

Capital News Service Questionnaire

From: Jackie Incollingo [mailto:jincollingo@jmail.umd.edu]

Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2014 12:10 PM

Subject: CNS questionnaire of gubernatorial candidates

Dear Gubernatorial Candidate and Campaign Staff:

As part of our coverage of the governor's race, **Capital News Service** is distributing a questionnaire to all Maryland candidates for governor, in order to construct a graphic and **news** article indicating individuals' stances on several top issues facing the state.

We request that all the candidates provide written responses to the following 12 questions, and return them to Annapolis bureau chief Jackie Incollingo at jincollingo@jmail.umd.edu by Monday, March 10, 2014.

QUESTIONNAIRE

MINIMUM WAGE:

What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

I support raising Maryland's minimum wage. As a member of the House of Delegates, I led the floor debate in January 2006 and voted to override Governor Ehrlich's veto of the minimum wage bill, thereby raising the wage. I worked with Governor O'Malley and organized labor in 2007 to establish the nation's first statewide living wage law for Maryland's working families and the Middle Class. This legislative session, I have worked with Governor O'Malley, non-profits, businesses, labor, and our partners in the General Assembly to raise the minimum wage for all Maryland workers. I stand behind our Administration's proposal - The Maryland Minimum Wage Act of 2014 - which raises the statewide minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour and indexes future wages to the cost of inflation.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

Maryland enjoys a significant economic benefit by virtue of the number of federal agencies and contractors located within our state, as well as our proximity to the nation's capital. There are hundreds of thousands of federal employees and contractors that call Maryland home, and we will continue to encourage this relationship with our partners at the national level.

As Governor, I am committed to building the most competitive business climate in the nation right here in Maryland. Through our efforts, we will encourage economic diversification by helping to establish and grow more local businesses across industries. Our comprehensive approach will take into account the following nine factors: Tax Liability; Regulatory and Licensing Requirements; Cost and Reliability of Energy; Cost of Living; Reliable and Predictable Legal System; Small Business Access to Working Capital; Quality of the Workforce; Quality of Life; and Infrastructure.

We will continue to grow job-creating industries, including, but not limited to: agriculture and hospitality; clean energy investments like solar and off-shore wind; environmental retrofitting that protects our waterways and makes Maryland safer and healthier; partnering with our public research institutions in technology and healthcare to transform cutting-edge ideas into Maryland businesses; supporting public infrastructure, like the Purple Line and Red Line, that will create jobs and connect businesses and communities while reducing traffic congestion; and promoting the Port of Baltimore, which will attract more exchange and place Maryland at the epicenter of distribution for the entire East Coast.

TAXES:

1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

While I don't see the need in the foreseeable future to raise taxes, I do see the need for comprehensive tax reform that allows us to make the necessary investments in infrastructure and human capital, while ensuring a tax code that reflects our progressive values and our modern economy.

Over the last seven years, the O'Malley-Brown Administration has made tough decisions to bring Maryland through the recession while at the same time protecting our priorities of public education, public safety, creating jobs and protecting and growing the middle class. By working together, we have maintained our AAA bond rating, nearly eliminated our structural deficit, and regained 100% of the jobs lost during the recession.

I am committed to comprehensive tax reform that will make Maryland the most competitive business climate in the nation. As we have done in the past, any changes to our tax structure, including personal income taxes, estate taxes and corporate taxes must be fair and reflect Maryland's commitment to growing its economy, creating jobs and growing and protecting the middle class.

2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated?

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3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

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EDUCATION:

1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensated?

Educators have many choices when they decide where to teach, work and raise a family. One way that Maryland can recruit and retain the best educators is by making wise investments, providing competitive salaries, and providing excellent professional development. During the past seven years, at the state level we have made record investments in school construction, an average of \$340 million annually, and increased operating dollars for public schools by \$1.5 billion since 2007.

During the last several years, many local governments were forced to make choices they would have never imagined a few years ago and in some cases that has meant letting teacher salaries become stagnant. The same is true of class sizes. While we have fared better than other states, we have let our class sizes grow. And we know that especially in early education, this can have a negative impact on education outcomes.

