

MARYLAND VOTE 2026

MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5

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

MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5 (page 1 of 2)

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								
Mark Arness								
Rushern L. Baker								
Quincy Bareebe	●	X	●	X	●		X	Yes
Wala Blegay								
Adrian Boafo								
Reuben B. Collins	●	X	●	X	●	●	●	Yes
Ellis D. Colvin								
Harry Anthony Dunn								
Arthur Ellis								
Elldwnia English	X	X	X	X	●	●	●	Yes
Terry Antonio Jackson								
Harry Jarin								
Walter Kirkland	●	X	●	X	●	●	●	Yes

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

MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5 (page 2 of 2)

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.

Candidate statements follow grid

	Poverty	Abortion	Immigration	Education	Environment	Family	Conscience Protections	Addl. Comments
DEMOCRATS (cont)								
Jerry Lightfoot	●	X	●	●	●	●	●	Yes
Heather Luper								
James Anderson Makle	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Yes
Leigha Messick								
Keith Salkowski								
Kenneth Simons								
Alexis S. Solis								
Tracy Starr	●	X	●	●	●	●	●	Yes
Dave Sundberg								
Harold Tolbert	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Yes
REPUBLICANS								
Chris Chaffee								
Bryan DuVal								
Michelle Talkington								

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 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Quincy Bareebe

As an immigrant, mother, and healthcare professional who has witnessed the struggles of working families across Maryland's 5th District, I believe no one in the wealthiest nation on earth should go to bed hungry. SNAP is a lifeline for seniors, children, veterans, and people with disabilities — and I share the Catholic values of human dignity and care for the most vulnerable. Any cuts or restrictions to SNAP are an attack on the families I am running to represent, and I will fight in Congress to protect and strengthen nutrition assistance so that no Maryland family is left behind.

Reuben B. Collins

I support protecting SNAP and other anti-poverty programs that help families, children, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities afford food and basic needs. No one in America should go hungry because of political gamesmanship. Congress should strengthen programs that reduce hunger, support working families, and help people move toward stability and opportunity.

Elldwnia English

What would Jesus do!

Walter Kirkland

Programs like SNAP are essential to ensure that children, seniors, and working families do not go hungry. Access to food is a basic human need, and we have a responsibility to support the most vulnerable. I do not support restrictions that would prevent eligible individuals from receiving assistance. At the same time, these programs should be administered responsibly with proper oversight. We must also invest in job training, education, and economic opportunity so families can achieve long-term stability, independence, and dignity.

Jerry Lightfoot

As the gap between wealth and poverty widens, and the middle class seems to no longer exist we must do all we can to ensure the Americans that require additional aid and support receive it. How do we justify sending money to multiple countries for bailouts, etc. but tell our own citizens we must cut support to essential programs needed.

Additional responses on next page

Congressional District 5, Question 1. Poverty, continued

James Anderson Makle	SNAP benefits should be extended to working people as well that need a little assistance to get by. Many of our first Responders, Military and Veterans could use the help of SNAP benefits but never qualify or receive the help they disparately need. As a Marine, I witnessed many active duty service members live in poverty; while serving our country. All Americans can use extra help, in these troubling economic times.
Tracy Starr	I am a product of the SNAP benefits program from my childhood. I will oppose any type of restrictions on this type of program to support our most vulnerable, and will reach across the aisle in order to work with my colleagues in Congress to urge them to do the same. This program should not be restricted as it is a lifeline for so many in need.
Harold Tolbert	Social programs like SNAP comprise an insignificant percentage of the Nations Annual Budget and impacts millions of families. We must stand with our citizens who have fallen on challenging times.
Republicans	No response

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 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Quincy Bareebe	My Catholic faith teaches me the value and of every human life, I am personally pro-life and believe we must reduce abortions by supporting mothers, expanding access to healthcare, strengthening adoption, and providing economic support for families. But I also know we live in a diverse society with deeply personal, complex circumstances. I believe decisions should involve compassion, conscience, and care, not government mandates. In Congress, I will encourage a culture that supports women and children, and ensures no one is forced into impossible choices due to poverty or lack of healthcare.
Reuben B. Collins	I respect the moral seriousness of this issue and the sincere beliefs people bring to it. I also believe government should not criminalize women, doctors, or families making deeply personal medical decisions. I support reducing the need for abortion by investing in maternal healthcare, childcare, adoption and foster care support, poverty reduction, and real help for mothers and children.
Elldwnia English	Abortions are necessary medical procedures
Walter Kirkland	I respect deeply held beliefs on this issue. I do not support a blanket federal ban that would eliminate access in all circumstances. There must be exceptions for the life and health of the mother, rape, and incest, and access to medically necessary care in federal settings. I support maintaining existing limits on federal funding while expanding access to contraception, maternal care, and family support. We should reduce the need for abortion through prevention and support, while protecting women’s health and dignity.
Jerry Lightfoot	While my wife has brought forth four wonderful children I respect and support a woman's right to make the appropriate decisions regarding her body. There may be extenuating circumstances that may play a role in the need for an abortion.
James Anderson Makle	I personally don't believe in abortion, due to religious convictions. I, do respect a women's right to choose.

