**2018 Questionnaire for County Council**

**Prince George’s County**

**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 19, 2018. Your responses will be available to the public at** [**www.ProgressiveMaryland.org**](http://www.progressivemaryland.org/)

**Candidate Last Name: Ivey**

**Candidate First Name: Jolene**

**Office Seeking: County Council**

**District: District 5**

**Party: Democratic**

**Campaign Contact Information**

**Committee Name: Friends of Jolene Ivey**

**Street Address:[2700 Valley Way](https://maps.google.com/?q=2700+Valley+Way&entry=gmail&source=g)**

**City: Cheverly**

**Zip Code:20785**

**Business Phone:** [**301-437-8394**](tel:(301)%20437-8394)

**Campaign Website:[joleneivey.com](http://joleneivey.com/" \t "_blank)**

**Candidate Contact Information**

**Cell Phone:** [**301-437-8394**](tel:(301)%20437-8394)

**Email Address:Jolene@JoleneIvey.com**

**Treasurer Contact Information**

**Treasurer Name:Barbara Solt**

**Street Address:**[**5706 Forest Road**](https://maps.google.com/?q=5706+Forest+Road&entry=gmail&source=g)

**City:Cheverly**

**Zip Code:20785**

**Phone:**[**202-271-7963**](tel:(202)%20271-7963)

**Candidate History:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Previous Elected Offices:**  **Maryland State Delegate, 47th Legislative District (2007- 2015).**  Chair, Prince George's County Delegation (2012 - 2014), 2nd vice-chair (2011-12).  House Chair, Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (2011 - 2015).  Member, Ways & Means Committee (2007 - 2015).  Member, Legislative Black Caucus (2007 - 2015), Women Legislators of Maryland (2007 - 2015).  Member, Programs and Events Advisory Committee of Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission (2009-15); Advisory Council to the Children's Cabinet (2011-15); Advisory Board on After-School and Summer Opportunity Programs (2012-15); Prince George's County Juvenile Court and School Safety Work Group (2013-15).  Obama Delegate to the Democratic National Convention, 2008 |
| **Which Years Did You Serve:**  2007 - 2015 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Have you ever assisted Progressive Maryland in achieving its goals?** | **YES\_\_X** **NO\_\_\_\_** |
| **Describe:**  Last year I testified before the County Council in opposition to the Bladensburg Walmart being allowed to expand.  When I was Chair of the Prince George’s Delegation in Annapolis, I took the lead on the amendment to the education funding formula that has brought more than 40 million additional dollars to our county’s public schools; I sponsored the law that allows undocumented residents to receive a driver's license in our state; I fought a successful decade-long quest to have the Roger Taney statue removed from in front of our State House. When I was a delegate, I had a proud progressive voting record. | |
| **Major Endorsements (Elected Officials/Organizations/Opinion Leaders):**  UNITE HERE, local 25; LiUNA;  Teamsters, Joint Council 55 & 730; Prince George’s Muslim Council; IAFF, local 1619 | |

**Issue Questions**

1. Do you support a $15 per hour minimum wage for all Prince George’s County workers?

If yes, over what time period would you suggest implementing it? Do you support including an indexing provision?

**Yes X** No

Comments:  I support raising the current $11.50 minimum wage to $15 in Prince George’s County. People who work full time should earn a livable wage.

In late 2017, Montgomery County Council approved a $15-an-hour minimum wage that would take effect by 2024. (The measure will be implemented in phases depending on the number of workers employed by individual businesses, and with certain carve-outs). The District of Columbia has also decided to move to $15 an hour, phased in, as have other jurisdictions across the nation. The specifics involved are important, and can make a big difference to affected workers.

I am open to the need to phase-in the increase, as compared to implementing it immediately, but I want to see it done as quickly as possible. It is the right and just thing to do, and economically viable. Repeated studies have demonstrated the fallacy of the scare tactics being used in opposition.

I understand the need for an indexing provision, because the current minimum wage has been eroded by inflation, and full-time workers have seen their relative income shrink. Full-time work should earn a living wage, and I will work to see that a way can be found to ensure that the county’s minimum wage can keep pace with inflation.

1. Do you support public financing of County Executive and County Council races in Prince George’s County?

**YesX** No

Comments:  I support establishing a system of public financing for county elections. There are ongoing discussions and differing proposals currently being considered in Prince George’s County. There needs to be a balance found that ensures that legitimate candidates with grassroots support are eligible without allocating money to non-serious gestures.

I am also open to proposals that would discuss the ratio of matching funds, once a legitimizing threshold is passed. The public campaign financing law just passed this month by the District of Columbia Council included a 5-to-1 match. I am open to the consideration of various formulas in an effort to find something that can pass and be implemented.

Big, unaccountable money is corrosive to our democracy, and I support public funding of campaigns.

Montgomery County now has a public campaign finance program, and this past June the Howard County Council approved its own public finance system, to begin in the 2022 election cycle. Over 30 jurisdictions nationwide now have some form of public financing for their elections. Prince George’s should study these to determine what works effectively and fairly. With our county having an unfortunate and staining legacy of “pay-to-play,” it would be the right thing to do, be a relatively small amount of money for the county budget, and in the long-run money well spent.

