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Address: Silver Spring
What office are you seeking?: County Council At-Large
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: www.willjawando.com

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

The Agricultural Reserve serves Montgomery County (and really, the entire DC Metro region) as a living, thriving link to our regional heritage, in the preservation not just of open space and farms, but farming itself as a livelihood. This is important for many reasons, but for me, those that stand out include history, green open land with clean air and water, and the possibility of economic opportunity for small businesses involved in organic, craft and artisanal food and beverage.

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

As the Sierra Club noted in its endorsement of my campaign, I bring energy, enthusiasm and ideas to expanding the scope of the environmental movement to include low-income communities and people of color -- two groups who have not traditionally been part of the environmental movement. I believe we need:

- 1) Smarter land-use planning, focusing our development and redevelopment near mass transit, with greater density of mixed-using housing, in order to prevent sprawl and over-development.
- 2) Re-balance our transportation investments, away from roads and highways and toward a more reliable, accessible and speedier public transit network.
- 3) Maintenance of real-time and publicly-available reports on chemical and particulate emissions from the Dickerson Generating Station and the county-owned and operated trash incinerator. This will help protect our air and our water.

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

I wish to continue to preserve the open land in the ag reserve, and I want to see our farmers thrive there. Part of my call for keeping the Montgomery County Promise is economic opportunity for all, particularly small businesses. I'd like to see the Ag Reserve develop additional markets for specialized and organic crops, not just for sale at local markets, but for broader sale in the growing area of high-end food and beverage. For instance, we could develop a malt house for rye and barley farmers, for sale of the malted barley to Maryland craft brewers. Or a cidery from replanting of heritage cider apple species that today are nearly lost. Or organic soybeans for production of organic tofu. There is great demand for these products. I believe we can develop new small businesses here in Montgomery County to market Ag Reserve commodities into specialized markets.

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?**

Farmers face a thousand challenges -- starting with the local weather and ending with global commodity pricing. So much of the challenge to farming is outside the hands of the farmers. But there are things we can do to mitigate risk for the farmers and reduce overall costs, both challenges to continuing the future of farming. Those things include offering more county-backed small business loans, helping develop high-end food-and-beverage companies to buoy demand for local products, pairing MCPS student internship and career enrichment programs with local farmers, and fostering a trade ambassador spirit among our top elected officials to open markets for our Montgomery County ag products in neighboring jurisdictions.

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

Ultimately, I believe the best thing we can do is prevent what is sometimes called the "final harvest" of aluminum siding -- the sale of farmland to developers, who build sprawling housing and commercial centers. Once paved, that land is no longer a source of clean water, air or food. So it is imperative for all of us, even our urban neighbors, to take care to support our rural communities, because the open land, trees and green space of our rural areas really take care of us all. In other countries, particularly in the European Union, rural communities are preserved through economic vitality. We must do the same in the United States. We can forge public policy that creates more economic opportunities for our local farm businesses, both on and off the farm, but also mitigate risks and escalating costs.

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

I believe incineration is a last resort, and we should focus primarily on composting and recycling. Much of this depends on a deeply-rooted education and marketing campaign to our county's residents, as well as smartly-managed solid waste pickup, both at the residence, and in the case of composting food waste, at the business. Too many of our big businesses, and many of our homes, don't do enough to recycle and reduce their home waste. And food-waste is a tremendous issue, both because of the number of people who go hungry in our affluent county, but also because of the environmental detriment that occurs when food waste is mixed with household and commercial garbage instead of being collected and composted separately. These are major issues, and are not easily fixed, but should be addressed.

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 do support rural school policy acknowledging the unique nature of schools in farming communities. I also believe that our local ag reserve can play a significant role in providing healthy, local food to MCPS students. You only have to look to Baltimore to see the significant gains that school system made both in saving money and providing better, healthier food to their school kids, simply by locally-sourcing school lunch food. I believe we can do a great job of generating local market demand for Ag Reserve foods in partnerships with MCPS and neighboring school systems. I also believe we can foster a marketing and supply partnership with UMES Shady Grove, where many area cooks, food-handlers and restaurant managers develop their culinary knowledge and training. And many of DC's top chefs live in Montgomery

County, including National Press Club Executive Chef Susan Delbert, a resident of Silver Spring. Wouldn't it be great if she showcased the Ag Preserve products in a dinner?

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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 would do exactly that -- advance the market for farm products with the development of small businesses that use the Ag Preserve products in high-end food and beverage. As part of that, I believe we must examine how much of our county's resources are dedicated to the growth and development of small businesses. Right now, we have one person in the Business Navigator's Office, to serve a county of 1.1 million. We can do much better. We should have at least one person completely dedicated to the development of small and growing businesses stemming from the Ag Preserve, and a larger staff dedicated to helping open and grow small businesses throughout the rest of the county.

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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?**

We have suffered a historic imbalance in Montgomery County, with the vast majority of our resources going toward roads and highways, instead of public and mass transportation. We must reverse that imbalance, and place a major focus of our investment on BRT, Metro maintenance and expansion, a network of protected bicycle lanes, the CCT, and all-day MARC. While I am open to continuing to study M83, a new Potomac crossing and additional Beltway lanes, to date I have yet to see data and evidence that supports any of those projects.