Additional responses on next page

Congressional District 5, Question 2. Abortion, continued

Tracy Starr I do not oppose the removal of taxpayer funding to support abortion services. However, I do support the right of a woman to choose based on my fundamental belief that women have the right to do with their bodies what they want, and that they alone know the circumstances under which they can or cannot raise a child. I am a mother of three and one of faith. I have had friends who have had to have an abortion due to medical issues. I do not believe I have the right to tell other women they cannot abort a child. I do believe in removing taxpayer funding for it.

Harold Tolbert Although some people have sufficient reasons for desiring an abortion (Health of the mother, rape or insert) there are other private ways these cases can be handled.

Republicans No response

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 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats	
Quincy Bareebe	As an immigrant myself, I know the Catholic teaching calls us to welcome the stranger while also respecting the rule of law. I support compassionate, commonsense immigration reform that protects vulnerable children, keeps families together, and creates a fair and orderly system. We must secure our borders, but we must also uphold human dignity. I will work to fix backlogs, provide protections for vulnerable youth, and ensure our immigration system reflects both justice and mercy.
Reuben B. Collins	Children and young people who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, or placed in vulnerable circumstances deserve protection, due process, and humane treatment. Our immigration system should reflect both the rule of law and our moral obligation to protect children, families, and human dignity.
Elldwnia English	Americans are my issue not immigrants
Walter Kirkland	I support legislation to protect vulnerable immigrant youth, including measures like the Protect Vulnerable Immigrant Youth Act. Children who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned deserve safety, stability, and a fair chance at a better life. Providing humanitarian protection is both a moral responsibility and consistent with our values as a nation. At the same time, reforms should include proper oversight and coordination to ensure these protections are applied fairly and effectively. Protecting children while strengthening our immigration system is the right and compassionate approach.
Jerry Lightfoot	Children and the elderly should be protected at all costs. They are the most vulnerable among us, so we must take measures to ensure their safety and prosperity.
James Anderson Makle	Our current immigration policies have affected every community in this country. Children and young people are our most vulnerable population and need our protections. I have witnessed, many forms of neglect and abuse with our immigrant population; as a firefighter for 20 years in Southern Maryland.
Tracy Starr	I believe in fundamental human rights for all. In this vein, I do believe that Congress has an obligation to reform and rework the federal immigration system so that it respects those rights and so that people who have come here and are living here working and paying taxes, adjusting to society, and being productive, should be allowed to have a pathway to citizenship. I do think the onus to do so is squarely on Congress and that Members should stand up against any harmful tactics and policies that harm Americans and immigrants, especially children.
Harold Tolbert	Absolutely our immigration system should protect children who were likely born here.
Republicans	
	No response

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 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Quincy Bareebe	I deeply value the role Catholic schools play in our communities, but I cannot support legislation that diverts federal tax dollars away from public schools, which serve the overwhelming majority of Maryland's children — including those with disabilities, English language learners, and low-income families who have no other option. Rather than redirecting funding, Congress should be investing boldly in public education — raising teacher pay, modernizing facilities, and ensuring every child, regardless of zip code, has access to a world-class education.
Reuben B. Collins	I support parents, students, and quality educational options, including the important role Catholic schools play in many communities. At the same time, I believe federal education policy must protect and strengthen public schools while ensuring accountability, fairness, and access for all children. I am open to partnerships that support students without weakening public education.
Elldwnia English	Schools should be free and all education should be the same for poor or rich children.
Walter Kirkland	I support empowering parents and expanding opportunity, but I do not support federal tax credit programs that divert resources away from public schools. Public schools serve the vast majority of children and must remain strong and well-funded. I'm open to innovative solutions and partnerships, including support for families seeking alternatives, but any policy must include accountability, transparency, and protections to ensure all students have access to a quality education. My priority is strengthening public education while ensuring every child has a fair chance to succeed.
Jerry Lightfoot	Parents should be able to choose the most productive and beneficial opportunities for their children's education. They should not have to drive an excessive amount of miles in order to give their children a shot at a quality education. Whether it's magnet, charter, public, private, or home schools; parents should be entitled to the same federal tax credits for their child's education.
James Anderson Makle	Parents should be able to place their children in programs that best suit their educational needs, while removing their children from failing schools. Parents should have the ability to chart their children's educational path. The power of choice is freedom.