As the budget outlook continues to improve, I am committed to completing the adequacy funding study required under the Bridge to Excellence. I am also committed to making public education a top funding priority so that our educators have the resources and salaries they need to raise their families, work in appropriately sized classrooms, and educate our students.

2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you mitigate the conflict?

I support local autonomy to develop evaluation systems that are in compliance with state and federal statutes and regulation. Local educators and superintendents know their counties best - which is why we should always consider how we can combine federal initiatives with the best Maryland has to offer.

I will encourage an inclusive, local approach that aligns educators' knowledge with student needs, fosters "buy-in" from all stakeholders, and helps us refine our evaluation systems.

3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans?

Over the past seven years, we've built the #1 public school system in the country because we believed that education was – and is – the best way to ensure that all Marylanders have a chance to succeed.

Even as we faced the toughest economy since the Great Depression, we made record investments in our schools, knowing that our children's futures start in our classrooms. Most importantly, we have never stopped working with our educators, students, parents, community leaders, and partners in local government, all of whom have put Maryland's children first. But our work in education is far from finished. Having the best schools in the nation is not enough if even a single child in our state is denied the opportunity to learn, grow, and reach her or his potential. And there are still children in our state who do not have access to the education available to their fellow students.

It is time for us to take the next step as we continue to build a world-class school system for each and every child – in each and every neighborhood – throughout our state. That step starts with early childhood education – the foundation on which all of our efforts in education are built. While the benefits of Pre-Kindergarten education are well known, too many families do not have access to quality, affordable Pre-K. The # 1 school system in the nation can and should do better.

My proposal is simple: we must create a universal, high quality and voluntary Pre-K program in Maryland. That is why, as Governor, I will set aside enhanced gaming revenue to invest in our children and create a universal Pre-K program in Maryland. Universal Pre-K is easy to promise, but tougher to deliver – there is a real cost, and it will require some changes in our schools, including expanding school buildings themselves and partnering with local school systems and existing community based providers. So while some parts of this plan will go into effect immediately, it will not happen overnight. Ultimately, our plan ensures that by 2018, every Maryland family will have the option of sending their 4-year-old to a quality half-day Pre-K program where they can learn and grow. By 2022, we'll expand to full-day Pre-K for all 4-year-olds. These programs will help start our children on the path toward educational success, and we will not stop working until all Marylanders have access to the education they need and deserve.

MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE:

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

For the last five months, the Maryland Health Connection has been working around the clock to sign as many Marylanders up for quality affordable care as possible. Together, we've successfully enrolled more than 200,000 Marylanders into plans that provide them with the ability to go see a doctor, affordable prescription medication, and the peace of mind that comes from knowing that they are no longer one illness or accident away from bankruptcy. However, there's no question that the roll out did not go as smoothly as it should have. That is why we've taken real action to improve the website by executing a staff surge, replacing vendors who weren't meeting their obligations and providing additional resources. Before the next open enrollment period, we're committed to doing a thorough review of what worked and what didn't to make sure that our exchange never stops improving. All options are on the table as we move forward to ensure that all Marylanders have the opportunity to access quality care.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

I will not support the development of natural gas in the Marcellus Shale unless we have a safe way to do it. We will protect Western Maryland's families and our rural legacy as we pursue new energy opportunities, whether those opportunities include hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, wind power, solar or other sources.

In 2013, we funded a \$1.5 million study to fully examine all of the implications of natural gas hydraulic fracturing in order to determine whether it is right for Maryland. The study will examine: the risk of contamination of groundwater and surface water by fracturing fluids and gas; the risks of contamination or negative impacts to water and other natural resources from the handling and disposal of wastewater; the water resources required to support hydraulic fracturing activities; forest and habitat fragmentation and other environmental impacts due to the construction of drilling platforms, gathering lines,

transmission pipelines, and other necessary infrastructure; well spacing; greenhouse gas emissions from exploration wells, production wells and transmission lines; best practices for all aspects of gas exploration and production; and other important factors. We will carefully consider the results of this study before we take any steps toward fracking. While the energy potential of the Marcellus Shale represents an enticing economic opportunity, we will not accept a process that jeopardizes our families or environment.

