

MARYLAND VOTE 2026

MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3

ABOUT THE SURVEYS

The Maryland Catholic Conference surveyed candidates seeking office in the General Assembly (as well as Governor and Congress; see separate documents; see mdcatholic.org/elections).

Candidates could choose “agree” or “disagree” and/or provide a statement for these questions:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

CONSCIENCE PROTECTIONS. Congress should pass legislation to ensure religious freedom and rights of conscience for healthcare workers and other government employees.

WHY SHOULD MARYLAND CATHOLICS VOTE FOR YOU?



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.

MARYLAND VOTE 2026

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VOTE JUNE 11-18 (early voting) | JUNE 23 (Election Day)

These positions and statements provided by candidates to a Maryland Catholic Conference survey, plus materials at mdcatholic.org/elections, are resources to help you inform your conscience before voting. **Please see the separate gubernatorial and General Assembly surveys.**

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Candidate statements follow grid

	Poverty	Abortion	Immigration	Education	Environment	Family	Conscience Protections	Addl. Comments
DEMOCRATS								
Jennifer Cross	●	X	●	●	●	●	●	Yes
Austin Dyches	●	X	●	X	●	X	X	Yes
Sarah Elfreth	●	X	●	X	●	X	X	Yes
Sean Hammond								
Robert Gerald Morrison								
REPUBLICANS								
Ray Bly								
Berney Flowers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Yes
Felix M. Seier	●	X	●	X	●	●	●	Yes
John White								

Green = agree | Red = disagree | Blank = no response

Candidate statements follow. Candidates may not have responded to every question.

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.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross

I believe access to food is a basic need, and government has a responsibility to prevent hunger. SNAP supports children, seniors, veterans, and working families facing rising costs. I oppose restrictions that create barriers for eligible people through complex rules that do not reflect real life challenges. I support strengthening SNAP so benefits match food costs and access is simple. Cutting access shifts the burden to communities. Food security is about dignity, stability, and fairness.

Sarah Elfreth

I believe in the saying that the true measure of any society is how we treat our most vulnerable. 680,000 Marylanders – nearly half of whom are children – rely on SNAP to put food on the table. Last year, the President used his government shutdown to illegally freeze SNAP benefits to push Democrats to abandon the health care fight. Families who rely on SNAP should never be treated as political pawns. That’s why I joined the Maryland delegation in demanding that the U.S. Department of Agriculture release SNAP funding to families in need.

Republicans

Berney Flowers

I support SNAP because no American should go hungry—especially children, seniors, and those facing tough times. We must protect benefits for those who truly need them. At the same time, taxpayers deserve accountability. SNAP should encourage work and independence where possible, while cutting waste and fraud. The goal is simple: a program that is both compassionate and responsible.

Felix M. Seier

I support protecting SNAP because hunger weakens families, communities, and our economy. Many Marylanders work full-time yet still struggle to afford food. Restricting SNAP would punish children, seniors, and people already on the edge. We should strengthen programs that keep families stable and ensure no one in Maryland goes hungry.

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.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross I oppose bans on abortion in any healthcare setting and oppose cutting federal funding to states that protect access. I believe reproductive decisions belong between a patient and their doctor, not politicians. Men do not face comparable limits, creating a one sided imbalance that favors men rather than equal treatment. These restrictions place disproportionate burdens on women and young girls, creating harmful impacts on families. Protecting access is about healthcare, privacy, and fairness.

Austin Dyches I support Universal Healthcare. Abortion is healthcare and healthcare should be free.

Sarah Elfreth As one of the youngest women serving in Congress, women’s health care decisions are not abstract – they are personal. I do not support policies that threaten or restrict access to FDA-approved birth control or reproductive health care. I firmly believe reproductive health care choices are a fundamental human right, and I also believe that no government should warrant control over those personal decisions.

Republicans

Berney Flowers This is a deeply personal and difficult issue, and Americans hold strong, sincere views on both sides. I support long-standing limits on taxpayer funding for abortion, with exceptions for rape, incest, and to save the life of the mother. At the same time, we must ensure women have access to necessary medical care and support. Congress should focus on reducing unwanted pregnancies through education and supporting mothers and families.

Felix M. Seier I believe taxpayer dollars should not be used to restrict personal medical decisions. Marylanders hold diverse moral views, and federal policy should respect that diversity while ensuring access to safe healthcare. My focus is reducing unwanted pregnancies through better childcare, healthcare, and economic support so families can thrive.

