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Address: Potomac  
What office are you seeking?: Delegate  
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: [www.LaurieHalversonforDelegate.com](http://www.LaurieHalversonforDelegate.com)

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**2 Someone new to Montgomery County may ask, "What's the Ag Reserve and why is it important?" What's your answer?**

I would say the Ag Reserve is a treasure of Montgomery County. It is a specially zoned area of the county that includes Poolesville and Barnesville in my District 15. It is zoned for Agriculture as its main use. It is important because, as our population grows, our county has included in its master plan, protection for the farming industry which is a very important asset that very few counties have. In 2013, I was fortunate to ride in a county plane with Leadership Montgomery classmates and it was really awesome to see from the air how much area of green space that is part of our county.

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**3 What are your priorities regarding stewardship of the County's natural resources (water, forests, open spaces) and parkland?**

Today, I was out all day in Annapolis testifying on one issue that is important to me that affects water run off: I testified in favor of a bill to not allow the state to fund artificial turf fields (SB 763). These fake grass fields affect water run off and can contaminate the water because of the tire infill being used. Since 2009, I worked with Dr. Kathy Michels and Diana Conway and others to educate families on the benefits of natural turf. As a MCCPTA leader, I assembled a turf forum with experts in the natural turf industry as well as the artificial turf industry. In my testimony today, I spoke out to highlight the small businesses in Maryland who could benefit if our counties would install and maintain natural turf fields. Besides being better for kids, I think this would benefit the Ag reserve as well. Plus, it will save the state a million dollars per field over a 20 year period.

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**4 What is your vision for the future of the County's Agricultural Reserve? Briefly, how would you achieve that vision?**

I would like to continue to support the master plan for the Ag Reserve. I don't have any plans to change the reserve, but to keep it going. I own a percentage of my family's farm land in NC and have had some exposure to farming issues. I look forward to learning more from residents and farmers in the Ag Reserve.

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**5 Can you identify some of the top challenges to the Reserve's local agriculture and what actions you would take, if elected, to address them?**

I imagine that as population growth moves up north, there is more pressure to rezone some of the land from the Ag Reserve. I would fight against that because of the treasure that the Ag Reserve is. Farming land needs to be preserved to support the industry and to enjoy fresh local produce from the farms. It may even contribute to the health of our residents because of the oxygen and other benefits of vegetation so close to urban areas. Plus it serves as an education tool for those in the county who aren't normally around farming.

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**6 What more can be done to support our local farm businesses and rural communities?**

When my kids were young, I remember seeing a lot more marketing about the Ag Reserve in the local Gazette. Now that the Gazette isn't around anymore, I would like to see increased marketing efforts so residents understand the benefits of it. I am a merit badge counselor for Citizenship in the Community for Boy Scouts and I've noticed that some boys have never heard of Homestead Farms or Butlers Orchard. I teach them about the Ag Reserve and show them the pictures from the air that I took so they can see how vast it is. I took my boys to Butlers Orchard every year to pick out a pumpkin and it was one of their great memories of childhood. I hope schools are still going to the farms for field trips.

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**7 How should our County manage its solid waste? What role should incineration, composting and recycling play?**

I visited Covanta and the recycling areas in the County through Leadership Montgomery. More can be done to increase the percentage of plastic that is recycled. Overall, I was impressed with our county recycle centers and I would be happy to hear about any concerns in this area.

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**8 How can we expand the role the County's schools play in the support of a healthy local food system and the success of local agriculture? Do you support a rural schools' policy that provides equity for Reserve cluster schools acknowledging the unique nature of schools in region set aside for farmland and open space preservation?**

I have been a proponent of adding salad bars in our schools. This was something I campaigned on in 2014 when I ran for Board of Education. It would be awesome to be able to use local produce from the Ag Reserve.  
On the other question, I need more clarification.

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**9 Currently the County is exploring how best to support a strong agricultural economy through agritourism and new farming enterprises such as on farm breweries and wineries. What are your thoughts about how best to advance on farm activities within the context of the master plan?**

I am on the Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board) of Montgomery County, so I think it is best not to answer this question. My role on the Board is not to change the laws or suggest new laws, but to approve new licenses and listen to show cause hearings.

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**10 What are your regional transportation priorities? Do you support M83 and an additional Potomac bridge and outer beltway through the Reserve or adjacent rural zones?**

I support Governor Hogan's plans to widen I495 and I270. It sounds like there was no consensus on M83 and it is unfortunate that our infrastructure doesn't support the growth.  
I have been on a road that runs through a protected area in Washington, NC and, other than the road, the rest of the green area was preserved without commercialization. I have heard there is a fear of commercialization if a road runs through the Ag Reserve. Before ruling out such an idea, maybe there is a way it could work to the Ag Reserve's benefit. I am a huge proponent of getting feedback from the

community and I have a history of working with the public to find solutions. Here is a link to the project I mentioned in NC: <https://www.flatironcorp.com/project/washington-bypass/>