

# MARYLAND VOTE 2026

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## MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 5

**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](https://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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## MARYLAND PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 5

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

Positions and statements provided by candidates to a Maryland Catholic Conference survey, plus materials at [mdcatholic.org/elections](https://mdcatholic.org/elections), are resources to help you inform your conscience before voting. **Please also see the Governor and U.S. Congress surveys.**

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*

DISTRICT 5			Candidate statements follow grid				Addl. Comments
			Poverty	Environment	Education	Against Physician Assisted Suicide	
<b>STATE SENATE CANDIDATES</b>							
5	D	Gary Foote	●	●	X	●	YES
5	R	Justin Ready			●	●	
<b>STATE DELEGATE CANDIDATES</b>							
5	D	Dayana Bergman	●	●	●	X	YES
5	D	Alison Rudolph					
5	D	Courtney Alexa Welch					
5	R	April R. Rose	X	X	●	●	YES
5	R	Sallie Taylor	X	X	●	●	YES
5	R	Chris Tomlinson	●	X	●	●	YES
5	R	Steve Whisler	X	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.

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### DISTRICT 5 SENATE CANDIDATES

5	D	Gary Foote	Housing, medical care, and food are human rights. We should do all we can to make sure these are safe for all. We can make our community healthier and safer by paying more attention to these basic needs.
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### DISTRICT 5 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

5	D	Dayana Bergman	Yes, I agree and I also believe in providing wraparound community services to provide families free health screenings. Such as vision and dental screening.
5	R	Sallie Taylor	Disagree. Maryland's budget is now over \$70 Billion. We have enough money to provide a safety net for those who truly need it, seniors, veterans and the disabled. I disagreed with the House of Delegates vote to fund corporations and private colleges instead of funding the programs for the permanently disabled. We just need to make assisting the needy a priority.
5	R	Chris Tomlinson	We are too wealthy of a society to accept people starving or living on the streets, and so basic life-sustaining services should be in place as a safety net for citizens falling on hard times. However, I believe that private charities (such as various Catholic organizations) are better at providing such services, and are much better stewards of funds, than is the government. My preference is to keep government small and restrained, and for services for the poor to be provided by private organizations.
5	R	Steve Whisler	I'm generally skeptical of increasing Maryland's budget, which in the past four years has increased 17% from \$60B to over \$70B. I definitely want to ensure needy citizens have access to basic necessities such as food, housing, and healthcare. I want to see significant Medicaid reform to ensure only those who truly need it receive vital services. The federal government will very likely reduce Medicaid funds to states and we must ensure the limited funds that remain help those who need it most.

## 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.

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### DISTRICT 5 SENATE CANDIDATES

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5	D	Gary Foote	It is time to stop living like it's 1973. A disruption in the world's oil supply, and our economy is thrown into chaos? We have had over 50 years to make sure this doesn't happen, and yet here we go again. By the time I am finished writing this the US will have spent another 5 million dollars on weapons of war. Feel free to contact me if you have ideas for ways this money could be better spent. How about housing, education, food, health, and protecting the environment. (For a start...)
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### DISTRICT 5 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

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5	R	Sallie Taylor	Disagree. Maryland has reduced its carbon footprint and now is importing 40% of its energy from out of states and those sources of energy are fossil fuel based. Tax credits and grants just drive up cost and do nothing to address the real problems, like high electric bills.
5	R	Chris Tomlinson	Firstly, Maryland's carbon emissions are a negligible fraction of the global total, and so any such action would be ineffective and performative virtue signaling. Secondly, I oppose programs that serve to grow the government into an ever-larger and ever-more-powerful behemoth, engineering society and controlling citizens' lives through inefficient and heavy-handed programs. The effective and sensible way to reduce carbon footprint in Maryland – to the extent it is even necessary – is to remove barriers to natural gas and nuclear power plants.
5	R	Steve Whisler	Maryland's climate policies and unrealistic goals are the reason why utility rates have soared. Nearly 30% of current bills include taxes and fees to build alternative energy solutions and delivery channels -- these exorbitant costs do not inject much needed energy in the grid ... and won't be created or delivered for many years to come. Today, we must import 40% of our energy, which is simply generated by fossil fuels in neighboring states.

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### 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.