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.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross

I support immigration reform that protects children and young people, including measures like the Protect Vulnerable Immigrant Youth Act. I support an earned pathway to legal status or citizenship for individuals and families with no criminal history who came under prior policies. This process should be structured and accountable. I also support allowing trusted community and faith based organizations to help guide individuals and families through the legal path to citizenship.

Sarah Elfreth

Under this Administration, ICE has sent under-trained agents into our schools, workplaces, and places of worship, which has left countless children subjected to the abuses of the immigration detention systems. I have used every tool available to rein in the President’s weaponization of ICE, including voting against blank checks for ICE and conducting oversight of the ICE detention center in Baltimore. I am a proud original cosponsor of the American Dream and Promise Act because I believe Congress can and must build a stronger immigration system that upholds the dignity of our neighbors.

Republicans

Berney Flowers

We should protect children who’ve been abused, neglected, or abandoned—period. They deserve safety, stability, and a fair chance at a better life. I support targeted, humanitarian protections for vulnerable youth, paired with strong safeguards to prevent fraud and abuse of the system. At the same time, Congress must fix our broader immigration system—securing the border, enforcing the law, and creating legal, orderly pathways—so compassion and accountability go hand in hand.

Felix M. Seier

Children who have been abused, abandoned, or trafficked deserve protection regardless of where they were born. Legislation like the Protect Vulnerable Immigrant Youth Act helps ensure that young people in crisis are not left without safety or legal stability. Protecting children is a moral responsibility and strengthens our communities.

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.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross

I support expanding educational opportunities while keeping public education fully funded and the priority. I support options like scholarships if they are accountable, transparent, and do not take resources from public schools. Federal programs must ensure equal access and protect against discrimination. I also support voluntary, age appropriate pathways starting around age 10 in fields like cybersecurity, AI, and defense. Early exposure builds skills, supports strong careers, and helps guide students toward productive paths.

Austin Dyches

No. I will work to abolish charter schools. Children deserve their own Bill of Rights. Condemning them to a life of servitude by denying them a proper, science-based education is child abuse.

Sarah Elfreth

I am a proud graduate of our country’s public school system and remain opposed to tax-funded vouchers and other programs that subsidize religious and private school tuitions for K-12 students, including the “Educational Choice” provisions included in the Big Ugly Law. Not only are these credits a diversion of vital public funds from our schools already in need across the country, but these private institutions leave our young learners at risk in not having to follow the same transparency, special education, or civil rights laws as our public schools.

Republicans

Berney Flowers

Parents should have a strong voice in their children’s education. I support expanding options—public, charter, private, and faith-based—so families can choose what works best. At the same time, we must ensure accountability and protect funding for public schools that serve the majority of students. The goal is simple: empower parents, expand opportunity, and make sure every child—regardless of zip code—has access to a quality education.

Felix M. Seier

I support strong public schools because they are the one place where children of every background learn, grow, and build shared civic values together. Private education, even unintentionally, separates children by income, faith, and social status. A healthy democracy requires students learning side-by-side, forming a common understanding of what it means to be part of one community and one country.

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.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross

I support strengthening tribal sovereignty and honoring treaty responsibilities. I support returning specific federal lands to tribes where there is clear historical or cultural justification. I support voluntary federal buyback programs so landowners can sell ancestral land at fair value to be returned to living tribes. I support co management where tribes steward the land with federal support to protect natural resources, reducing exploitation and preserving them for future generations while maintaining conservation and public access.

Sarah Elfreth

I've spent my entire career working to move faster, bolder, and smarter on environmental restoration. Protecting our environment is not only the right thing to do, but it's also critically important for the thousands of Marylanders who earn their living on the Chesapeake Bay. As Vice Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee, I am focused on building a clean energy future, tackling rising tides, and expanding access to the Bay for all. My first bill to pass the House was the bipartisan MAWS Act to tackle invasive blue catfish and save our blue crabs, oysters, and rockfish.

Republicans

Berney Flowers

We have a responsibility to be good stewards of our natural resources. I support protecting and maintaining our national parks and wildlife preserves so future generations can enjoy them. That also means using taxpayer dollars wisely, promoting conservation, and balancing environmental protection with responsible economic growth. We don't have to choose between a strong economy and a healthy environment—we can and should achieve both.

Felix M. Seier

Protecting our natural resources is a shared moral duty. Maryland's parks, waterways, and wildlife are part of our heritage and our economy. Congress should support responsible stewardship, conservation, and climate resilience so future generations inherit a healthy environment and a stable, sustainable Maryland.

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.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross I support strengthening families by expanding the child tax credit, extending WIC, and increasing funding for childcare and foster programs to ensure stability and safety for children. I prioritize keeping families together whenever it is safe, with support like financial assistance, job training, mental health care, and parenting education. Strong families lead to better outcomes. When removal is necessary, foster systems must be well funded and accountable.

