



Climate Change and Maryland's US Senate Race

Before You Vote:

Learn Where the Candidates Stand on
Global Warming and Clean Energy

Ahead of the April 26th primary, the CCAN Action Fund asked all the Maryland candidates for US Senate to respond to a survey about global warming and clean energy. Several responded, providing the answers below that we hope will help voters like you understand their positions.

Here's how to use this survey: For your convenience, we have included clickable links to the answers to every question from every candidate. **Just follow the grid below and click on the check mark, question mark, or "X" beside each candidate's name to see their verbatim answers.** We have divided the candidates into two categories. The first set of candidates presently hold elected office or have in the past. The second set have not held elected office before.

CCAN Action Fund is the sister organization of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. Our mission is to educate voters on the candidates' policy views on climate and energy. We do not endorse candidates.

Learn where and how to vote [here](#).



Name and party	Years in elected office	Supports Clean Power Plan?	Supports action on methane gas?	Supports "cap and dividend"?	Supports clean energy tax credits?	Supports federal/state action?	Supports real bipartisan action?	Fought for these bills as an elected lawmaker
Currently serves in elected office								
Chris Van Hollen (Democrat)	25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Healthy Climate and Family Security Act of 2015 Keep it in the Ground Act of 2015 Natural Gas Environmental and Economic Security Act of 2015 Cap and Dividend Act of 2010 Maryland Clean Energy Incentives Act of 2000
Has not served in elected office								
Blaine Taylor (Democrat)	-	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	No prior office
Margaret Flowers (Green Party)	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No prior office
Steve Gladstone (Independence Party)	-	?	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	No prior office
Violet Staley (Democrat)	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No prior office

***Here's a list of all the Maryland candidates for US Senate, including those who did not respond to this survey. Websites are provided so you can learn more.**

Margaret Flowers - Green, <http://www.flowersforsenate.org/>
Steve Gladstone - Unaffiliated, <https://gladstone2016.com/>
Violet Staley - Democrat, <http://www.violetstaleyformarylandsenator.com/>
Blaine Taylor - Democrat
Chris Van Hollen - Democrat, www.vanhollen.org
Chris Chaffee - Republican, <http://www.chrischaffeeforussenate.com/>
Sean P. Connor - Republican, <http://www.seanconnor.us/>
Freddie Donald Dickson Jr. - Democrat, [facebook.com/groups/277194622462268/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/277194622462268/)
Greg Dorsey - Unaffiliated, <http://www.gregdorseyunaffiliated.com/>
Richard J. Douglas - Republican, <http://douglasmaryland.com/>
Donna Edwards - Democrat, <https://donnaedwardsforsenate.com/>
John R. Graziani - Republican, <https://www.facebook.com/grazianiforsenate/?fref=nf>
Greg Holmes - Republican, <http://gregformaryland.com/>
Joseph David Hooe - Republican, <http://www.joehooe.org/>
Ralph Jaffe - Democrat, www.fedupwithcrookedpolitics.com
Chrys Kefalas - Republican, <https://www.chrysformaryland.com/>
Mark McNicholas - Republican, <http://www.mark4md.com/>
Lynn Richardson - Republican, <http://www.richardsonforussenate.org/>
Theresa C. Scaldaferrri - Democrat
Anthony Seda - Republican, <http://sedaforussenate.com/>
Richard Shawver - Republican
Edward Shlikas - Unaffiliated, <http://www.shlikasforsenate.com/>
Charles U. Smith - Democrat
Kathy Szeliga - Republican, <http://www.kathyformaryland.com/>
Ed Tinus - Democrat, <http://www.united-us.org/>
Dave Wallace - Republican, <http://www.davewallace.us/>
Arvin Vohra - Libertarian, <http://votevohra.com/>
Garry Thomas Yarrington - Republican
Kay Young - Unaffiliated
Lih Young - Democrat

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

1. In June 2014, President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan. The rule establishes the first-ever national standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants. Until this rule, existing power plants were not limited in the amount of carbon they could release. On August 3, 2015, the Clean Power Plan became final. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court halted implementation of the Clean Power Plan while legal issues are decided by the courts. What is your position on the Clean Power Plan? Do you think it should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

With Republicans in Congress refusing to act on climate, President Obama used authority under the Clean Air Act to cut carbon emissions from power plants. It is a strong step forward and I've worked to protect it from Republican attacks and have signed an amicus brief to the Supreme Court arguing that they should uphold it. Once it overcomes the legal challenge, we will also have to work to ensure that it is fully enforced and that states meet their targets.

However, we must do more to address carbon emissions on an economy-wide basis and deal with other anthropogenic pollutants. I've introduced the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act, a simple yet comprehensive cap-and-dividend bill, as the next step in the effort to address climate change.

2. On August 18, 2015 the Obama Administration proposed the first methane pollution standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities, a rule that will blunt the projected growth of methane emissions leakage from the industry. On March 10th, the Administration announced that it will also draft regulations to limit methane emissions from existing oil and gas facilities. Pound for pound, methane gas traps more than 80 times as much heat on our planet in the short term than carbon dioxide does. What is your opinion of the Administration's proposed methane rules? Do you think they should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

I've been pushing for action on methane emissions for many years - we should be working aggressively to implement the proven methods that can control leaks and limit emissions. The Administration's draft regulations are a good first step to tackle this problem, but we must do more. For example, the proposed rule deals with new and modified sources, but it is critical that we expand the scope to existing sources. I was encouraged by the President's announcement with Prime Minister Trudeau of a joint U.S.-Canada climate commitment that included addressing existing sources, and by the creation of an Interagency Task Force on natural gas storage facilities to prevent disasters like the recent leak at the Southern California Gas Company's Aliso Canyon facility.

We need legislative action as well. My Healthy Climate and Family Security Act, while primarily focused on carbon emissions, also requires EPA regulation of other anthropogenic greenhouse gases that are contributing to climate change. I am an original cosponsor of the Natural Gas Environmental and Economic Security Act, which would charge royalties on all oil and gas produced from federal leases, including vented and leaked gas, in an effort to create a financial

incentive to control leakage. It prohibits all venting and limits flaring and establishes new operating and equipment standards, including mandatory leak detection and repair standards. While I've also cosponsored the Keep It In The Ground Act to stop new federal leases, we need to make sure that existing operations are held to the highest possible standard.

3. "Cap and dividend" is a carbon-reduction policy tool that would set a steadily declining cap on the total amount of U.S. carbon pollution that can be released into the atmosphere. Any company that

extracts new fossil fuels from the ground or imports them into the U.S. would have to buy a permit at a federally-organized auction for every ton of carbon dioxide those fossil fuels will emit into the atmosphere. All of the money raised would then be returned in equal amounts—through a quarterly “dividend”—to every U.S. resident with a valid Social Security number. What is your position on implementing a cap-and-dividend policy in the U.S? Please explain your answer.

I strongly support cap and dividend and have worked with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network on this concept since I first introduced the Cap and Dividend Act in 2009. I have since reintroduced it as the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act and continue to push for it as a simple and effective solution to reducing emissions and boosting family incomes.