1. Do you believe that all Prince George’s County school board members should be elected?

Yes **Not at this time**

Comments:  Focusing on whether or not school board members are elected or appointed is a distraction from the real problems facing our schools. What’s more important is to have someone to hold accountable for the success of our students.  County Executive Baker wanted the authority that the public assumed he already had, and I was instrumental in the legislature in giving him that authority. If we are unhappy with the schools we know who has the power to change things.  We have had several changes in the constitution of our school board with no improvement in the rank of our school system.

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

Comments:

There is a role for public charters schools in Prince George’s County. They’ve been properly vetted and approved by our school system, with strong oversight. Weak charter schools in our county have been closed, while strong charters have flourished. Our school system has struggled to provide an excellent education to our students, and I believe we need to support all well-considered programs that help them learn.

Free, universally available, good public education is vital to a prosperous, free, and just society. I am a strong supporter of, and advocate for, our county’s public schools, and of our teachers, their organizations, and unions. Strong teachers make strong schools, and the morale of our teachers directly affects our children and the quality of their education.

In Maryland, all teachers are members of their union, regardless of whether they teach in traditional public schools or public charter schools, which is how it should be.

1. 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.

Yes **No X**

Comments:As a strong supporter of our public schools, I do not support school vouchers.

1. As a member of the District Council, would you ensure that development in our county adheres to the principles of smart growth?

**Yes X** No

Comments:  I strongly support the concept of smart growth.The 2014 General Plan,Plan Prince George's 2035, recommends that future growth and mixed use development be focused in eight Regional Transit Districts, where economic and job growth can be centered, so the county can limit sprawl and preserve our agricultural and forested land. This is an important step, and a good start.

These goals are important to adhere to (but should not be absolutely binding). If we can do better, I want to remain flexible. The 2014 General Plan is a blueprint to chart a course, intended to establish a framework for the future. Just as this 2014 version superseded and amended the 2002 Plan Prince George’s 2035, Prince George’s County needs to be flexible, adaptive, and future-looking.

I support the stated goals and intentions contained in the plan: to create strong, green, walkable communities of mixed use and job creation, and to protect our resources. These goals are desirable and admirable, but achieving them fairly and with transparency will remain the challenge. Short-term development motivated by profit without consideration of transit, conservation, sustainability, open spaces, or the long-term future must be challenged and stopped. Many seemingly discrete and independent decisions have and will add up; the overall structure of our communities and future will be determined by decisions the next District Council will make.

For example, transit-oriented development grids should have a watershed overlay. This allows transit, watershed protection, and infrastructure planning to be considered together, early in the design process. Viewing them as separate issues weakens each, and can lead to misguided projects and uncoordinated efforts.

We also need the wise use of incentives and subsidies. The focus should be to revitalize existing communities and neighborhoods, take advantage of our underdeveloped Metro station areas, and protect our open spaces.

Adhering to smart growth principles is our obligation to the future, and I will work on the District Council to see that future growth is wise and sustainable.

1. Would you work to ensure that residents’ vision for how their communities should develop is present in every land use plan, amendment to the zoning ordinance, and application approved by the District Council?

**Yes X** No

Comments: An open, transparent, and inclusive process is important for multiple reasons.

It has always been my practice while in office to reach out to the widest possible circle of people in our businesses, schools, faith communities, municipalities, and leaders and stakeholders throughout the community to understand the needs, desires, and frustrations confronting the people and groups in the district. The County Council should also continue to do so in structured and official ways to seek buy-in from every community affected by its decisions.

My experiences around land use have informed my priorities of including the public in decision making, which increases the public’s trust in the process and yields a superior outcome; and focusing human-scaled, walkable, bikeable development which enhances and integrates natural areas into transit centers.

Recently a map amendment was submitted that would, ultimately, allow an apartment building to be built on a property in Cheverly that is a valuable environmental asset, is designated as being in a FEMA floodplain, and includes a spring that has an historic designation. Only a small percentage of that land was owned by the developers, and the vast majority is county owned. She did not contact the mayor or council. Further, the developer made the request after admittedly being aware of the two-year process that led to the Planning Board to approve the Greater Cheverly Sector Plan. Had the developer asked for the change to property’s categorization during the many public meetings held before approval of this Sector Plan, the public would have had the opportunity to point out the flaws of this change. Instead, the developer asked for the amendment, and the council member started the process for approval, which sparked a loud outcry from Cheverly residents. Nearly 300 people came to the joint meeting of the Planning Board and District Council, and 60 residents (including me) spoke against the map amendment.  Only a representative of the developer spoke in favor of it.

This experience showed how much damage is inflicted on the public’s trust when the development process is not transparent. It is critical to include the residents who are most impacted by a development project, at every step. Listening to a variety of voices and viewpoints yields the strongest outcomes. In a municipality it is easy to reach the mayor and council, at a minimum.  Unincorporated areas require more legwork to reach civic leaders, but the Council member should already know who they are and be in touch with them.