Austin Dyches Fetuses should not be eligible for the Child Tax Credit.

Sarah Elfreth Growing up in a working-class household, I understand the importance of affordable, high-quality child care. Today, it is more expensive to send an infant to daycare than it is to send an 18-year-old to the University of Maryland. I am laser-focused on lowering costs for working families. I have hosted roundtables to hear from parents and caregivers, I will always support full funding of WIC, and I have co-sponsored legislation to cap the cost of child care at 7% of a parents' income. In the Maryland Senate, I sponsored a bill to create an income tax credit for parents of stillborn children.

Republicans

Berney Flowers Strong families are the foundation of a strong country. I support policies that help mothers and children thrive, including strengthening WIC and improving childcare and foster programs. We should target relief to those who need it most, while ensuring programs are efficient and accountable to taxpayers. I'm open to expanding support like the child tax credit, but it must be fiscally responsible and focused on helping working families succeed.

Felix M. Seier Families thrive when they have stability. Expanding the child tax credit, strengthening WIC, and improving childcare and foster programs all help parents raise healthy children. These supports reduce poverty, improve long-term outcomes, and reflect our shared commitment to protecting families at every stage of life.

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

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross

I support protecting religious freedom and rights of conscience for healthcare workers and government employees. At the same time, those protections should not come at the expense of others' rights or access to care. Religious freedom must be balanced so that one person's beliefs do not limit another person's ability to receive lawful services or practice their own beliefs. This approach protects individual conscience while ensuring fairness, equal access, and respect for everyone.

Austin Dyches

You are free to work in any industry you want. If you work in a public service you will provide that service regardless of your religious preference or you should be removed. A private citizen may believe and exercise the rights of their life in any way they deem fit.

Sarah Elfreth

I fully support the First Amendment and the right of every American to live according to their faith. I have held interfaith roundtables to engage directly with faith leaders in Maryland. During these unprecedented times, it's the leadership of our faith leaders that gives me – and so many others – hope, peace, and inspiration. However, we cannot allow the right of conscience to be used as a tool to deny women life-saving health care or to allow government employees to discriminate against the public they are paid to serve.

Republicans

Berney Flowers

Religious freedom is a fundamental American right, and people shouldn't be forced to violate their deeply held beliefs. At the same time, patients must have timely access to legal care. We can respect both by protecting conscience rights while ensuring systems are in place so services remain available. This isn't about choosing sides—it's about balancing liberty with responsibility in a practical, common-sense way.

Felix M. Seier

Religious freedom is a core American principle. Healthcare workers and government employees should not be forced to violate their sincerely held beliefs, while still ensuring patients receive timely care. Thoughtful conscience protections can uphold both individual rights and the functioning of essential services.

8. WHY SHOULD MARYLAND CATHOLICS VOTE FOR YOU?

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Jennifer Cross

I respect faith, protect religious freedom, and believe it should never come at the expense of others. I support strong families, access to food, childcare, and stability, while ensuring dignity and opportunity for all. My focus is on fairness, compassion, and responsible leadership that reflects both moral values and real solutions for everyday people.

Austin Dyches

You may not agree with me on abortion, but you should agree that we need to stop the foreign killing abroad, bring our people home and rebuild America. I support your right to exercise your religion as a private citizen in any way you deem fit, and I will fight for that right. Thank you for taking the time to send this questionnaire to me, and I would love to speak to your entire congregation. Best, Austin

Sarah Elfreth

I believe that as doctors take a hippocratic oath to do no harm, politicians should take a hippocratic oath to not divide. Every morning, on my drive into Washington, I focus on bringing a collaborative, results-driven approach to this job. As your Congresswoman, my team and I have delivered real results for Maryland. We have passed 5 bills into law, hosted 24 town halls, solved over 2,000 constituent cases, and brought home \$20 million in federal funding for projects across the District. This work doesn't happen in the headlines – it happens when we come together to solve difficult problems.

Republicans

Berney Flowers

I attempt to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, my personal savior, in my daily walk. As your Congressional representative, I will consider his teachings in all I do, as I have in the past. I served this country honorably for over three decades, and I am confident that I can be a better representative of America-First principles than the incumbent representative.

Felix M. Seier

I'm running to serve the people who feel unseen—families struggling with costs, seniors on fixed incomes, workers left behind, and children in underfunded schools. My focus is dignity, fairness, and responsible stewardship. I will work to strengthen families, protect the vulnerable, and ensure Maryland's future is built on justice and compassion.
