

MARYLAND VOTE 2026

MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 9

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

ABOUT THE SURVEYS

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

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

ASSISTANCE TO THE POOR. Funding in Maryland’s budget should be maintained, and when necessary, increased to provide low-income residents access to basic necessities, such as food, housing and healthcare.

ENVIRONMENT. The State of Maryland should support initiatives such as tax credits or grant programs to encourage Maryland residents, businesses and non-profits to reduce their carbon footprint.

K-12 EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS. The State of Maryland should continue to expand existing funding to provide scholarships for low-income students who wish to attend the K-12 nonpublic school best suited for their educational needs.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE/MEDICAL AID IN DYING. In 1999, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation making it a felony for an individual to assist in another individual’s suicide. Maryland should uphold the law in its current form and reject legislation to legalize the practice of physician-assisted suicide/medical aid in dying.

WHY SHOULD MARYLAND CATHOLICS VOTE FOR YOU?

We encourage you to use these materials and the resources at mdcatholic.org/elections, to help you inform your conscience before voting.

Please note: 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.



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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 also see the Governor and U.S. Congress surveys.**

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Candidate statements follow grid

DISTRICT 9			Candidate statements follow grid				
			Poverty	Environment	Education	Against Physician Assisted Suicide	Addl. Comments
STATE SENATE CANDIDATES							
9	D	Katie Fry Hester					
9	R	Ben Hightower					
STATE DELEGATE CANDIDATES							
9A	D	Chao Wu					
9A	D	Natalie Ziegler	●	●	X	X	Yes
9A	R	Fitzgerald Mofor	●	X	●	●	Yes
9A	R	Spencer Rhoda					
9B	D	Abdun Matin	●	●	●	●	Yes
9B	D	Courtney Watson	●	●	●	X	Yes

D = Democrat | R= Republican : Green = agree | Red = disagree | Blank = no response

1. ASSISTANCE TO THE POOR

Funding in Maryland’s budget should be maintained, and when necessary, increased to provide low-income residents access to basic necessities, such as food, housing and healthcare.

DISTRICT 9 SENATE CANDIDATES

No responses.

DISTRICT 9 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

9A	D	Natalie Ziegler	Government has a responsibility to take care of our most vulnerable citizens, and there are many hardworking people really struggling at the moment. Federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP would be devastating unless the state fills the gap. Between housing and health care having risen many times beyond the rate of inflation, the sudden large increase in utility costs, and now gas prices going up, people with lower wage jobs, seniors, the disabled, etc. really need help.
9A	R	Fitzgerald Mofor	I agree that funding in Maryland’s budget should ensure that low-income residents have reliable access to basic necessities such as food and healthcare. As a Christian, I am guided by the Church’s social teaching, which calls us to uphold the dignity of every person and prioritize the needs of the vulnerable. I appreciate the vital work of Catholic Charities in Maryland that partner with state programs to deliver compassionate and effective assistance. Also I believe that the state should not provide all of these necessities in perpetuity. There should also be a pathway for self sufficiency.
9B	D	Abdun Matin	I am in full support of increasing resources to support Marylanders in need. I believe that it is the role of a state government to support the well being of its people.
9B	D	Courtney Watson	When the federal government cut benefits to the poor recently, I supported supplementing these benefits with state funds as the incumbent delegate.

2. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Maryland should support initiatives such as tax credits or grant programs to encourage Maryland residents, businesses and non-profits to reduce their carbon footprint.

DISTRICT 9 SENATE CANDIDATES

No responses.

DISTRICT 9 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

9A	D	Natalie Ziegler	We have a responsibility to younger generations to do what we can to mitigate the effects of climate change, which is already causing more extreme weather events, increasing the price of insurance, and threatening infrastructure in coastal and low lying cities and towns.
9A	R	Fitzgerald Mofor	Tax credits and grant programs should be redirected to assist residents, businesses, and non-profits in coping with the rising costs of energy. Further, tax credits and grants should also be directed to energy generation companies, and Maryland should increase its investment in nuclear energy to address the supply and demand issues related to energy in the state. Over the years, data centers have increasingly populated the PJM grid, creating a higher demand for energy in Maryland. As a result, the state needs to enhance its energy generation capacity to meet this growing demand.
9B	D	Abdun Matin	Protecting the environment is incredibly important to me and my platform, but financial barriers can prevent businesses and non-profits from making changes. I support programs that make being environmentally friendly more accessible and affordable.
9B	D	Courtney Watson	I chair the House Appropriations Committee's subcommittee on Transportation and the Environment. Part of the budget hearings I conduct for environmental agencies review tax credit and grant programs to ensure adequate funding and best use of funds for maximum impact.