2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

Over the last seven years, we have made great strides to promote alternative energy production here in Maryland. In 2013, we passed the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act, which will enable Maryland to produce new clean energy and create jobs. We also committed to source 2% of Maryland's energy from solar facilities within our state. As of 2013, this effort has resulted in the creation of 2,000 jobs in solar energy, and by 2018 we expect it to generate another 8,000. We will continue to promote the growth of both of these industries, which protect our environment while creating domestic employment opportunities.

MARIJUANA :

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

I support the work that we did last year to become the 19th state to create a framework for medical marijuana. However, through the process of implementing that program, we have learned that the 2013 legislation did not provide the type of access to medicinal marijuana that many had hoped. We know that there is considerable support in the General Assembly this session to identify reasonable modifications to the law that will help more Marylanders access medical marijuana. I agree that we need to modify the law to help more Marylanders access medical marijuana.

I support the decriminalization of possession of nominal amounts of marijuana because: (1) arrests and prosecutions for small amounts of marijuana disproportionately affect our minority community, though use among Whites and people of color is comparable; (2) a criminal conviction for minor possession typically impairs an individual's ability to secure employment or affordable housing; and (3) Maryland spends millions of dollars arresting and prosecuting minor marijuana possession and could better use those funds to support law enforcement strategies to combat violent crime.

My support of marijuana decriminalization is not an endorsement of its use. As Governor, I will support continued education on the dangers of substance use for children both in school and at home. We will also help all people struggling with substance abuse to access the services they need to get healthy.

I do not support, however, the legalization of marijuana at this time. The States of Colorado and Washington will provide an example of the socio-economic challenges and pitfalls to marijuana legalization. We will learn from their experiences and assess whether additional changes to Maryland's law are warranted.

David Craig for Governor

Dear Gubernatorial Candidate and Campaign Staff:

As part of our coverage of the governor's race, Capital News Service is distributing a questionnaire to all Maryland candidates for governor, in order to construct a graphic and news article indicating individuals' stances on several top issues facing the state.

We request that all the candidates provide written responses to the following 12 questions, and return them to Annapolis bureau chief Jackie Incollingo at jincollingo@jmail.umd.edu by Monday, March 14, 2014.

QUESTIONNAIRE

MINIMUM WAGE:

What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

My running mate, Delegate Jeannie Haddaway and I support the elimination of the state income tax, which would then enable working middle class Marylanders to vote themselves a pay raise. By keeping more of their own well earned money instead of seeing the state spend it, a change in the minimum wage would be unnecessary. We support programs that help people obtain more financial freedom without harming the small businesses of the state such as enhancements to the Earned Income Tax Credit.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

Delegate Haddaway and I will take the economic success we had in Harford County while I have served as County Executive and expand it to the entire state. We received great credit on this when Harford County achieved, for the first time in county history, the AAA bond rating. Standard & Poor's, Fitches, and Mooney applauded us for our lower tax rates which attracted new businesses and over 6,000 jobs and greatly diversified our economic base. Reforming Maryland's tax structure and having less reliance on federal funding will poise the state to attract innovative businesses. We will also benefit from tourism and the arts, energy credited jobs, sustainable agriculture and the expansion of the Helen Bentley Port of Baltimore.

TAXES:

1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage

over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

I have introduced a plan to eliminate the state income tax. The reduction will be phased in over a five year period saving the Maryland taxpayers \$8B. This benefit to our working class extends to the small business employees over 94% of which pay taxes though the income tax not the corporate tax.

2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated? **To be more competitive with our surrounding states in the Mid-Atlantic region we will phase in a lowering of the corporate income tax at a rate of 1.25% a year until we reach 4%. This will tie us with the state with the lowest rate – Kansas. We will then see our economic base grow with larger businesses.**

3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

We support recoupling with federal law but believe a repeal of the law would provide the most benefit to our fellow Marylanders. Maryland is one of only two states in the country that collects both an inheritance tax and an estate tax. It is inappropriate to tax those who inherit property such as farmland when it has already been taxed. This has caused many retirees to establish residency in other states or to leave Maryland altogether. It also helped land Maryland a place on Forbes' list of Where Not to Die in 2013.

