

Name: **Kevin Mack**  
Address: North Potomac  
What office are you seeking?: Delegate, District 15  
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: [www.MackForDelegate.com](http://www.MackForDelegate.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?**

Since 1980, the Ag Reserve has served as a county and state treasure offering residents the opportunity to enjoy our region's agrarian history and rural lifestyle and has been called "the country's most successful farmland preservation program". The 93,000 acre Ag Reserve offers a multitude of activities ranging from berry picking hiking and horseback riding to biking. The Ag Reserve is a place for recreation and education that also preserves our history and culture and land. We must ensure that the Ag Reserve is preserved for generations to come.

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

I will work to maintain and protect Montgomery County's commitment to open space and preserving the Ag Reserve for farmers and generations to come. I will support policies that promote the responsible stewardship of farmland as well as sustainable agricultural farming practices. The Ag Reserve is a model for preservation of farm and rural lands. Maryland and Montgomery County must continue to lead the way in preservation. I will work to strengthen the Maryland Forest Act, fight to improve water quality and push for greater use of recycling and renewable energy sources.

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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 see the Ag reserve continue to be the example for preserving rural and farmland communities. The Ag Reserve should be a destination to escape the stress of urban and suburban life where kids of all ages can learn about farming, sustainability and best practices for protecting our environment. The natural beauty of the Ag Reserve makes it a perfect open classroom where students have the opportunity to learn about the environment, growing food, protecting our lands and preserving our agrarian and rural heritage.

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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?**

The main challenges to the Ag Reserve are the costs of:  
1) Maintaining the viability of farms  
2) The push for development  
3) Raising public awareness of the importance of the Ag Reserve to the state and Montgomery County.  
I would like to identify new tax breaks and incentives to help farmers keep and grow their farms. The cost of purchasing new farmland in the Ag reserve or expanding farmland is becoming prohibitively expensive.

Creating a fund to help offset the cost of purchasing new land and tax incentives would be a step in the right direction. I support continued use of land trusts and zoning to protect the Ag Reserve. Also, Agritourism may be used to increase public awareness.

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

We should be working to connect the Ag Reserve community to under served communities and enter into partnerships with MCPS to purchase food from farms in the reserve. Use Agritourism to promote locally grown food products.

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

The Dickerson Generating plant and the incinerator need to be phased out and replaced with renewable energy. Burning trash is not a renewable source of energy. I would like to see a greater role for composting and recycling to deal with solid waste, devoting more resources to promote and educating residents on composting and recycling.

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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?**

MCPS should make learning about the Ag Reserve a part of their curriculum that would include visits to farms, participating in environmental studies impacting farming, our forest and water quality. The establishment of a intensive hands on internship program starting in middle school through college should be implemented in collaboration with MCPS, MCA, Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation Ag Services etc.

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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 like to see agritourism grow and be a part of the reserve but it needs to proceed in a manner that provides stability, standards, balance and supports the overall goal of protecting the 93,000 acres for the promotion of farms, open space and natural resources. I believe it is important to partner with local businesses, citizens, and governments to strike the right balance to grow agritourism.

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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 do not support a second bridge crossing. I support a common sense, pragmatic approach to transportation. I believe in a holistic approach to these issues. I would like to see the CCT project fully funded, widen I-

270 (I have concerns about Governor Hogan's plan for widening I-270 with a P3 and do not want to see toll roads which would charge \$40+ for use), add an additional rail line and expand MARC service. We need to do all of these things while being vigilant in protecting our natural resources.