3. K-12 EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

The State of Maryland should continue to expand existing funding to provide scholarships for low-income students who wish to attend the K-12 nonpublic school best suited for their educational needs.

DISTRICT 9 SENATE CANDIDATES

No responses.

DISTRICT 9 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

9A	D	Natalie Ziegler	I cannot support using public funds for private, often religious, education. There are other ways to fund private schools.
9A	R	Fitzgerald Mofor	Maryland should continue to expand funding for the BOOST (Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today) scholarship program so that low-income students can attend the K-12 nonpublic school that best meets their needs. For years the program has been chronically underfunded, often at levels around \$8–10 million, meaning it could serve only a fraction of eligible applicants. Governor Moore initially proposed cutting the program and phasing it out for new students. In Annapolis, I will be a strong advocate for fully funding BOOST to meet the clear demand from Maryland families.
9B	D	Abdun Matin	No one should have less opportunity because of their financial status. I support the state government working to make education and other resources more equitable.
9B	D	Courtney Watson	To the extent the budget allows, I support maintaining the existing funding for low-income students.

4. PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE/MEDICAL AID IN DYING

In 1999, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation making it a felony for an individual to assist in another individual's suicide. Maryland should uphold the law in its current form and reject legislation to legalize the practice of physician-assisted suicide/medical aid in dying.

DISTRICT 9 SENATE CANDIDATES

No responses.

DISTRICT 9 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

9A	D	Natalie Ziegler	I supported Maryland's Death with Dignity Act, which did not pass. in part because I believe every health care case is different and the legislature has none of the tools necessary to make health care decisions. I also have had personal experience watching a loved one die a slow and agonizing death that I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy. The unfortunate truth is that we are not always able to control pain.
9A	R	Fitzgerald Mofor	The Maryland General Assembly should absolutely maintain the 1999 law that makes it a felony for an individual to assist in another individual's suicide. In Annapolis, I am a guaranteed no vote on physician-assisted suicide/medical aid in dying. I believe that only God, our creator, has the authority to determine when our time on earth comes to an end. This bill poses a danger and contradicts the principles of my Christian faith.
9B	D	Courtney Watson	As a Catholic, I believe deeply in the Sanctity of Life and the dignity of every human life, especially in suffering. As a public servant, however, I also have a duty to respect the freedom and conscience of those who do not share my beliefs. I strongly support expanding hospice and palliative care so no one faces the end of life without compassion and support. At the same time, I support allowing physician-assisted dying only under strict, carefully regulated conditions for those facing terminal illness and unbearable suffering.

5. WHY SHOULD MARYLAND CATHOLICS VOTE FOR YOU?

DISTRICT 9 SENATE CANDIDATES

No responses.

DISTRICT 9 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

9A	D	Natalie Ziegler	I share the Catholic Church's concern for the poor and for planet earth, as well as the desire for peace and compassion for others. I feel the world is reverting back to a crueler time, and the Church is one institution pushing for kindness towards our fellow man and stewardship of the earth.
9A	R	Fitzgerald Mofor	Maryland has a profound Catholic heritage dating back to its founding by Cecil Calvert as a haven for those facing religious persecution. The 1649 Act of Toleration advanced religious liberty for Christians at a time of division. As a candidate for delegate in District 9A, I am committed to upholding these foundational values of human dignity, religious freedom, and care for the vulnerable. I will advocate for policies that protect parental rights in education, support faith-based institutions, and provide full funding for programs like BOOST that expand opportunity for low-income families.
9B	D	Abdun Matin	As state delegate, I plan on regularly meeting with and supporting Maryland's Catholic community in all the ways I can. I stand with your community in your values including equity, supporting low-income residents, and helping the environment. I would greatly appreciate the Maryland Catholic community's votes!
9B	D	Courtney Watson	As a lifelong Catholic, baptized and married at St. Louis Church in Clarksville, and a graduate of the Jesuit college, Loyola Maryland, in a family of six children with activist and devout parents, I was taught that serving others is the measure of a life well lived. My passion is to solve every day problems for residents of my district all year long, while working during the 90 day legislative session to pass laws that protect the vulnerable, and serve all Marylanders.