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## 2018 Questionnaire

Progressive Maryland is a grassroots community organization that acts for social and economic justice by developing civic leaders and cultivating allies in order to advance economic, racial, and environmental equity, and to change our economic system for the benefit of all people in Maryland. Learn more at [www.ProgressiveMaryland.org](http://www.ProgressiveMaryland.org)

Progressive Maryland supports candidates who will work to build a society and economy that works for all Marylanders, with special emphasis on traditionally marginalized groups—low and moderate income residents, people of color, women, LGBTQ+, and all oppressed and exploited people. Elections can have an enormous impact on our work to reduce inequity and to improve the lives of residents all over the state. It is our responsibility not only to advocate for residents but also to empower them to engage in the political process at every level, from member-led canvasses to trainings for our members who wish to run for office.

To be considered for Progressive Maryland's endorsement, please return the completed questionnaire to our Policy and Legislative Director Jennifer Dwyer at [Jennifer@progressivemaryland.org](mailto:Jennifer@progressivemaryland.org) **no later than 5 P.M. on Friday, January 26, 2018**. Your responses will be available to the public at [www.ProgressiveMaryland.org](http://www.ProgressiveMaryland.org)

### Candidate Information

Candidate Last Name: Lewis

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Candidate First Name: Robbyn

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Office Seeking: Delegate

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District: 46

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Party: Democratic

### Campaign Contact Information

Committee Name:

Friends of Robbyn Lewis

Street Address:

6 N Potomac Street

City:

Baltimore

Zip Code:

21224

Business Phone:

410-929-0555

Fax:

n/a

Campaign Website:

[www.robbynlewis.com](http://www.robbynlewis.com)

## Candidate Contact Information

Cell Phone:

443-604-2984

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Email Address:

[robbyn@robbynlewis.com](mailto:robbyn@robbynlewis.com)

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## Treasurer Contact Information

Treasurer Name:

Gigi Eggers

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Street Address:

2111 Essex St

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City:

Baltimore

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Zip Code:

21231

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Phone:

410-534-4842

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<b>Candidate History</b>
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Previous Elected Offices:

None.

Which Years Did You Serve:

2017 - present

Have you ever received an endorsement from Progressive Maryland?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ or NO  \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, when:

Have you ever assisted Progressive Maryland in achieving its goals?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ or NO \_\_\_\_\_

Describe:

Major Endorsements (Elected Officials/Organizations/Opinion Leaders):

*MD Sierra Club, League of Conservation Voters*

## Issue Questions

1. Do you support ending the money-based bail system?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*Money should not determine whether or not someone is free before trial. The money-based bail system disadvantages those in the lowest socioeconomic situations, who are already overrepresented in our criminal justice system. Money bail represents an antiquated – and failed – approach to criminal justice that benefits those of means without taking into account the traumatic impact of unnecessary pretrial jailing or the actual risk of flight posed by a defendant without access to money. Research by faculty at the University of Pennsylvania has demonstrated a link between pretrial detention and the negative outcomes of individual cases.<sup>1</sup> Further, the entire point of bail – to guarantee presence at trial – may be negated by money bail, as longer pretrial detentions created by inadequate resources lead to fewer individuals appearing at trial when those individuals are held for longer than 24 hours.<sup>2</sup> For these reasons and more, I support the elimination of money bail in Maryland.*

2. Will you support a \$15 per hour minimum wage for all Maryland workers? If yes, over what time period would you suggest implementing it? Do you support including an indexing provision?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*I support raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour, and indexing it to keep up with the rate of inflation.*

3. Do you support public financing of State Senate and Delegate races similar to systems enacted in Montgomery County and Howard County?

**Yes** No

Comments:

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<sup>1</sup> Stevenson, Megan and Mayson, Sandra G., "Bail Reform: New Directions for Pretrial Detention and Release" (2017). *Faculty Scholarship*. 1745.