4. The “Production Tax Credit” (PTC) and “Investment Tax Credit” (ITC) are the premier federal tax incentives to promote renewable energy. Both of these credits were recently renewed and extended, however their value is scheduled to decrease over time. What is your position regarding renewal and extension of the PTC and ITC? Please explain your answer.

I supported the extension of the PTC and ITC, which provides certainty over the next few years that will help end the “boom-bust” cycle in the renewable energy industry that developed as credits expired and were reinstated. We should make sure that these credits are in place as long as necessary to ensure strong renewable energy development. We also must repeal oil and gas credits that are unnecessary and create a competitive advantage for dirty energy.

5. State governments have played a large role in advancing climate change and clean energy policies. What state climate change/clean energy policies do you think have been the most effective? Do you have a position on climate change/clean energy policies Maryland should adopt? Finally, how do you think the federal government should work with states in its response to climate change? Please explain your answers.

Maryland has been a real leader on climate and clean energy for many years. I was proud to author the Clean Energy Incentive Act of 2000, a comprehensive package of sales and income tax incentives for clean energy and climate-friendly technologies. I’ve also supported the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act that was recently signed into law, giving Maryland one of the most ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets in the country. I also support the update to the Renewable Portfolio Standard. Maryland can also continue its progress with the development of offshore wind and expansion of community renewables.

The federal government should both compel and incentivize forward action. The Clean Power Plan will set federal carbon emissions reduction targets for all states. Federal renewable tax incentives will help Maryland’s clean energy industry. Federal research into renewable energy and energy efficiency will further improve technologies. The federal government can also provide best practices and grant support for climate mitigation, which is particularly important for coastal communities in Maryland.

6. The United States can do more to address climate change by making meaningful long- term investments in carbon-reducing technologies. Gridlock in Washington has largely prevented Congress from taking substantive steps to tackle the problem. Would you work to build consensus in Congress to pass climate change legislation? How have you demonstrated your ability to build consensus in the past?

One of my major frustrations in Congress has been Republican refusal to accept the basic climate science and acknowledge the human contribution to climate change. The American people are far ahead of their Congressional representation on this issue. And among those Republicans who acknowledge climate science, too many refuse to take action, citing costs or feasibility. My Healthy Climate and Family Security Act responds to those issues as an achievable emissions-reduction program that would not raise costs for the

vast majority of American families.

I've worked to move forward on areas of consensus. For example, I am a co-chair of the bipartisan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus, which educates and engages members on both sides of the aisle on building the clean energy economy. By focusing on green jobs and renewable industries in diverse states across the country, we've worked to bring more members into the conversation.

7. Can you describe examples where you showed legislative leadership on climate change and clean energy issues? Please provide details of your personal involvement in your examples.

Clean energy and climate have been priorities for me throughout my time in public service, from passing the Clean Energy Incentives Act in the Maryland General Assembly to introducing cap and dividend legislation in the Congress. I was in House leadership and fought to pass climate legislation in the House in 2010. I am co-chair of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus and a member of the Safe Climate Caucus and Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition, and when Congressman Henry Waxman, one of the top environmental champions in Congress, retired, he asked me to take his place as a co-chair of the Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change. I've worked closely with the President and House and Senate leadership to push for climate action.

8. How long have you held elected office in Maryland? What office(s) did you hold?

I've held elective office in Maryland since 1991, when I was sworn in to the Maryland House of Delegates. I served in the House of Delegates until 1995, when I went to the Maryland Senate. I was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2002 and continue to serve there.

BLAINE TAYLOR

1. In June 2014, President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan. The rule establishes the first-ever national standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants. Until this rule, existing power plants were not limited in the amount of carbon they could release. On August 3, 2015, the Clean Power Plan became final. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court halted implementation of the Clean Power Plan while legal issues are decided by the courts. What is your position on the Clean Power Plan? Do you think it should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

Yes.

2. On August 18, 2015 the Obama Administration proposed the first methane pollution standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities, a rule that will blunt the projected growth of methane emissions leakage from the industry. On March 10th, the Administration announced that it will also draft regulations to limit methane emissions from existing oil and gas facilities. Pound for pound, methane gas traps more than 80 times as much heat on our planet in the short term than carbon dioxide does. What is your opinion of the Administration's proposed methane rules? Do you think they should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

Yes, if can be.

3. "Cap and dividend" is a carbon-reduction policy tool that would set a steadily declining cap on the total amount of U.S. carbon pollution that can be released into the atmosphere. Any company that extracts new fossil fuels from the ground or imports them into the U.S. would have to buy a permit at a federally-organized auction for every ton of carbon dioxide those fossil fuels will emit into the atmosphere. All of the money raised would then be returned in equal amounts—through a quarterly "dividend"—to every U.S. resident with a valid Social Security number. What is your position on implementing a cap-and-dividend policy in the U.S? Please explain your answer.

Repeal + simply abolish all carbon emissions.

4. The "Production Tax Credit" (PTC) and "Investment Tax Credit" (ITC) are the premier federal tax incentives to promote renewable energy. Both of these credits were recently renewed and extended, however their value is scheduled to decrease over time. What is your position regarding renewal and extension of the PTC and ITC? Please explain your answer.

Extend.

5. State governments have played a large role in advancing climate change and clean energy policies. What state climate change/clean energy policies do you think have been the most effective? Do you have a position on climate change/clean energy policies Maryland should adopt? Finally, how do you think the federal government should work with states in its response to climate change? Please explain your answers.

Yes.

6. The United States can do more to address climate change by making meaningful long-term investments in carbon-reducing technologies. Gridlock in Washington has largely prevented Congress from taking substantive steps to tackle the problem. Would you work to build consensus in Congress to pass climate change legislation? How have you demonstrated your ability to build consensus in the

past?

Yes.

7. Can you describe examples where you showed legislative leadership on climate change and clean energy issues? Please provide details of your personal involvement in your examples.

Yes. Stopped owning and driving cars in 1998.

8. How long have you held elected office in Maryland? What office(s) did you hold?

MARGARET FLOWERS

1. In June 2014, President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan. The rule establishes the first-ever national standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants. Until this rule, existing power plants were not limited in the amount of carbon they could release. On August 3, 2015, the Clean Power Plan became final. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court halted implementation of the Clean Power Plan while legal issues are decided by the courts. What is your position on the Clean Power Plan? Do you think it should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

The Clean Power Plan needs to be strengthened. We need to end extreme energy extraction, stop building new fossil fuel and nuclear infrastructure and invest in clean renewable sources such as wind, solar and water instead. Ideally power generation should be decentralized and lower the costs of electricity to low-income communities in particular. I support a strong mobilization, including a just transition for displaced workers, to move rapidly to carbon-free nuclear-free clean renewables by 2030, or sooner if possible. This should be done in coordination with a focus on clean transportation such as improvement of our public transit and pedestrian and bicycle-friendly infrastructure to reduce the use of cars and trucks. I have been an active member of Beyond Extreme Energy, which is focused on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and We Are Cove Point, which I helped to found and is focused on stopping Dominion's gas refinery, power plant and export terminal in Lusby, Maryland. I am also active with Clean Up The Mines!, which I helped to found, to address polluting abandoned uranium mines. Baltimore could be the home of a new clean transportation manufacturing facility, which would bring good jobs. And I support incentives for regenerative farming and wetland restoration to store carbon and provide natural buffers for sea level rise.