EDUCATION:

1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensate? **There is duplication in government that could be eliminated and the savings could then be shifted to the classroom. Both the county government and the local board of education have departments such as human resources, facilities, transportation, procurement, and capital project design. County governments provide such services to the police and fire departments, library systems, and the judicial agencies; they can do this for the board of education which would then put the money into the teacher's pockets and the classrooms.**
2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you

mitigate the conflict? **Politicians should not determine how teachers are evaluated or how schools are assessed. This should be done by the local school system. I will ensure that this is not done by the state but by superintendents and the principals.**

3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans? **Pre-K is offered all across the state and is administered very well. The parents have the ability to send their children to these programs. Other candidates are not truly offering an improvement just a headline to their campaign to make people think they are. I know this, having been a teacher and assistant principal for 34 years and having a daughter who teaches pre-K to four years olds.**

MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE:

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

There is a simple solution to the inaccessibility to the health care which was created by the current administration – we can allow people to choose their own insurance broker using their subsidy. These insurance brokers/companies already exist and have been providing their assistance for years. A new bureaucracy which has cost \$240 million did not need to be created.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

We believe that the natural gas extraction should be allowed under a regulatory structure that protects both the economy and the environment.

2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

The Renewable Portfolio Standard should remain as flexible as possible so as to encourage the development of all types of sustainable and alternative energy while protecting ratepayers. Off shore wind happens to be one of the most expensive options and has many environmental concerns that are unanswered such as avian deaths and interference with the ocean bed. We also have to find a way to get it to land which means ratepayers.

MARIJUANA :

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

While we do not believe that our court system should be overburdened with these lower level cases we do not support legalization or full decriminalization. We have to be careful about the message we send about the dangers of marijuana use and we also have to consider the way it impacts our state as we attempt to poise ourselves as a cybersecurity, biotech, and defense mecca where top security clearances are required. Additionally, when has the government ever been successful in a program such as this? How would health care issues change if it was legalized?

QUESTIONNAIRE

MINIMUM WAGE:

What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

I am strongly in favor of increasing the minimum wage. That's why I was the first gubernatorial candidate to call for a minimum wage increase – to at least \$10 by 2015 – and why I have testified in Annapolis in support of legislation to increase the minimum wage. My support for an increase also includes support for indexing the minimum wage to the cost of inflation. The minimum wage is so far behind inflation that it is difficult for families to make ends meet without public support for food, housing and medical care. The real costs of low-wage work are high for taxpayers and employers. No Marylander who works 40 hours a week should struggle to put food on the table or pay basic bills. Raising our workers' wages will boost our economy and strengthen our state. It's the right thing to do.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

When planning for your future, the first thing they teach you is never put all your eggs in one basket. The same goes when planning for our state's future. Last year's government shutdown demonstrated all too clearly the cost to Maryland of being economically dependent on one sector. Maryland took a big and needless hit. The best way to diversify our economy is to identify our strengths and promote them, which is exactly what my recently released 30-point jobs plan, *Fighting for You: Jobs for All Maryland*, does. We can do so much more for the people of Maryland when it comes to jobs and our economy. As governor, I will take on this tough fight. I will adopt a regional and sector-based approach to economic development, enabling the distinct regional economies in our state to grow, as well as distinct sectors such as cybersecurity and the life sciences. Western Maryland has a long history of manufacturing. The Eastern Shore offers extraordinary opportunities for renewable energy projects. We should celebrate and build on each region's strengths, not continue with a failed "one size fits all" approach to bringing business to Maryland.

I would encourage Marylanders to read my full plan to create jobs here:
<http://dougansler.com/jobs>.