Additional responses on next page

Congressional District 5, Question 4. Education, continued

Tracy Starr

I have three children of my own and so having the ability of choice to send my children to private or public school would allow me as a parent to have more choices and more information in providing for their education. Children are individuals and so each child has very different learning styles from the other. Scholarship funding for private school tuition should be made available to every parent in the instance that the local public school is not the right environment for an individual child.

Harold Tolbert

Giving parents quality options for educating their children should not mean the dismantling of Public Education. It's not either or; but both And.....

Republicans

No response

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 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Quincy Bareebe I strongly agree. Our national parks, wildlife preserves, and natural resources are part of our shared inheritance — a sacred trust we hold for future generations — and responsible environmental stewardship is not just a policy issue but a moral one. I will proudly support legislation that protects and expands our public lands, invests in conservation, and ensures that the beauty and bounty of this nation's natural resources are preserved for every American and every generation to come.

Reuben B. Collins We have a responsibility to be good stewards of creation and protect our natural resources for future generations. I support protecting national parks, wildlife preserves, clean air, clean water, and public lands while also working with communities, workers, and local governments on responsible environmental policy.

Walter Kirkland I support legislation that promotes responsible stewardship of our environment and natural resources. Protecting national parks and wildlife preserves biodiversity, supports public health, and strengthens local economies. We should invest in conservation, clean energy, and sustainable practices while partnering with communities. Good stewardship ensures we pass on a healthier environment to future generations while balancing economic growth and environmental protection.

Jerry Lightfoot God has created this beyond beautiful planet we call Earth. He has also created every living creature within and given us dominion over it all with a charge to take care of it. The only problems Earth has are the ones we as humans created and it's our duty to leave this planet in a better place than how we received it for the generations to follow.

James Anderson Makle We need to protect our natural wildlife and national Parks.

Tracy Starr Protecting the environment and reducing the harmful effects of climate change is a priority for me and should be for Congress. Congress has the power to enact laws and policy changes that would protect the preservation of wildlife and our national parks. It is the responsibility of Congress to ensure that the country as a whole is on the same page and that we as a society are doing our part to protect and preserve the earth and its environment.

Harold Tolbert Our National Parks and Wildlife are jewels that we must protect and admire for future generations.

Republicans

No response

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 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats	
Quincy Bareebe	I partially agree. I strongly support expanding the child tax credit, extending WIC, and increasing funding for childcare and foster programs — all commonsense investments by Congress. We must support mothers and children, particularly those in low-income households who are left behind. However, any provision to provide a child tax credit to unborn children must be carefully crafted to ensure it does not become a backdoor to restrict women's reproductive rights. My focus remains on ensuring that the families and children who are struggling right now have the resources they need to thrive.
Reuben B. Collins	Families need real support, not just slogans. I support strengthening the child tax credit, protecting WIC, expanding affordable childcare, supporting foster care, improving maternal and infant health, and helping parents raise children in safe and stable homes. Congress should make it easier for families to afford food, housing, healthcare, and childcare.
Walter Kirkland	I support legislation that strengthens families and supports mothers and children. Expanding and extending the Child Tax Credit, strengthening WIC, and investing in childcare and foster programs all help families thrive. These policies reduce child poverty, improve health outcomes, and give parents the stability they need. I also support providing support earlier in pregnancy to ensure healthier outcomes for both mother and child. Supporting families at every stage is essential to building stronger communities and a stronger future for everyone.
Jerry Lightfoot	Children are our future and need to be protected and provided for at all costs. At the end of the day these young people did not ask to be, that's a decision their parents made. So why must they suffer because we as a Nation cannot work together to ensure the support and funding of programs established with them in mind.
James Anderson Makle	Especially expanding child care for children with Special Needs
Tracy Starr	I believe that every mother should get the support she needs to start her child's life out with the best possible support and nurturing in order to have the best possible beginning to life.
Harold Tolbert	Absolutely yes. Again supporting our most vulnerable population takes very little of our National Budget and goes a long way in supporting our families in need.
Republicans	
	No response