2. On August 18, 2015 the Obama Administration proposed the first methane pollution standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities, a rule that will blunt the projected growth of methane emissions leakage from the industry. On March 10th, the Administration announced that it will also draft regulations to limit methane emissions from existing oil and gas facilities. Pound for pound, methane gas traps more than 80 times as much heat on our planet in the short term than carbon dioxide does. What is your opinion of the Administration's proposed methane rules? Do you think they should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

I am very concerned about methane because of its potency, especially over the short-term (i.e. next 20 years), as a Greenhouse Gas, and I believe the rules should be strengthened. We need to prevent leakage as much as possible from all facilities, new and old, in a mandatory, not voluntary, way. We also need to repair existing infrastructure such as the pipes that carry gas to homes and buildings to prevent leaks, and we need to repair deep wells such as the one in Aliso Canyon to prevent leaks. Given the severity of the climate crisis, these steps should be taken quickly. I also support a ban on fracking. There is no safe way to frack gas. Not only does it harm health and pollute the environment, but fracking wells also leak methane.

3. "Cap and dividend" is a carbon-reduction policy tool that would set a steadily declining cap on the total amount of U.S. carbon pollution that can be released into the atmosphere. Any company that extracts new fossil fuels from the ground or imports them into the U.S. would have to buy a permit at a federally-organized auction for every ton of carbon dioxide those fossil fuels will emit into the atmosphere. All of the money raised would then be returned in equal amounts—through a quarterly "dividend"—to every U.S. resident with a valid Social Security number. What is your position on implementing a cap-and-dividend policy in the U.S? Please explain your answer.

I would support a strong cap and dividend program that incentivizes a decrease in the extraction and use

of fossil fuels. In general, I prefer comprehensive solutions rather than market-based solutions, but I see cap and dividend as a positive interim step. I would put most of my energy into promoting a plan that moves us rapidly off carbon and nuclear to clean renewables in a way that protects workers who will lose their jobs and sets clear, ambitious (meaning they would adequately address the crisis) goals with concrete plans to achieve them. And we need to think about not just energy but use a holistic approach that considers transportation, agriculture and water and increasing the energy efficiency of houses and structures. We can make this transformation now. We can find the funds to pay for it. And in addition to mitigating the climate crisis and improving health, it will create millions of high quality jobs.

4. The “Production Tax Credit” (PTC) and “Investment Tax Credit” (ITC) are the premier federal tax incentives to promote renewable energy. Both of these credits were recently renewed and extended, however their value is scheduled to decrease over time. What is your position regarding renewal and extension of the PTC and ITC? Please explain your answer.

I support tax credits that incentivize the production of clean renewable energy sources such as wind, water and solar. I do not support biofuels such as corn ethanol and biomass such as trash incinerators or large-scale burning of wood. I also support incentives to create decentralized energy production by individuals and cooperatives with the ability to sell excess energy to the grid, especially in low-income communities. Tax incentives don't reach people at the lower end of the income scale. For example, we can create community solar coops or solar farms at schools that are combined with training in installation and maintenance to provide jobs where they are needed and train our clean energy workforce for the future. Income from excess energy production can be distributed to coop members or, in the case of school districts, can fund needed programs and improvements as they are doing in Carlisle, PA.

5. State governments have played a large role in advancing climate change and clean energy policies. What state climate change/clean energy policies do you think have been the most effective? Do you have a position on climate change/clean energy policies Maryland should adopt? Finally, how do you think the federal government should work with states in its response to climate change? Please explain your answers.

I support a ban on fracking, as was done in New York, but I would make the Maryland ban stronger to ban all forms of fracking for oil and gas. I look to states like California and Hawaii that have strong incentives for distributed solar that are successful. California has net metering. We need to use this transition period to also democratize the energy grid and take it out of the control of energy monopolies. Hawaii has the strongest Renewable Portfolio Standard, but I think we can and should be even more ambitious. We need to aim for carbon-free nuclear-free by 2030. I think Maryland also needs to bring back proposals for offshore wind, which should be the major part of our energy portfolio.

The federal government has the responsibility to look at the big picture and set the strongest goals that will have the best chance of mitigating the climate crisis. Setting a goal, like being carbon free, nuclear-free by 2030 will drive everything toward that goal; the tax structure, research on efficiency and clean energy, transit, housing, land use, agriculture, air travel will all be driven toward achieving that goal. This has been a critical missing element of US climate policy. Essentially, the federal government needs an Apollo Project to confront the climate crisis. This needs to include not just a goal but a plan that looks at all major contributors to the climate crisis such as transit, construction, infrastructure and trade policies. Simple things like the importation of commercial products from China instead of cutting back or manufacturing them here contribute to high energy usage globally that hurts all of us. We also need to look at the best way to protect and manage water so that there will be adequate water to meet our needs.

The federal government has a responsibility to work with states on best practices and providing resources so that states can create clean energy, transit and more that is tailored to their needs and resources. The federal government also has the responsibility to provide financial assistance to states and municipalities. We

can find the money to do this without putting too much burden on individuals, and in the long run we will save money. We need to stop subsidizing the oil, gas and nuclear industries. And we need to cut our military spending by at least half by closing bases and outposts around the world and altering our foreign policy to be more cooperative. Our military is the single largest user of fossil fuels.

6. The United States can do more to address climate change by making meaningful long-term investments in carbon-reducing technologies. Gridlock in Washington has largely prevented Congress from taking substantive steps to tackle the problem. Would you work to build consensus in Congress to pass climate change legislation? How have you demonstrated your ability to build consensus in the past?

I have worked on a broad range of advocacy campaigns in the past, and so I have a deep understanding of how political power works. My major project at present is PopularResistance.org which came out of my work with the Occupy Movement of which I was a major organizer. There is the power of the industries who fund campaigns and their lobbyists who influence legislators and assist in writing legislation and then there is the power of people working together. I have educated, organized and mobilized people to put issues on the table that went against industries' wishes and to succeed in stopping harmful legislation as well as promoting positive alternatives. Through this work we have built coalitions across a broad spectrum of issues and across political lines. We have been able to find areas where we agree and work together from there.

We are often told that politics is the 'art of compromise', but we have seen where that has been used to weaken movements and force people to accept legislation that doesn't solve the problem. I believe that for fundamental issues, such as the climate crisis, we cannot compromise in this way. We must work with the popular movement to set the agenda and create the political climate to make our agenda inevitable. There are two realities, the political reality and the real reality. The real reality, like the climate crisis, doesn't change but the political reality can be changed. We see that right now with the TransPacific Partnership (TPP) which I have worked for the past 5 years to stop. When we began it was said to be unstoppable, as I write this it is stopped in the Congress.

I am running as a Green Party candidate because I strongly believe that we can build political power through alternative parties. The major parties currently take voters for granted. They don't feel like they have to do much to win votes because they can always frighten voters into voting for the lesser evil.

I am also running as a Green Party candidate because Green Party candidates, myself included, do not take corporate or PAC dollars. We are not beholden to wealthy and corporate interests. We are free to tell the truth and to advocate for solutions that protect people (and other living things) and the planet. It is critical right now that we expand the debate beyond the limits of what is allowed within the two wealth-dominated parties.