Some highlights from my plan:

- **Form Academic Manufacturing Clusters** to connect entrepreneurs with

manufacturers and academics. Maryland has some of the best universities in the nation, and we should be encouraging entrepreneurs to set up shop near these universities. For example, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore has a thriving solar farm, and the state should leverage that in attracting green energy businesses to the area. Frostburg State University has plans to build a medicinal herb manufacturing plant, another industry that could draw businesses to Western Maryland. Through tax credits, workforce training assistance and other means, I will encourage the development of manufacturing clusters across the state, such as national security near Anne Arundel Community College and Prince George's Community College, renewable energy near UMES and Salisbury University, and medical device and small device manufacturing near Johns Hopkins and UMMC. California has Silicon Valley with its universities; Maryland should have Security Valley, Renewable Shore and Medical Hill.

- **Establish a Health and Biosciences Hub.** We must harness the job creation potential of our health and bioscience industry beyond just maintaining the incremental investments currently made. Establishing a Health and Biosciences Hub would allow us to identify and categorize these companies and estimate how much they pay in corporate income tax in a given year. Using that estimate as a base amount, Maryland could earmark any additional tax that the state collects beyond this amount from companies included in the Hub and invest it in a revolving loan fund to expand and generate new jobs in the health and bioscience industry.
- **Make Maryland a national leader in “remanufacturing.”**
Remanufacturing – taking old non-functional products, like hospital equipment and auto parts, and restoring them to new or better condition – is a high-skilled, environmentally responsible form of manufacturing that saves energy and removes more material from our waste stream. It holds great promise in Maryland, given our historically strong manufacturing base, available factory space and proximity to rail and port infrastructure. I will work closely with industry leaders and community colleges to train Marylanders to fill the thousands of gaps in this green, high-skilled profession and find other ways to unleash remanufacturing's economic potential in Maryland.
- **Convert polluting waste into energy.** Maryland cannot really reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay until it limits the amount of livestock manure and chicken litter that enters the Bay. We need practical solutions to address this issue that will not diminish farmers' incomes. My plan to build an environmentally sound chicken-litter-to-energy plant on the Eastern Shore is just that. It will reduce Bay pollution, something I have long fought to achieve, and it will also create jobs and provide a new source of renewable energy. Additionally, once the plant is built, farmers

would be able to sell their litter to the plant operator for profit.

TAXES:

1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

Under the tenure of Lt. Governor Anthony Brown, Marylanders have been hit with 40 new taxes and fee increases in the last seven years. Our state's progressive personal income tax system is such that taxpayers should not be saddled with multiple other taxes, many of which burden those least able to manage the additional expense. That's not fair, particularly when we have yet to close tax loopholes that allow many corporations to avoid paying taxes altogether.

2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated?

Over the last seven years, more than 7,000 small businesses have left Maryland and close to 200,000 people are unemployed. One of our top priorities must be jobs – creating more jobs. To do that we must attract and retain job-creating businesses. We are no longer competing with China and India to retain our companies; we are competing with neighboring states. Virginia, for example, attracts businesses by offering a lower corporate income tax rate of 6 percent. At 8.25 percent, Maryland cannot compete. To attract and retain job-creating businesses, and launch new ones, I have proposed phasing in a reduction to the corporate income tax rate starting with a 0.25 percent decrease in my first year of office.

As corporate income tax revenues increase from business expansion and job creation, and our tax base grows, I will gradually reduce the rate until we are competitive with our neighbors. Reducing the rate gradually is important so we do not jeopardize funds for education and other services.

To ensure we can continue to provide the services core to our democratic values and cover the cost of lowering the corporate income tax rate, I will close corporate tax loopholes, starting with one that allows companies to avoid paying their fair share in taxes altogether. Nineteen of Maryland's 50 largest corporations avoided paying a single dime of corporate income tax in 2011. I will crack down on this unscrupulous practice once and for all, returning anywhere from 92 to 144 million dollars to the state's general fund for education and other

services. It's time to hold on to our businesses that play fair and produce jobs while rooting out businesses that exploit loopholes to avoid paying their fair share.