In our system of representative government, I will represent the people of District 5, but also take into account the overall requirements of the entire county that the Council serves. This bifurcated responsibility is something that I take seriously, and I will always be attuned to as I seek ideas and opinions -- officially and informally -- from the widest possible number of sources. The County Council as a whole also needs to do so.

1. Do you support the preservation of the rural tier?

**Yes X** No

Comments:  There are 15 Metro stations in Prince George’s County and multiple MARC stations, and the land around them has not been maximized. The 20th Century is over; we need to move beyond the old car-centric approach to development. It is important that the Council be wise about limiting greenfield development in the county, and protect assets such as the our rural tier.

Growth is inevitable, and economic prosperity and development are needed and desirable, but on the County Council I will work to see that development is done wisely, to limit sprawl, to be future-looking, and to preserve our green spaces. One of the many responsibilities of the Council is to plan for the future, and the parameters we set today will help determine tomorrow’s prosperity. Smart growth is wise, and will help ensure a better, healthier, and more sustainable future for the county and its residents.

1. Over the past few years, the County has been conducting a significant effort to rewrite and simplify the zoning codes that govern development in Prince George's County.  Are you satisfied with this process so far?  Are there important areas where you might want see changes or modifications made in the new proposed code?  If so, what are they?

**Yes X** No

Comments: The comprehensive rewrite of the county’s zoning code was overdue, and I am pleased that the process is underway. Zoning is a complicated and critically important part of the job of the County Council.  I want to work with my colleagues to have smart, green and sustainable growth for projects in our county.

The county has undergone and is further undergoing significant change, and it is important that our zoning recognizes that and is wisely adapted to the challenges that have and will continue to confront us. It is important that our inevitable growth be smart growth, and our zoning and statutes should be structured with that in mind.

True transparency and community involvement is vital. There will inevitably always be conflicting interests and values, and it is important that these be resolved in an open way. Further, it is important to acknowledge that this effort should be an ongoing and continuous process. There are always unintended consequences and unanticipated results, and it is important that the County and the Council remain open to making necessary adjustments as events and changes unfold.

The zoning process should include environmental justice considerations, to make sure that development is fair, just and healthy for all.

1. What would you do to enhance economic stability and wealth for Prince George's County residents?

Comments: The county and its residents will thrive when we have strong public schools, smart and sustainable economic development, job growth, wise use of incentives, mandates, and subsidies, and engaged leadership.

This is a real and important challenge facing the people of Prince George’s County. Money is like blood. When it circulates within the body, it helps regenerate itself. When an artery is cut, the blood flows out weakening the body, and when our county's budget is spent on non-Prince George's County businesses and workers, that money leaves the county. By supporting local businesses through the contracting process, taxes are returned to our budget, other local businesses get the benefit of residents' spending, and more residents are hired.

Our county should strive to be a national model on how to successfully build and support small and minority-owned businesses. We have the resources, but we need the will and the leaders willing to make it happen.

The awarding of contracts needs to be as open as possible, and no-bid contracts should be limited and transparent. The Council should explore imposing mandates to ensure that a specified percentage of contracts are awarded to Prince George’s companies, and strict enforcement should be instituted to ensure that the companies are actually based in the county, and they are not just fronts. I also think the Council should ensure that a significant percentage of workers who work for companies that receive contracts are actual residents of Prince George’s County. These, and other steps which are needed, will increase the number of minority-owned firms receiving contracts.

Project Labor Agreements are an important tool in ensuring that our workers are paid a fair wage for construction projects, and I believe we should mandate and enforce a rule that a majority of the workers be Prince George’s County residents.  When we invest in the people who live here, they will invest directly into our economy.

Education is the foundation of economic stability.   Research has demonstrated the great benefits of early childhood development programs -- and expanding the home visiting program is a priority of mine. Learning starts well before pre-k, and mentoring young parents who want and need that help is an investment that pays off for a lifetime. Our community has a strong volunteer base, and we can organize our churches, mosques, and civic association members so that they are trained and vetted to be the mentors that struggling parents need to raise school-ready children.

Everyone benefits when every student reaches his or her full potential, and our county and *all* its residents will benefit. As the late Senator Paul Wellstone said, “We all do better when we all do better.”

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

* Co-sponsor legislation? **YES**
* Work with our Policy and Legislative Director to help pass a bill? **YES**. Working with and hearing the insights, experiences, and advice from involved and knowledgeable constituents and stakeholders is important.
* Speak at public events in support of legislation?   **YES**. That is part of the responsibility of being a member of the County Council.
* Write an op-ed in support of legislation?   **YES.** I authored an op-ed in support of earned sick leave.  <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-sick-leave-20131209-story.html>

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

* Speaking at Progressive Maryland events?    **YES**

Meeting with our membership annually to report on the progress of our shared priorities and answer questions from our members?   **YES**