7. Can you describe examples where you showed legislative leadership on climate change and clean energy issues? Please provide details of your personal involvement in your examples.

I am a co-founder of Clean Up The Mines, a national campaign to clean up the more than 15,000 abandoned uranium mines which are still polluting water, air and land throughout the west and impacting all of us. We currently have legislation that is in its final stages of being drafted that would catalog the mines in one place, identify the highest standard of clean up and prioritize and start cleaning up the mines. When I learned about the mines, I organized a series of conference calls between front line and other organizations to create the campaign. We held a 5 day tour of mines in South Dakota in April, 2014 to kick off the campaign at Pine Ridge. We have worked with Rep. Grijalva's office to draft the bill and we have lobbied other members of Congress and agencies to support it, as well as building organizational support.

I am co-founder of We Are Cove Point which has been working over the past year and a half to stop construction of the gas refinery, power plant and export terminal in Lusby, Maryland. I appreciate CCAN's work

to bring this facility to the attention of the people of Lusby and CCAN's continued support for these efforts. My involvement is in strategic support, fund raising, organizing support and participating in actions.

I am involved the Beyond Extreme Energy campaign which has been focused on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as an organizer, facilitator and participant in actions.

For the past 5 years, I have been a lead organizer of Flush the TPP, a campaign to stop the TransPacific Partnership and other dangerous international agreements. This work helped to expose the TPP, build consensus against it, train activists across the country and coordinate actions at the national and international levels. We have built a broad movement of movements.

In September, 2014, I helped to organize the Climate Convergence in New York City which took place before the climate march.

When the Tar Sands Resistance began, we promoted it heavily and encouraged the activist community to get involved because we recognized that this was a critical next step in combatting the climate crisis. I also participated in one of the training camps and actions in Texas. I have participated in other camps and conferences with climate groups such as Rising Tide NA and 350.org chapters. Through Popular Resistance we have worked to support and elevate the efforts of those on the front lines.

I also work on other issues such as health care, economic democracy, democratizing the media, peace and net neutrality. I have written about many issues, including many articles on the climate crisis and what must be done to address it.

8. How long have you held elected office in Maryland? What office(s) did you hold?

I have not yet held public office. I have done a broad range of advocacy at the state and national level. I have written legislation, lobbied for legislation, educated staffers and organized Congressional briefings. I have testified before committees in the Maryland legislature and Congress. I have also attended many hearings in Congress and have engaged in civil resistance in Congress when necessary.

I am a physician by training. I am as prepared and ready to serve in Senate as anyone and I will be as dedicated to fighting for real solutions and climate justice as a Senator as I have been as an advocate. I look forward to working with CCAN as your next senator in Maryland.

STEVE GLADSTONE

1. In June 2014, President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan. The rule establishes the first-ever national standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants. Until this rule, existing power plants were not limited in the amount of carbon they could release. On August 3, 2015, the Clean Power Plan became final. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court halted implementation of the Clean Power Plan while legal issues are decided by the courts. What is your position on the Clean Power Plan? Do you think it should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

The Clean Power Plan is a fairly sizable work meant to curb carbon emissions through various avenues. The goal of the Plan is one I wholeheartedly support. We must take steps to combat climate change while weaning the country off dangerous fossil fuels. However, the Plan itself is definitely not how I would go about achieving such a result. This puts me in a precarious place; do I support a plan that has the proper end goal but bad implementation or do I not support it in favor of something else?

I would pursue an alternative method of achieving the same goal, staving off support for the Plan as long as possible. If it comes down to this plan or nothing, I would support this plan. But I feel alternatives are better, which is where [my energy policy](#) comes into play.

Any major change to energy policy needs to take the economic impact into account. That includes all aspects of the economy, from cost to power companies, cost to consumers, cost in government subsidies, cost to specific industries like mining, costs to the environment, costs for new technology, and more. When we look at the cost analysis from various groups (each with their own agenda), you're looking at many billions of dollars on the line to implement this plan as written. Knowing how much renewable tech costs, I would go so far as to say hundreds of billions or more given that renewable energy storage has a long, long way to go and interstate transmission of renewable energy via something like HVDC is not cheap. These are piece glossed over in most renewable energy studies: the storage and transit costs. Intermittence requires solutions to the storage and transit problems. That's the only way renewable energy will work en masse.

Without going into details on all that, the point is that the cost for lowering carbon emissions by 2030 under this Clean Power Plan is likely far higher than what the EPA and federal government is estimating. That means either taxpayers will shoulder a chunk of the burden or utility companies will raise prices to offset the outlays. They already use the difference between lower energy costs and electricity pricing to build out transmission lines and other needed infrastructure (though not as quickly as anyone would like), hence why electricity costs today haven't gone down with the lower cost of energy. The Clean Power Plan would likely increase that cost a decent amount. I am highly suspicious of President Obama's claim that electricity prices will be lower by 2030 under this plan. You cannot get lower electricity prices while simultaneously increasing costs for infrastructure, not to mention the already higher levelized cost of energy (LCOE) from renewable like solar. The math just doesn't work that way. And when you increase electricity prices on everyday Americans who already are dealing with all the other economic issues of the day (like wage stagnation and low minimum wages), adding an extra burden is the improper way to go about doing things.

Furthermore, the Clean Power Plan fails in regards to clean energy standards. Under the Plan as I understand it, nuclear power- the biggest source of clean energy in the United States- continues to be ignored in the climate change arena here in America. A number of nuclear plants are at risk of closing in the near future, lowering the amount of clean energy produced in favor of less clean alternatives. The Plan does nothing to help prevent those closures. In fact, [some states might be able to close a nuclear plant, replace it with natural gas production, and still get credit for cutting emissions even though overall emissions would go up](#)

when compared to nuclear energy. That is bad policy, but the EPA doesn't seem to care.

As I said, the goals of the Clean Power Plan I wholeheartedly support... but the implementation leaves much to be desired. [My plan is a much more ideal solution](#) and affects carbon emissions not just through domestic production but with imports as well. This is because the first part of the plan must tackle the economic aspects. In that regard, I propose a carbon tax starting at \$20/metric ton of CO2 emissions and raise it 5.6% each year thereafter. The CBO estimates this will raise about \$1.2 trillion in additional revenue over the next 10 years while also curbing emissions at a good pace. Being a tax means it can go up or down as needed. The lack of regulatory bodies like one finds with cap and trade or cap and dividend systems gives the tax more flexibility and room for success. On the downside... it is a tax.

That tax would be offset in other ways. I have a [fully fleshed out tax reform plan](#) with specific tax rates, deduction closing, and revenue analysis that shows how economic growth can be achieved. With a carbon tax, we are able to lower the corporate tax rate to 18% and lower everyone's income tax rate. This provides economic relief to individuals, families, startups, and small businesses- more relief than the cost of the carbon tax, which is important to keep in mind. We want to lower the burden on those groups, not raise it.