[http://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/faculty\\_scholarship/1745](http://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/faculty_scholarship/1745)

<sup>2</sup> Laura & John Arnold Found., Pretrial Criminal Justice Research 2 (2013), available at

[http://www.arnoldfoundation.org/wpcontent/uploads/2014/02/LJAF-Pretrial-CJResearch-brief\\_FNL.pdf](http://www.arnoldfoundation.org/wpcontent/uploads/2014/02/LJAF-Pretrial-CJResearch-brief_FNL.pdf)

*Corporations and large donors currently have too much power in our political system. Public financing would help to alleviate the influence tied to financial support.*

4. Do you support increased protections for workers in terms of scheduling practices? In particular, will you support requiring employers to give 3 weeks' notice to employees of their shift schedule, requiring employers who call employees into work only to send them home before the end of their shift to provide a certain percentage of the pay that the employee would have made that day, and prohibiting employers from scheduling an employee to work back-to-back shifts or shifts scheduled only a few hours apart without the employee's consent?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*I fully support integrity in scheduling, and ensuring that shift workers receive adequate notice and/or compensation when employers use unfair scheduling practices. In my first session as a delegate, I proudly co-sponsored the Maryland Fair Scheduling Act, and will look for similar legislative efforts this spring in Annapolis.*

5. Do you support workers' rights to organize in the private and public sectors? Will you make it a priority that all public employees be covered by a public employees relations act, similar to the National Labor Relations Act, which has governed work in the private sector for over 80 years?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*All employees should be free to organize in both the private and public sectors. Unions were a critical means of building a middle class in the United States through the power of organized labor. As a daughter (teacher's union), granddaughter (Glass Molders Pottery Plastics and Allied Workers) and sister (UFCW and The Newspaper Guild) of union members, I am proud of the role they have served, and will look for ways to continue supporting their work in Annapolis.*

6. We believe that the financial security of women is integral to the health of our economy. Do you feel that legislation ensuring the equal treatment of men and women in the workplace is appropriate? If so, what legislation will you support as a member of the General Assembly to bring women to parity with their male colleagues?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*Legislation ensuring parity between men and women in the workplace is appropriate. I anticipate eagerly supporting legislation strengthening Maryland's Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, and assisting in anti-harassment and paid maternity leave bills this spring.*

7. Do you believe that employers should be required to make reasonable accommodations for employees and applicants for employment who have known limitations due to conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*Reasonable accommodations for employees and applicants who have limitations due to conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth is another means of ensuring parity between men and women in the workforce. It is vital to provide such accommodations – not just as a matter of equity, but to make sure Maryland’s workforce benefits from the talents of all of its residents, regardless of such limitations.*

8. Are there any instances in which the state should place restrictions on a patient seeking abortion care, such as stage of pregnancy, access based on age, or the type of abortion care that state funding should cover?

Yes  No

Comments:

*A person’s health decisions and access to care should not be limited by finances and insurance, which is why I co-sponsored legislation last year protecting Planned Parenthood funding in Maryland regardless of what happens with the ACA. When a patient seeks abortion care, that care should always be safe, always be legal, and if a patient believes it is their best option, it should be accessible in whatever context is most meaningful to her.*

9. Will you support single-payer health care in Maryland? If so, how would you pass it and how would you pay for it?

Yes  No

Comments:

*Maryland already has an all-payer health care system, which has saved the state millions of dollars. As a public health professional who worked to implement the Affordable Care Act in Maryland at the Health Benefit Exchange, affordable access to high-quality health care is critically important to me – it is what I have spent most of my career on, all over the world. I am proud to be sponsoring legislation this year that will create a Basic Health Plan in Maryland, and am looking forward to examining other pieces of legislation that address gaps in our insurance models and system of care.*

10. Will you support instituting transparency rules for Pharmacy Benefit Managers and drug corporations as well as creating a drug cost review commission for high cost drugs?