3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

As I travel across the state, I overwhelmingly hear from Marylanders that our state has become too expensive for retirees. That is why back in August, I proposed that we increase the estate tax exemption to match the federal level. Maryland should be a state that holds on to its retirees, where generations stay and grow future generations. Equally essential to this goal is a commitment to reducing the burdens that prevent Maryland's working families from climbing the economic ladder, whether that be increasing the minimum wage or creating a pipeline to jobs by discounting college tuition for high demand occupations in Maryland. Let's do more to make Maryland a state where people can afford to raise their families generation after generation.

EDUCATION:

1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensated?

Good teachers make for good education, and essential to hiring and holding on to the best teachers is fair pay. Also essential is following through on promises made. When the current administration broke its promise to contribute \$300 million each year to the state's depleted pension system – a promise that it made to teachers in 2011 when it required them to contribute more to their pensions and health benefits – a fundamental trust was broken. As governor, I will restore trust with teachers by keeping their pensions and benefits secure.

I will also make it a priority to increase incentives to attract and retain highly qualified teachers and administrators. These will include mortgage interest credits and student loan tax credits to increase the net fiscal benefits of working as an educator in Maryland. This is especially important given the freeze on cost-of-living increases for teachers imposed in response to the budget crisis facing the state. As the state's fiscal outlook improves, I will propose offering teachers who serve in challenged schools the opportunity to receive an additional state tax credit that will offset continuing education costs as well as tuition payments for their children.

2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you mitigate the conflict?

I support efforts to provide our educators the tools they need to provide high-quality instruction to all students. In this period of transition to the Common Core State Standards, our focus should be on ensuring that our teachers have sufficient time and resources to develop and put in place teaching plans aligned with those standards. For that reason, assessments based on the Common Core State Standards should carry less weight in teacher evaluations until our teachers have had adequate time to adjust to the Common Core.

Waiting a period of years for new assessment results to stabilize before letting the full weight and consequences of the new evaluation system fall on them is a smart and reasonable way to proceed. We should in no way abandon the goals behind the Common Core, however. Our kids deserve the best. Other states, like Massachusetts, have found ways to transition gradually and we should look for good models to follow.

During this period, I will work with MSDE to make sure that we are providing our educators professional development tied to the new standards and curriculum. The goal here is to lift up our students, our educators, and our education system.

3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans?

I wholeheartedly support expanding pre-K, and I was the first candidate to release a pre-K plan designed specifically to close the achievement gap. Unlike the other candidates' proposals, my proposal focuses first on ensuring access to pre-K for our neediest families, with built-in supports for pre-K educators to ensure quality as the plan scales up.

Given the overwhelming evidence in support of early education as a means to closing the achievement gap, it is essential that we increase access to the current pre-K program in Maryland. To begin, that means extending the program from a half-day to full-day program. In 2015, we will expand eligibility to families with household incomes at or above 300 percent of the 2014 federal poverty guidelines, which is currently \$71,550 for a family of four. We anticipate this expansion in the first year will cost approximately \$20 million dollars and would be paid for by expanded gambling revenue currently earmarked for horse racing.

After 2015, so long as rigorous data analysis supports successful expansion, I will seek to increase access to the current pre-K program in stages to ensure that we maintain standards and rigor as we increase the scale of the program across

the state.

My pre-K plan makes sure that full-day pre-K is available to all families in need, and offers an approach that allows us to scale up pre-K funding responsibly, ensuring quality and keeping the state from falling further into debt. Anthony Brown's and Heather Mizeur's plans – which they estimate to cost \$138 million per year and \$280 million per year, respectively – risk offering expanded pre-K without proper quality controls and without a clear funding stream. When the state commits many millions to a new initiative – like a health exchange, for example – it needs to be sure that it has a plan to get it right.

MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE:

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

The implementation of Maryland's health insurance exchange has been a total failure. Despite our nationally recognized pool of talent in both the medical and IT fields, the exchange program that Lt. Governor Brown implemented is a national embarrassment; we rank 46th out of 50 states in enrollment, and many Marylanders are still unable to get the insurance they need and deserve.