After all is said and done, under my energy plan with a carbon tax affecting domestic and imported goods (taxing carbon footprint of imports is important to curb emissions), I would be able to dedicate \$4-500 billion over the next 10 years on energy investments, specifically:

- » \$10 billion on upgrading existing dams and hydroelectric plants to maximize efficiency and effectiveness (this adds a good number of gigawatts for not much cost)
- » \$25 billion on next gen nuclear energy research and design (Molten Salt Reactors, Small Modular Reactors, breeder and waste recycling technology, etc)
- » \$300 billion towards cost sharing measures for gen3+/gen4 nuclear plants and Small Modular Reactor installations
- » \$100 billion towards expansion of utility-scale solar farms

This is in addition to the billions I would invest in infrastructure related to transmission (HVDC lines, converter stations, etc). All of which is funded through the carbon tax and other tax reforms, while lowering corporate and individual income taxes for everyone.

That kind of energy plan puts a major focus on clean energy and reduction of carbon emissions. It gets around WTO consequences with a carbon tax compared to a capping system (see later question on "cap and dividend" for more details). It focuses more on nuclear than renewables due to renewable energy storage costs, capacity factors, transmission needs and more when compared to next-gen nuclear. It would likely raise electricity prices for Americans a small amount, but with the tax offsets, individuals, families, startups and small businesses should all keep more money than they would otherwise.

Like I said, if it was a choice between the Clean Power Plan and nothing, I would support the Plan. If choices are available, I would go with my own plan that I consider superior in achieving the desired results.

2. On August 18, 2015 the Obama Administration proposed the first methane pollution standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities, a rule that will blunt the projected growth of methane emissions leakage from the industry. On March 10th, the Administration announced that it will also draft regulations to limit methane emissions from existing oil and gas facilities. Pound for pound, methane gas traps more than 80 times as much heat on our planet in the short term than carbon dioxide does. What is your opinion of the Administration's proposed methane rules? Do you think they should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

I support the Administration's effort to force repairs and upgrades to existing infrastructure that results in wasted resources. This includes those that result in methane leaks. Firms handling such volatile resources

need to maintain effective standards to protect everyone and the environment as much as possible, even if the phrase “protect the environment” is a bit of an oxymoron when it comes to fossil fuels.

As of this writing, to my knowledge, the standards have not been finalized. Thus I cannot say for sure whether [the proposals from August 18, 2015](#) are what the EPA and Obama Administration will actually pursue. Nor do I know if the [EPA’s proposed rule on the Federal Register](#) has changed based on comments. It seems the proposal focuses on four main areas:

- » Finding and repairing leaks
- » Capturing natural gas from the completion of hydraulically fractured oil wells
- » Limit emissions from new and modified pneumatic pumps
- » Limit emissions from several types of equipment used at natural gas transmission compressor stations

That list is a decent start, but only addresses a portion of the methane emission problem. [Based on data from 2013](#), only 39% of methane emissions come from oil and gas production. The rest comes from transmission and storage (30%), distribution (18%), and processing (13%). The EPA’s proposal that took comments does not tackle all of these areas effectively. It appears to focus mainly on the production side, with some pieces dedicated to tackling transmission leaks.

Then there is the issue of tackling aspects of the natural gas lifecycle outside of methane emissions. Case in point: flaring. Flaring is the intentional burning of gas into CO₂. Typically it is done to resolve safety issues. But as far as I know, the United States (unlike Canada) does not distinguish between “routine” flaring by firms and “non-routine” flaring (ie, emergency flaring). The EPA’s proposed rules aim to tackle flaring in general, regardless of whether it’s being done for emergencies or not. I’m not sure if this is just a negligent oversight by the EPA or what, but the proposed attempts to curb flaring should be removed. Firms don’t flare because they can’t make money on the gas; they most often flare and vent in order to let off back-pressure. It’s about safety. Given the choice of exploding wells or CO₂ emissions, we should be taking CO₂ emissions from flaring.

That being said, we shouldn’t be using fossil fuels in the first place. But that is a much longer battle to fight. In the meantime, the EPA’s proposed rules, as I see them right now, are mostly ok. A few tweaks and it should be tolerable. It’s not as strong as it should be, nor is it as common sense as it should be, but given the federal government’s molasses approach to rulemaking, making the necessary changes would be a herculean task that adds years to the schedule of application. I would much rather see this implemented with minor tweaks now and pursue additional rules to really curb methane emissions (and tackle fossil fuel use in general) than wait.

3. “Cap and dividend” is a carbon-reduction policy tool that would set a steadily declining cap on the total amount of U.S. carbon pollution that can be released into the atmosphere. Any company that extracts new fossil fuels from the ground or imports them into the U.S. would have to buy a permit at a federally-organized auction for every ton of carbon dioxide those fossil fuels will emit into the atmosphere. All of the money raised would then be returned in equal amounts—through a quarterly “dividend”—to every U.S. resident with a valid Social Security number. What is your position on implementing a cap-and-dividend policy in the U.S? Please explain your answer.

Energy upgrades will not pay for themselves. Even if every energy company in America knows fossil fuels are on the decline, it costs a lot of money to change. Thus, one suggestion favored by myself and most every economist is a tax on carbon emissions from fossil fuels. A tax on the carbon contents of fossil fuels is the less expensive way of reducing emissions compared to a [collection of policies like “required fuel economy”](#) according to the IGM Forum (a large collection of economists from prestigious schools). Unfortunately, there is no way to reduce carbon emissions for free; to end fossil fuel usage you need to provide an alternative energy source (costs money) or get people to stop doing activities that require the burning of fossil fuels in

the first place, like electricity generation from coal power plants. Hence the tax on carbon emissions.

Such a plan can take multiple forms. The big three versions are cap and trade, cap and dividend, and a direct carbon tax. I support any tax on emissions, but strongly favor a carbon tax while other candidates favor cap and trade or cap and dividend. To explain why requires understanding of the different programs.

Cap and Trade programs do what their name implies: cap emissions to certain levels under strict penalty. A central authority (ie, federal government) sets the overall emission cap for a period of time and then offers up “allowances” to affected upstream carbon producing/importing sources via auction. Those carbon producers are not allowed to exceed the allowances they are given. Under cap and trade, if a producer finds they need less allowances to comply with the emission limit, they can then sell/trade excess allowances to other producers. This allows firms to craft policies that best suit them economically- be it buying allowances to stave off internal upgrades or selling off excess allowances if internal changes for compliance cost less.

Cap and Dividend programs are very similar to cap and trade. A central authority (ie, federal government) again sets the overall emission cap for a period of time and then offers up allowances to affected upstream carbon producing/importing sources. However, unlike cap and trade, money raised through sales of allowances will be returned to US citizens in the form of a quarterly dividend. If there are 300 million active Social Security numbers and allowance sales generate \$30 billion over one year, the dividend gives back \$25.00 each fiscal quarter for a total of \$100 over the whole year.

There’s also been a variance proposed dubbed a “fair-share cap and trade” which functions like a cap and trade, but allowances are distributed in equal share to each US citizen. Those citizens would then be able to sell their allowances to power companies for cash. The theory is that any rise in energy prices due to the carbon cost to upstream producers and importers of fossil fuels is offset by the money paid by the energy companies to the individuals for their allowance.

