ever meet. And may God continue to bless America. Amen...   |

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**Why should Catholics vote for me? *continued***

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**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES**

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| Chris    | Chaffee | We share the same core values life protecting the unborn the veteran and the elderly and one day we will live eternal life together as one.  |
| Robin    | Ficker  | I've always been pro life. It is an abomination that Maryland allows abortion up till birth especially when the average U.S. couple is only producing only 1.75 children when replenishment requires 2.25 children. My wife was a physician medical missions sister and President of the Church Council of The Our Lady of Mercy, Maryland's largest parish.   |
| Lorie R. | Friend  | I was raised in a Christian home and credit that upbringing with giving me a strong moral and ethical character. As an adult, I am a Christian and active in my local Church. I am truly supportive of our rights as Americas to freely practice and exercise our religion, and I will defend our religious liberties as a US Senator for Maryland.  |
| John A.  | Myrick  | As a Catholic, I understand the struggles that Maryland Catholics face daily with trying to balance their beliefs with the demands of our society. My views are moderate and reasonable, and I will represent all Marylanders in the Senate; working with the State's leaders to ensure that Maryland's voice is heard - not mine. I will work with anyone - regardless of political party or affiliation - to the benefit of Marylanders and of our nation. I will introduce Congressional Term Limit legislation and pledge to serve only 1 term in the Senate. As YOUR Senator, I will represent the views of all Marylanders at the national level - not my own. |

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