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#### DISTRICT 5 SENATE CANDIDATES

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5	D	Gary Foote	Public money should fund public schools. Private schools are a choice. Let's do what needs to be done to make sure there are great public schools in every neighborhood, regardless of zip code.
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#### DISTRICT 5 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

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5	D	Dayana Bergman	This offers the opportunity for smaller classroom sizes for children who benefit from learning in a small classroom size setting.
5	R	Sallie Taylor	Agree. We should allow and encourage school choice in all forms including public charter. All families, and we can start with low income, should have the choice of taking the cost of their child's public education and applying it to the nonpublic school of their choice.
5	R	Chris Tomlinson	Although I always wish to constrain government to the extent possible, given that the primary source of education funding in MD is the state, I believe the state should indeed expand existing funding to provide scholarships for ANY student -- not just a low-income student -- who wishes to attend the K-12 nonpublic school best suited for their educational needs. The purpose of educational funding is to educate students, not to maintain a jobs program for public school educators, and the funding should follow the student to the educational establishment that best fits their values and needs.
5	R	Steve Whisler	I support fully scholarship programs for low-income students; a program that Maryland Democrats tried to cut significantly last year. I am a former educator and current president of the Carroll County Board of Education. I would also like to champion legislation to help facilitate school choice and help parents offset the cost of private school tuition, after-school tutor programs, etc.

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#### 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.

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##### DISTRICT 5 SENATE CANDIDATES

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5	D	Gary Foote	Life is sacred. We should be doing more to teach nonviolence because we certainly have enough advocates of violence promoting destruction of human life.
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##### DISTRICT 5 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

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5	D	Dayana Bergman	Personally, I had a family member who was a retired nurse, a Vietnam Veteran, and chose to die with dignity in Washington State. He was suffering from MS and was near his last days. He was suffering from a severe infection that was extremely painful. He just couldn't take it and it was very difficult for the family as well we didn't want to see him suffer. Rick was a good man he was very caring and always helping others. He helped my mother in-law raise my husband. I think it's possible under very strict circumstances to provide individuals this option if they choose to die with dignity.
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5	R	Sallie Taylor	Agree. I am pro-life from conception to natural death.
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5	R	Chris Tomlinson	I am pro-life, believing that all life – especially innocent life – is precious and worthy of protection, and that applies to both ends of a person's lifespan. I certainly sympathize with people in chronic pain, or with fatal diseases, but I do not believe that the answer is suicide, and I do not believe that the state should facilitate or encourage such actions.
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5	R	Steve Whisler	The medical profession should assist in prolonging life and making patients comfortable during the final days. I do not support physician-assisted suicide / medical aid in dying. I believe in the power of prayer and God's plan for our lives.
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## 5. WHY SHOULD MARYLAND CATHOLICS VOTE FOR YOU?

### DISTRICT 5 SENATE CANDIDATES

D	Gary Foote	We all have an obligation to promote the common good and I take that responsibility seriously. Reducing violence, advocating for the poor, addressing basic services for everyone - these are all positions I advocate. We can all work together to make Maryland and Carroll County places that serve as models for the rest of the country. Everyone does better when everyone does better. When we don't fight hard enough for the values we say we believe in, pretty soon it becomes apparent that we don't really believe what we say.
R	Justin Ready	Respect for the key God-given values of life, freedom of religion and common sense care for those who are most vulnerable while encouraging a culture of hard work, family and accountability are at the core of my belief. As a State Senator, I work each day to balance the needs we have with the taxpayer funds available. I believe in strong families make safe and strong communities. While the Catholic Conference and I agree on some specific policies and also disagree with some, Catholic voters can count on me to always stand up for our shared values and respectfully discuss how to solve problems.

### DISTRICT 5 DELEGATE CANDIDATES

5	D	Dayana Bergman	I grew up Catholic, my grandmother used to take us to Saint Michael in Miami Dade and later our family moved and we went to Saint Brendan; my youngest sister and 4 of my cousins graduated from Saint Brendan High School. I do hold strong beliefs in always helping others, making sure people have access to food and shelter, basic necessities. While still respecting the beliefs of others. Thank you for your consideration and I hope that we can work together in the future.
5	R	April R. Rose	I am pro-life and believe that school choices that include access to private education at faith based schools.
5	R	Sallie Taylor	Catholics and everyone else should vote for me because I will focus on the fundamentals of government: public infrastructure, public safety, fair and efficient judicial system, local control, and a reasonable safety net for those in need. Also, I will fight against increased taxes and fees. I am an active member of my local chapter of Right to Life. Protecting individual Freedom is my top priority.
5	R	Chris Tomlinson	I believe that Catholics should vote for me for the same reasons that other residents should vote for me: because I stand for personal responsibility, traditional family values, parental rights, law and order, and property rights. I am strongly pro-life and pro-school-choice. And I work hard to represent my constituents with integrity, transparency, and accountability. In addition, while I do not exactly wear my faith on my sleeve, I am a proud Catholic. We had a beautiful Catholic wedding 4 years ago and we're raising our daughter Catholic.
5	R	Steve Whisler	I am a life-long Christian Conservative. My campaign philosophies include faith, family, freedom, and fiscal responsibility. Faith is listed first for a reason as He and His word guide my life. I am pro-life and will always consider the principals of my faith in any decision I make in Annapolis.