Carbon Taxes differs from the cap programs in that there is no cap on emissions. Instead, there is a no-limit tax on carbon emissions. Upstream producers/importers can pollute all they want if they are willing to pay (a lot) for it, which most firms won’t want to do. The tax is levied on a per metric ton basis established by a central authority (ie, federal government).

All three of these concepts- cap and trade, cap and dividend, and a carbon tax- can work towards climate change; all three would generate a significant amount of revenue for the federal government at the same time. In each case, the cost is applied upstream because those producers/importers will ultimately pass the cost downstream to consumers, [making accountability much easier to track](#) (ie, we aren’t counting carbon emissions from individuals). But of these three policies, as stated earlier, I strongly favor a carbon tax due to its simplicity in all aspects. The downsides to cap and trade or cap and dividend outweigh the good, I feel.

To start, under cap and dividend, you run into the logistical challenge of identifying/locating every eligible individual in the country. Having the IRS be responsible won’t work because many folks- such as retirees who might benefit under this system- don’t pay taxes and, thus, aren’t reachable in that regard. Social Security could possibly reach more folks, or the government could conduct outreach programs. All of these create more overhead and eat into dividend returns or increase necessary federal budget outlays- something we don’t want.

Next, you need to establish a broker for buying/selling allowances under cap and trade or cap and dividend. Brokers add another layer of complexity with the additional overhead and cost. Is the broker a government agency or in the private sector? What rules and regulations govern them to ensure impartial equality of opportunity? What kind of transparency rules must they adhere to?

Then you need to consider the economics of allowances. If a firm were to hoard their allotment for a long enough period of time, prices on trades would rise due to scarcity and the potential for market disruption

increases tremendously. Imagine hedge funds who own energy companies messing with allowances under a cap system. Knowing how keen Wall St. is to maximize ROI, expecting these companies to behave properly is not a good idea.

Finally (for this question, at least), cap systems are far more likely to run into the border adjustment problem with international trade. The WTO allows for border adjustments- that is to say, additional fees on imports- if the adjustment does not discriminate like imports against domestic options nor does it discriminate imports from one country against another country. This is referred to as national treatment (NT) and most favored nation (MFN) treatment under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The first question becomes one of whether the need for an allowance constitutes an "internal tax" or "internal charge of any kind" under GATT, Article III, section 2. Once that is resolved, we would need to decide how the whole allowance system works with regard to imports. Do you measure the end result stateside or do you measure total emissions as a result of the creation process? For example, if steel is imported, do you need allowances for the steel made of met coal or do you need allowances for the steel and for the production emissions abroad? That is where NT and MFN issues arise, further complicating any capping system where allowances are involved. After all that, you need to decide if the "likeness" requirement under GATT messes with imports too much. Is a ton of cement produced by a plant running on solar energy "like" a ton of cement produced by a plant running on coal? [Under WTO standards, they would probably be considered "like."](#)

Most of these issues may be overcome with a cap system... just after a lot of hardship and millions (if not billions) of dollars in cost. The goal here is to combat climate change as simply and effectively as possible while raising revenue that can be used for expanding other energy projects such as renewable farms or next-gen nuclear facilities. This is why I favor a carbon tax. KISS applies here. The one area that will be difficult to overcome is the "tax" designation- a stigma in the US, but not to the WTO. Capping systems are [most likely to fall under the category of "regulations"](#) as defined in GATT, Article II, section 4. Indeed, the [European Court of Justice determined emission-based allowances to fall under the "regulation" designation](#), increasing potential pushback and WTO problems with a cap system more-so, potentially even becoming a violation of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. "Regulations" are also not covered under the Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) Agreement... but taxes and duties are.

A carbon tax can be just as effective as a cap system while also [avoiding the major pitfalls involving the WTO and international trade](#). Economists and trade law experts favor a tax due to its greater transparency and efficiency. As I said at the start, I support any system that combats climate change, but the best way to tackle the issue, with the least amount of overhead and trade hurdles, in my opinion, is through a carbon tax.

One last point to make regarding cap systems. Other candidates may refer to the RGGI (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) that Maryland and other northeast states are a part of as a model for successful cap and trade (or possible cap and dividend, in this case). They may point out that emissions have gone down since states joined the RGGI in 2005. They are correct, but it's not because of the RGGI.

Due to the recession and various market influences (like cheaper natural gas), CO2 emissions naturally declined in the region from 2005. By the time caps came into effect in 2009, emissions were so far below the cap amount that firms had no real incentive to reduce emissions through auxiliary spending or to purchase emission credits. There is little evidence as of right now to show that the RGGI has been even marginally effective.

The real test will be over the next 3-5 years. Already in 2015, with the lowering of the cap by the RGGI, allowance prices are starting to rise. States are starting to become aware of a possible pinch- both economically and in producing less carbon emissions than the cap calls for. It's important to be aware of this as the Clean Power Plan from the earlier question has the EPA implementing cap and trade programs in states that fail to meet the desired goals. Such plans may cause more headaches than they should. We don't want to see programs scrapped because of poorly planned "punishments" affecting states.

4. The “Production Tax Credit” (PTC) and “Investment Tax Credit” (ITC) are the premier federal tax incentives to promote renewable energy. Both of these credits were recently renewed and extended, however their value is scheduled to decrease over time. What is your position regarding renewal and extension of the PTC and ITC? Please explain your answer.

We definitely need to keep subsidizing and promoting investment in renewable energy and clean energy. I support the renewal and extension of both PTC and ITC. However, like with any tax credit, there is room for improvement. In this case, the concern I have relates to the failure in rewarding energy production. Investment is one thing, but poor investment yields poor output, a major concern with the already intermittent technologies that make up wind and solar renewable energy.

Renewable technology, especially solar based on crystallized silicon, is still in its infantile stage. There is much room for improvement both in cost and efficiency. The ITC is rewarding investment in current technology, focusing on short term gain versus long term benefit. On top of that, the ITC doesn't reward actual solar efficiency. When you do cost comparisons to natural gas combined cycle plants (NGCC), the levelized cost of electricity (LCOE) becomes competitive when you build out utility-scale solar projects. Utility scale photovoltaics are about 25% cheaper than concentrated solar power (CSP) plant generation, making it more economically viable. But the ITC doesn't care about economics and efficiency. It wants more solar, right now, and it doesn't care how. This results in less effective and less efficient solar buildout compared to what we should be pursuing.

That's good for fighting fossil fuel use and battling climate change, but definitely not the best use of government energy (bad pun, sorry). Subsidies for solar technologies would be much more effective with taxpayer dollars if they rewarded quality generation, not investment. This is different than the PTC; I mean reward the total amount of megawatts generated, create benefits for increased capacity, and more. Maximize the output and achieve the best ROI's. This should be done by increasing the number of R&D grants and other direct investments towards new solar technology like thin-film systems constructed from Earth-abundant materials. When we look at renewable energy, especially solar, we don't want to get stuck with 20-30 years of inefficient systems due to infrastructure buildout based around short term financial gain. Wind and solar already face 30 year maintenance windows, requiring a good amount of investment for changes and upkeep. Better planning and development right now can save us billions in the future while achieving the same results, even if it is a little slower on the uptake due to the time it takes science to progress.