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

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats	
Quincy Bareebe	I believe in religious freedom and rights of conscience — true American values — but have serious concerns about "conscience protection" laws used as cover to deny patients time-sensitive care. These laws have too often justified discrimination against women seeking reproductive healthcare, LGBTQ+ patients, and other vulnerable communities. True religious freedom means practicing your faith freely — not imposing your beliefs on a patient in medical need. I'll support narrowly drawn conscience protections that ensure no patient is ever denied the healthcare they're entitled to receive.
Reuben B. Collins	Religious freedom and rights of conscience are important constitutional values. I support protecting people from discrimination because of sincerely held religious beliefs while also ensuring that patients, workers, and the public can access essential services, healthcare, and equal protection under the law. We should seek a fair balance that respects both conscience and civil rights.
Walter Kirkland	I support strong protections for religious freedom and rights of conscience for healthcare workers and government employees. People should not be forced to violate their sincerely held beliefs. At the same time, we must ensure patients can still access timely, medically appropriate care. I support policies that protect conscience rights while requiring reasonable accommodations, referrals, and clear standards so no one is denied essential services. This balanced approach respects both religious liberty and patient access.
Jerry Lightfoot	This seems like a choice that shouldn't even be up for debate. I strongly feel like this may be justified and further supported under the rights granted under the First Amendment.
James Anderson Makle	I was a firefighter/ Medic for 20 years, and watched our first Responders (Firefighters, Nurses, Military, Police) give their all to service the people of Southern Maryland. These are our real Hero's and need their rights protected.
Tracy Starr	I do believe in religious freedom and rights of conscience for people who work in healthcare and government. As a former government employee myself, I felt very restricted in my ability to practice my faith especially around the high holidays.
Harold Tolbert	We must trust that our citizens are responsible enough and concerned for the well being of others they care for and love.
Republicans	
	No response

8. WHY SHOULD MARYLAND CATHOLICS VOTE FOR YOU?

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5 CANDIDATES

Democrats

Quincy Bareebe	My faith and my values are inseparable from my politics — they are the foundation of everything I stand for. As an immigrant who worked my way from washing dishes to building a healthcare company, my trust in God has always guided me to serve others with humility and compassion. Catholic values — human dignity, care for the poor, stewardship of creation — drive my fight for affordable healthcare, food security, strong schools, and a clean environment. I humbly ask for your vote, your prayers, and the privilege of serving Maryland's 5th District.
Reuben B. Collins	Maryland Catholics should vote for me because I believe public service is about protecting human dignity, strengthening families, serving the poor, and building communities where every person can thrive. I am focused on lowering costs, expanding affordable housing and healthcare, supporting workers, protecting children and seniors, and restoring honest government. My campaign is rooted in service, faith, family, and community.
Elldwnia English	They shouldn't, I am the furthest from Jesus. I pray to God for morality. I do not believe in artificial or manufactured Bibles. I believe in good, helping the helpless, feeding the hungry, and healing the sick. I believe in doing the most for the least of us. I have seen the Catholic Church and how far it has fallen from God.
Walter Kirkland	Maryland Catholics should vote for me because I am committed to protecting human dignity, strengthening families, and serving those most in need. I support policies that expand access to food, healthcare, and housing, while creating pathways to long-term stability through education and opportunity. I believe in supporting parents, investing in children, and caring for our communities. I will lead with respect, compassion, and a commitment to bringing people together to build a stronger Maryland for all.
Jerry Lightfoot	I am a Brother in Christ that has walked in similar shoes and has had a plethora of shared life experiences as each and every one of them. I am a service disabled combat veteran that has put my life on the line for the person to my left, right, and all those back home. I will fight for them with that same tenacity and dedication. I attend St. John the Evangelist on Old Branch in Clinton, MD. While growing up in the Bronx, NY I attended Catholic Schools.
James Anderson Makle	My family has been in Maryland and the Catholic Church since the late 1600s, many of our family names are etched in the stained glass in many Catholic Churches throughout Southern Maryland. My family has a long history and tradition of following the Catholic Church, I remember attending Catholic Churches like St Michaels Church in Aquasco, Md

Continued on next page

Congressional District 5, Question 8. "Why vote for me?" continued

Tracy Starr	I am a fair and balanced professional with an ear to listen and hear all sides of a story before I make any judgement calls. I also believe in being a representative for all, not just myself as an individual with individual opinions and beliefs. It is important that we all have the ability to freely practice our faith, to speak out in favor of our own beliefs and ensure that we are providing to the poor and the next generation. People of Catholic faith are an embodiment of good service to others and to God, and I would be honored to have the vote of the Maryland constituency of Catholics.
Harold Tolbert	I'm a man of faith in God and will always seek the good in people. My guiding star is "Principles above Friendship".
Republicans	No response