I have proposed allowing Maryland consumers to use the federal exchange website to purchase Maryland health insurance plans. Under this proposal, consumers would still have the option to attempt to purchase insurance through Maryland's existing broken health exchange website, but would have a second option to use the federal health exchange website to buy Maryland health plans. The two websites would run simultaneously. There is no cost to the state associated with providing this second option to consumers.

Under this model, Marylanders would get all the benefits of being able to purchase state-approved health insurance plans that provide affordable coverage – the only difference is that they will now be able to use a fully-functioning website to purchase them.

As for oversight going forward, I have called for a full accounting from Lt. Governor Brown as to how the failed exchange that was built under his watch resulted in calamity for so many uninsured Marylanders and led to tens of millions of dollars in cost overruns. It is clear that he failed to provide the oversight or leadership necessary to see this program through. I welcome the recent news that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Inspector General will be launching an inquiry into the failed rollout overseen by Lt. Governor Brown.

To ensure failures of this kind do not happen again and to provide the people of Maryland with the accountable government they deserve – a government that never forgets that the money it spends belongs to the people of Maryland – as governor, I will create an online transparency portal that enables Marylanders to see how contracts are being awarded, how money is being spent, and how many Marylanders are being served.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

I believe strongly that fracking should only come to Maryland if it can be done safely, without threatening human or environmental health. I am the only candidate in this race who has not just talked the talk of fracking safety but actually walked the walk. In 2011, a fracking well blowout spilled fracking fluid into a tributary that feeds into the Susquehanna River, the source of nearly half of the Chesapeake Bay's fresh water and the drinking water for roughly 6.2 million people. As Attorney General, I went after Chesapeake Energy, the company responsible for endangering the health of Maryland residents and the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, and my enforcement action led to a \$500,000 donation to the Susquehanna River Basin Commission for water quality monitoring within the river basin.

My action also compelled the company to provide documentation of the circumstances surrounding the blowout and its impact on adjacent tributaries of the Susquehanna, and to implement certain best practices designed to minimize the effect that its drilling activities have on water quality and the environment.

I have also assembled a team of assistant attorneys general representing more than 20 separate divisions and units within the Office of Attorney General (OAG) to provide support and share information on the Marcellus Shale and other natural gas and drilling issues as they arise, and to assist the Marcellus Shale Safe-Drilling Advisory Commission with its assessments, due out in 2014. At my direction, OAG staff has met with interested citizens, attended public meetings to educate individuals about the issues, and created educational materials to be sure that Marylanders know how to protect their interests, especially regarding complicated leases of their land to oil and gas companies.

As governor, I will review the recommendations of the Marcellus Shale Safe-Drilling Initiative Advisory Commission and seek input from public health and environmental leaders before allowing fracking to occur in Maryland. There has to be science and economics and public health data that drives this conversation rather than just heated political rhetoric. I will see what an independent review of

the science shows. And if fracking does occur here, it must be highly regulated with clear and strong environmental enforcement. Likewise, if fracking is done irresponsibly, I will seek consequences, just as I did with Chesapeake Energy.

2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

I think our best strategy is to have a diverse energy portfolio, and one that puts an emphasis on renewable energy sources like solar, biomass and wind. I have strongly advocated for increasing our state's requirements for use of renewable energy sources. The current administration's plan is to require certain renewable sources – like solar, biomass and wind – to compose 20 percent of our energy purchases by 2022. But when it comes to protecting our environment and investing in Maryland's renewable energy economy, we must aim higher. That is why I have called for increasing that requirement to 40 percent by 2025.

I also think we can do more to promote use of renewable energy in this state. Other states offer credit multipliers for certain types of renewable energy, incentivizing utility companies to purchase or generate more renewable energy. Maryland used to offer credit multipliers for solar, wind and methane energy, but those credits have expired (solar was replaced with a two percent purchase requirement). I will renew our commitment to these incentives for purchase of renewable energy.