In regards to the PTC, efficiency and effectiveness are again the focus. The PTC gives a \$0.023 per kWh credit to renewable energy production. But, again, there is an efficiency component missing. Using the PTC to setup wind farms in Iowa, for example, is good... but Iowa already gets a large chunk of their electricity from wind. Compare that to Florida which has public policy going against renewable energy sources, yet could be well served by the technologies (wind and solar) due to increased demand there for electricity. I'm of the opinion that the PTC (and ITC) should start to include a geography component. Perhaps offering more incentive to regions where it is more difficult to build out due to state policy. Without such a component, companies with an existing renewable footprint in a certain locale can continue to expand, receive the credit, and provide an overabundance of electricity to the area. That wouldn't be a major deal if we had a better power grid, transmission infrastructure, and/or storage capacity, but we don't. Not yet, at least.

Additionally, I would like to see credits and investment expand into nuclear energy. I believe I'm the only Maryland candidate (and possibly the only US Senate candidate) supporting and pushing for nuclear energy as part of the clean energy initiative. Through the [revenue generated by my tax plan](#), those hundreds of billions dedicated towards nuclear research and buildout along with utility-scale solar projects- on top of these tax credits- would really give a boost to clean, safe, and efficient energy production. Next generation technology- both nuclear and solar- are our best bets for the future. The ITC, PTC, and direct investments need to reflect that.

5. State governments have played a large role in advancing climate change and clean energy policies. What state climate change/clean energy policies do you think have been the most effective? Do you have a position on climate change/clean energy policies Maryland should adopt? Finally, how do you think the federal government should work with states in its response to climate change? Please explain your answers.

Without going through the hundreds of policies across all 50 states, it's tough to say what has been most effective. What truly matters however, from a policy perspective, is openness towards clean energy in the first place. Climate change is still not believed by millions of Americans. Entire state governments denounce policies aimed at fighting it. Here in Maryland, some candidates have even called for the elimination of the EPA because they find the agency's actions to combat climate change antithetical to American values. Those values, unfortunately, revolve around the mighty dollar.

A number of states have great dependence on fossil fuels. Not just oil and natural gas, but coal. Just in 2015, the BEA reported GDP declines in West Virginia and North Dakota due to the drop in mining while Oklahoma and Wyoming experienced lower GDP growth than desired because of those very reasons. That's part of a larger issue facing the coal industry. Coal- especially metallurgical (met) coal- provided billions in revenue to mining and energy companies through exports back in 2010-2012. They depended upon the fossil fuels to help drive their economy. When the export market crashed, [these companies suffered](#). The four largest mining companies by output in the US had a net worth of approximately \$34 billion back in 2011; in February 2016, [they were worth about \\$150 million](#).

This is a symptom of state policies being closed off to climate change and alternative energy sources. They focus on the short term points: existing jobs, cheaper fossil fuel prices, and current workflows. Renewable and clean energy disrupts all that. It's a disruption for the better, but in an age when the economy teeters, when wages stagnate, and when the job market is watched more closely than a Kardashian video, it is difficult for states to objectively look at the bigger picture. States taxing fossil fuels and/or spending money on clean energy infrastructure just is not a priority under the current mentality of many regions. Just look at the [Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy and Efficiency](#) to see the widespread differences. Maryland has 73 listed policies/initiatives; North Dakota has 17 while West Virginia and Kansas have just 11.

Maryland doesn't have the most clean energy policies, but we do get a majority of our energy from clean sources. According to the EIA, 64.5% of electricity generated in the state came from clean energy, [with 53% of that being nuclear energy from the only nuclear plant in the state at Calvert Cliffs](#). Coal and natural gas make up the other 35%. Maryland can definitely wean itself off both of those within the next 10 years or by 2030 at the latest. It would be a triumphant task to show the nation that all our electricity comes from clean energy. Getting rid of fossil fuels entirely isn't feasible given the manufacturing and transportation sectors, but to have all electricity generated by non-fossil fuel sources would be something else! And that goal is within our reach. There is room for improvement in the hydropower arena, taking advantage of both the Chesapeake and Appalachia. Even smaller investments in small modular reactors to increase our nuclear footprint would be cost effective in eliminating fossil fuel dependency in the state. Both show Maryland taking the initiative and acting as a national leader in the realm of climate change and energy policy.

But such also needs to be balanced with economic changes as well. No one wants to see those employed in fossil fuel industries lose their jobs. With clean energy initiatives, job reallocation and/or job training programs must be part of the package. Those men and women are good, capable workers that shouldn't be tossed aside for the sake of progress. They need to be given additional opportunities, be it in the renewable/clean energy sectors or elsewhere. Failure to include that as part of the policy is failure to address the whole issue. Climate change is important, but people and jobs in the here and now are too. Helping both at the same time can be done without sacrificing one for the other.

Finally, the federal government can work with states in two main ways: investment in clean energy through

tax credits and federal funds and by helping craft programs to help those dependent on fossil fuel jobs. Just like I said in regards to the policy Maryland should push for, tackling the fossil fuel problem also requires tackling the employment problems created through the disruptive technologies. Sacrificing jobs for the sake of progress when they don't need to be sacrificed serves no one's interest except those who view climate change as the direst need for mankind. It absolutely is an important issue to address, but overcoming fossil fuels at the expense of the economy and societal success creates a meaningless future full of increased burden and extraneous hardships. That is precisely what we are trying to avoid. States need assistance and assurance that their residents and their economies will not suffer because of clean energy policies. The federal government can provide both, if proper policy and programs are crafted.

6. The United States can do more to address climate change by making meaningful long-term investments in carbon-reducing technologies. Gridlock in Washington has largely prevented Congress from taking substantive steps to tackle the problem. Would you work to build consensus in Congress to pass climate change legislation? How have you demonstrated your ability to build consensus in the past?

Absolutely. I would definitely work to build consensus in Congress to pass legislation for clean/renewable energy initiatives, legislation to curb carbon emissions, legislation for advanced R&D into new energy technologies, and more. In order to build consensus, however, we need to overcome the belief problem. A number of Congress members do not believe in climate change... or they don't believe it to be caused by man. While it's likely true that the Earth goes through climate cycles, mankind's actions have definitely contributed to the problem in an extremely significant way. Still, belief is a very powerful thing. It can prevent any real change from occurring as we've seen not just with climate change, but also with civil issues like same-sex marriage as well. Beliefs cannot be ignored.

However, they can be skirted. For many members of Congress that don't buy into the climate change discussion, the issue is one of economics. They have ties to fossil fuel industries and/or their state depends upon fossil fuels for jobs, tax revenue, and more. Fiscal security is a key component to climate change opposition. Money can be a powerful motivator. That's one of the main tools needed to bring about a consensus.

[My tax plan does just that.](#) Many of those who oppose climate change are Republicans. They don't want to deal with the investment costs or job losses, especially in states where their GDP is heavily tied to the success of the fossil fuel industry. But they also want lower taxes, both for corporations and for individuals. My tax plan does just that, cutting the corporate tax rate to 18% and lowering everyone's income tax by 3-10%. This is a huge deal for Republicans, something they've spent years fighting for.