Yes  No

Comments:

*Yes, I am supportive of such efforts, and look forward to signing on as a co-sponsor to this legislation.*

11. In general, do you support or oppose charter schools?

Support  Oppose

Comments:

*When implemented correctly, public charter schools can provide additional supports and services to students in hardest to reach areas. There must be strong oversight and accountability to ensure the charter school is held to the same standards as any other public school. As a private citizen, I helped found the Patterson Park Public Charter School in my neighborhood more than a decade ago. When I and a group of neighbors first began working on the idea of a neighborhood school - back in 2003-2004 - all we wanted was to bring a quality school to our community, close to our homes. Public charter was one of the options, and thanks to the hard work of many dedicated neighbors who volunteered, we made it happen. Since opening its doors in 2005, our school has prepared hundreds of our kids for secondary school and university. We are rightly proud of this, and we recognize the benefits provided by the fact that the school's staff remained employees of the local school board. Today, I have a fuller understanding the risks that face our public school system, and as a result I am more dedicated than ever to ensuring that in Maryland, our public charter schools remain just that: public. All of our teachers and staff should belong to their respective unions, and the local school boards should maintain oversight.*

12. Do you support or oppose school vouchers that would allow public school students, K-12, to attend a private school instead of their local public school? Please explain your support or opposition.

Support

**Oppose**

Comments:

*All students should have access to an excellent school and our public school system should be the means by which we achieve this standard. However, I consistently voted against the BOOST voucher program this last term at each occasion because I believe the current program insufficiently protects students' and educators' civil rights.*

13. Will you support making state colleges and universities free for all in-state students?

Yes

**No**

Comments:

*As someone who is still in the process of paying off student loans, I have an incredible amount of empathy and personal understanding of the struggle to attain a high-quality education at an affordable price. I support efforts to make higher education more affordable and accessible to all students – especially students without the means of paying without taking on significant debt. I would want to find a model that would allow for more affordable higher education that can allow more students to graduate debt-free, without affecting the quality of the institutions involved or the education they provide.*

14. Will you support the Trust Act?

**Yes**

No

Comments:

*Protecting Maryland's immigrant community is imperative. I was supportive of the Trust Act in the last legislative session and still am.*

15. Will you support closing corporate tax loopholes by requiring combined reporting, as most other states have done? Will you support bringing back Maryland's 6.25 % tax rate on income of more than \$1 million to allow upper income residents to contribute more to Maryland?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*Yes, as a matter of ensuring tax equity and addressing wealth inequality, I support closing these loopholes.*

16. Do you plan to introduce or support legislation to provide protection for the Potomac, Chesapeake or other shared environments that have had federal funding for protection removed?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*District 46 is home to a large portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and cleaning our environment has been a key motivator in my time as a resident of a community on the Bay and a legislator in Annapolis. I am proud to be a leader in the legislature in sponsoring legislation regulating air pollution by chicken farms along the Chesapeake.*

17. What legislation and regulations can Maryland state government enact to protect our residents from the damage inflicted by Trump's federal government?

Comments:

*Mitigating the damage being done by the Trump administration and Republican Congress is a top priority. I supported the legislature's decision to give Attorney General Frosh the autonomy to sue the Trump administration last session and will continue advocating and voting for the AG's office to receive the appropriations it needs to do so. We must also pass legislation at the state level for regulations which have been repealed at the national level, like the individual mandate for health care and the Basic Health Plan, while looking for legislation to protect our friends, family, and neighbors most vulnerable to the damaging policies of this White House.*

18. Do you support the creation of a progressive caucus in the state legislature?

**Yes** No

Comments:

*I support creating a progressive caucus and would be happy to join it.*

19. For the measures above that you have agreed to support would you be willing to:

- Co-sponsor legislation? YES  or NO
- Work with our Policy and Legislative Director to help pass a bill? YES  or NO
- Testify at a hearing in support of legislation? YES  or NO
- Speak at public events in support of legislation? YES  or NO
- Write a letter in support of legislation? YES  or NO
- Write an op-ed in support of legislation? YES  or NO

20. Would you be willing to engage with Progressive Maryland members and their communities by:

- Speaking at Progressive Maryland events? YES  or NO
- Meeting with our membership annually to report on the progress of our shared priorities and answer questions from our members? YES  or NO
- Writing a letter to unorganized workers endorsing an organizing drive by a labor union? YES  or NO