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What office are you seeking?: Delegate, District 39
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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?**

The Ag Reserve is a beautiful stretch of rural land in upper Montgomery County, that has been designated in perpetuity for agricultural use and prohibited from commercial or residential development. It's important because its forests and green fields are the lungs of Montgomery County, mitigating carbon pollution and refreshing the air we breathe.

Some of the county's early modern planners foresaw the way that development in Montgomery County would boom and took this innovative approach to contain sprawl and maintain ecological green space while ensuring a local farming industry would endure.

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

1. I oppose building a natural gas pipeline crossing the Potomac upstream at Hancock, Maryland. A leak from this location would cause ecological damage as far downriver as Montgomery County.
2. We must strengthen the Forest Conservation Act, and increase the ratio of trees planted to forest acres cleared. Also critical is to provide for the maintenance of planted trees, as an unacceptable portion of those planted to replace cleared trees end up dying from neglect.
3. Common spaces like parks, trails and waterways are an essential piece of strong communities, ensuring recreation activities for all and a readily available social and family gathering space. They must be preserved and we should look for opportunities to expand or enhance them.

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

First and foremost, we must resist the calls to open it up to development.

I would like to see the Ag. Reserve a place where small, family-owned farms are thriving, supported by local restaurants and markets. I want to see more farm breweries, markets and wineries supporting farming within the reserve and providing a tourist destination for folks to enjoy the beauty of the reserve -- I think Waredaca Brewery is one of the most idyllic places relax and take in the rolling hills of the piedmont.

I would work within the state legislature to reduce the regulatory burdens on opening such small businesses and keep the farmland of the reserve in the hands of local farmers. I will also strive to maintain the infrastructure and common space needed for and eco-tourism, like transit options, bicycling and hiking trails, well-funded parks and clean air and water.

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?**

Land prices are high enough to make it harder to access farm land and farm subsidies are shrinking to make farming less profitable. I'll admit freely, that I don't know a lot about the farming business, and so I will gladly take an education on what's needed for our local farms to thrive.

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

We need to make it easier for those businesses to operate so that rural communities can maintain a local economy. While I think it's important for businesses to be held to a high standard in terms of wages, benefits and employee rights, I think other forms of regulation are gratuitous and support, for instance, the brewing deregulation proposed by Comptroller Franchot this past year, that would make it easier for small breweries and wineries to thrive, both bringing visitors to our rural communities and providing a market for its farm goods.

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

The county's goal should be to ultimately eliminate to zero any solid waste left after recycling, repurposing and composting have been done. Clearly, we are still a long way off from that ideal and need to take concrete steps in the near term to get us on track.

The two biggest steps the county could take toward this end would be to start a curbside pickup composting program, and implement single-stream recycling.

The incinerator facility at Dickerson is, along with the nearby coal-fired generator, the largest point source of air pollution in Montgomery County. On the other hand, the alternative to its continued operation would be to dedicate a large swath of land to build a new landfill. I'm not prepared to sacrifice any of the Agricultural Reserve for this purpose, and have no desire to push that burden on to open space in another jurisdiction. Therefore, I think it prudent to continue operating the incinerator, monitor the emissions closely, and strive toward zero waste.

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?

Schools can provide a market for local agriculture and form an incredibly valuable means to teach students about where food comes from by following the process from farm to cafeteria.

I would need to learn more about the equity provided to schools in the reserve, but it's certainly important that we support those schools and make sure that upcounty students have access to the full breadth of MCPS including career technology/vocational training, and the agricultural reserve provides unique opportunities to be part of that.

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've talked about these a bit above, but I'm a big supporter of agri and eco-tourism. In the case of farm breweries, wineries and distilleries in particular, it's important that we have transit links to forestall an increase in intoxicated driving in the area and make the destinations more accessible to people in the denser communities downcounty.

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?**

My top regional transportation priorities are to expand MARC service to two-way full day service, widen I-270 from Germantown to Frederick and incorporate reversible HOT lanes that would form the backbone of a bus rapid transit system.

I oppose the predominant M83 alignment and a new Potomac bridge crossing and outer beltway because the damage to otherwise protected forest land, wetlands and farms would be unacceptable. That said I'm sympathetic to the people of Clarksburg and their infrastructure problems that, in my opinion, were a consequence of developer money corrupting policy and politics, and foreshadow what would happen if the ag. reserve were opened to development. We must ensure that their express bus links to the MARC system be restored, and that Clarksburg be integrated into new county transit systems like BRT, and the corridor cities transitway.