I also have [a plan to fix government procurement and wasteful spending.](#) It's a plan based on DoD analysis and GAO recommendations that would save hundreds of billions of dollars without sacrificing national security or program integrity. There are candidates in the Maryland election that are part of budget committees, and while they might claim to be champions of fiscal and environmental responsibility, their lack of action concerning the GAO reports on overlapping, duplicated, and wasteful government spending over the last six years speaks volumes to their dedication on the matter- billions of dollars worth. My thesis on procurement and government waste tackles root causes of these issues. It's another thing Republicans who oppose climate change want to fix (big, wasteful government is bad after all).

I can offer up those ideas because my plans, [based on initial analysis](#), are fully funded by the changes I put forth. The money is there for everyone to check. That allows me to offer up political concessions to those who oppose climate change. Politics is about philosophy, representing the people, and working with your fellow representatives in achieving goals everyone wants. That's my opinion, at least.

Unfortunately, I have no past proof of action towards these goals because I have never held office. But consider what other candidates for the Senate seat, those who have held office, say on the matters. They may tout a piece of legislation or say they've always supported keeping the Bay clean. But look at their answers

to this survey. Listen to their words. See if they're aware of the big picture and how all these aspects of government work together. I have a tax plan that includes pieces both Democrats and Republicans are clamoring for, I have [the revenue analysis to back it up](#), and I have [the most detailed policy for energy investment](#) of all the candidates in the race. Others may say they are the best candidate for the job, but none of them can promise [hundreds of billions in clean energy investment over the next 10 years](#), an investment based on a bi-partisan tax reform plan that would fund it all. So while I have not demonstrated a past ability to build consensus, I am now demonstrating a detailed, bi-partisan approach to changing things for the better with energy and many other aspects of our society.

7. Can you describe examples where you showed legislative leadership on climate change and clean energy issues? Please provide details of your personal involvement in your examples.

Having never been an elected official nor involved in any energy companies, I sadly cannot provide examples showing legislative leadership on climate change and clean energy. I can say, however, that [my energy policy](#) is the best of any candidate in Maryland. I can also say that I'm the only candidate in Maryland (and possibly the United States) with a [fully detailed economic plan](#), including cost/revenue estimates, that serves as a roadmap for getting us to that energy goal. The only other candidate with a plan (to my knowledge) is Chris Van Hollen and, while I give him kudos for his cap and dividend based program that is better than nothing, it is far from the ideal plan we need in the United States- not to mention the logistical problems it would face in addition to challenges from the WTO for violating GATT rules on taxation of imports (assuming Mr. Van Hollen wishes to apply cap and dividend to imports... which he should if he's serious about emissions). See my earlier answer on the cap and dividend program for more details.

8. How long have you held elected office in Maryland? What office(s) did you hold?

I have never held an official government position. Then again, that makes me uniquely qualified given the current state of affairs with Congress, no? Find me another candidate in Maryland who has the level of detail to their policies that I do, that is bi-partisan by default, and is not afraid to share their thoughts, feelings, research, and thinking process with others... find me another candidate like that here in Maryland. I don't think one exists outside of myself. I know that's arrogant and egotistical, but all you have to do is look at the policies written and judge for yourself. Over 150 pages and hundreds of endnotes written so constituents can see the sources for themselves instead of taking my word for it. There is no other candidate in Maryland or the United States like me. And that is really, really unfortunate, speaking volumes to the level of politics here and around the country :(

VIOLET STALEY

1. In June 2014, President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan. The rule establishes the first-ever national standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants. Until this rule, existing power plants were not limited in the amount of carbon they could release. On August 3, 2015, the Clean Power Plan became final. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court halted implementation of the Clean Power Plan while legal issues are decided by the courts. What is your position on the Clean Power Plan? Do you think it should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

*I am glad that the President had the courage to have the EPA do its job. The Clean Power Plan is a good start on improving our air quality and the health of all of our citizens. Power plants have to be held accountable. I will vote to implement the plan.

2. On August 18, 2015 the Obama Administration proposed the first methane pollution standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities, a rule that will blunt the projected growth of methane emissions leakage from the industry. On March 10th, the Administration announced that it will also draft regulations to limit methane emissions from existing oil and gas facilities. Pound for pound, methane gas traps more than 80 times as much heat on our planet in the short term than carbon dioxide does. What is your opinion of the Administration's proposed methane rules? Do you think they should be strengthened? Weakened? More or less left the same? Please explain your answer.

*I support the proposed methane rules. All of the Administration's proposals will be assessed after a period of time.

3. "Cap and dividend" is a carbon-reduction policy tool that would set a steadily declining cap on the total amount of U.S. carbon pollution that can be released into the atmosphere. Any company that extracts new fossil fuels from the ground or imports them into the U.S. would have to buy a permit at a federally-organized auction for every ton of carbon dioxide those fossil fuels will emit into the atmosphere. All of the money raised would then be returned in equal amounts—through a quarterly "dividend"—to every U.S. resident with a valid Social Security number. What is your position on implementing a cap-and-dividend policy in the U.S? Please explain your answer.

*I think this is an excellent plan that puts the American citizen first. We are the consumers and recipients of the side effects of pollution. To additionally receive a monetary benefit is "icing on the cake"

4. The "Production Tax Credit" (PTC) and "Investment Tax Credit" (ITC) are the premier federal tax incentives to promote renewable energy. Both of these credits were recently renewed and extended, however their value is scheduled to decrease over time. What is your position regarding renewal and extension of the PTC and ITC? Please explain your answer.

*I will vote to renew and extend these tax credits which benefit businesses and the American citizens. It is a joint effort to improve our health and reward best practices to promote renewable energy.

5. State governments have played a large role in advancing climate change and clean energy policies. What state climate change/clean energy policies do you think have been the most effective? Do you have a position on climate change/clean energy policies Maryland should adopt? Finally, how do you think the federal government should work with states in its response to climate change? Please explain your answers.

*I think that the research Maryland has done on fracking has been beneficial in looking out for the Health of its residents and on the environment. The Chesapeake Climate Action Network has done a good job of contacting state government elected officials to emphasize the importance of these issues. The Clean Energy Jobs Act that recently passed the House in the General Assembly is good legislation. The Federal government should support the states in their efforts to improve the quality of life for its residents. The Obama Administration has done so by focusing on cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay.

6. The United States can do more to address climate change by making meaningful long-term investments in carbon-reducing technologies. Gridlock in Washington has largely prevented Congress from taking substantive steps to tackle the problem. Would you work to build consensus in Congress to pass climate change legislation? How have you demonstrated your ability to build consensus in the past?

*I will work to improve the health and quality of life for all of our citizens. I am a bridge-builder and know how to work with others because I respect them as a person, and care for them and their families.

7. Can you describe examples where you showed legislative leadership on climate change and clean energy issues? Please provide details of your personal involvement in your examples.

*I grew up in Los Angeles county where we had a serious issue with smog. Local government worked to put restrictions on companies that polluted the environment. I have always been in support of these efforts. There was tremendous improvement in the air quality, but unfortunately we have seen the smog recently. As the Senator I will not relax efforts to enforce regulations and tirelessly work to improve our environment.

8. How long have you held elected office in Maryland? What office(s) did you hold?

*I have been a volunteer Public Servant all my life; this is my first time running for elected office.