Lastly, I think we can do more to harness Maryland's potential to grow our economy with renewable energy. To this end, as discussed above, I have proposed encouraging greater use of chicken litter to generate energy, a largely untapped renewable energy resource on our Eastern Shore, which has the added potential benefits of providing our farmers with an additional source of income and reducing Bay pollution from nutrients in animal waste.

MARIJUANA :

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

I support working with law enforcement to decriminalize possession of small amounts of marijuana, because there is little debate that the enforcement of Maryland's marijuana simple possession laws has been racially biased, ineffective, and a serious drain on state resources. I have offered strong support of a leading marijuana decriminalization bill now being debated in the General Assembly (offered by Senator Zirkin) and will continue to advocate for decriminalization as governor.

Seventeen states no longer jail adults for possessing small amounts of marijuana. Our policy on simple marijuana possession costs Maryland millions to arrest, process, prosecute and imprison offenders. Millions of dollars are being diverted to enforce possession of marijuana when it would be a better use of public dollars if law enforcement could focus on violent crimes and preserving public safety.

The disparate impact of marijuana arrests on the African-American community cannot be ignored. Despite the fact that African-Americans have comparable marijuana usage rates as Caucasians, they make up 58 percent of all marijuana possession arrests in a state where African-Americans make up 30 percent of the population. Moreover, in 10 jurisdictions, African-Americans are at least three times more likely to be arrested. In Baltimore, nearly 100 percent of youth arrested for marijuana in 2010 were African-American.

As for legalization, I believe any discussion of complete legalization should include Maryland's health professionals, law enforcement, and community organizations, and be based on what is best for the health and security of families and children, not on a rush to tax a new source of income to address budget pressures.

RON GEORGE for GOVERNOR
RESPONSE IN RED

QUESTIONNAIRE

MINIMUM WAGE:

What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

I do not believe an increase in the minimum wage is the proper method for raising worker's wages and improving quality of life in Maryland. The fact is over half of people working minimum wage are young people (16-24) with no dependents, and the total percentage of US workers making the minimum wage is 2.8%. It is meant to provide young people work experience and allow for seasonal businesses to operate in Maryland making us a tourist destination with greater economic impacts felt across the state. We need more jobs in our state and a minimum wage hike will result in thousands of lost jobs. The cost is too high and will shrink the number of small businesses. The Congressional Budget Office estimates we can expect a million jobs lost nationwide if we raise the minimum wage.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

Maryland is hurt disproportionately by federal budget cuts because of our reliance on federal jobs and federal contractors to provide employment. "Economic diversification" can be reworded simply to "growing the private sector tax base". My focus is on expanding manufacturing throughout Maryland, particularly in Western Maryland, Baltimore City and the Eastern Shore. Currently, MD has the highest Total Effective Tax Rate on new manufacturing firms in the nation and our equipment taxes are four times higher than the national average! To turn around our terrible manufacturing reputation, I will exempt all equipment from the state's definition of state property tax and cut the remaining state property tax rate for new manufacturing firms by 50%. We have chased away the

businesses with entry level and mid level jobs and with them any hope of sustained long term private sector growth.

TAXES:

1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

Our current personal income tax rates are absurdly high and hurt not only individuals but small businesses as well. Once elected Governor, I will sign an across the board 10% personal income tax cut which will be retroactive when citizens and small businesses file their 2014 returns. Eventually a flat tax should be imposed, but the rate will be subject to our economic climate and progress made on reforming the rest of the tax code.

2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated?

Our current corporate income tax rate is not competitive and must be lowered over the course of a few years. I am proposing a gradual reduction of the corporate income tax down to 5.75% by 2019.

3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

Currently, I am sponsoring legislation with the Speaker of the House to gradually reduce the estate tax over a few years and eventually recouple it with the federal estate tax putting us in line with most other states and removing the state portion of the estate tax. That bill is now currently passing and going to the senate as of this writing (3-14-14)

EDUCATION:

1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have

been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensated?

I am for letting teachers teach and not allowing the state or federal governments pressure them with mandates. My lieutenant governor running mate, Shelley Aloi, taught at the middle school, high school and university levels. I have taught high school level students. We are forming a commission for addressing the needs of teachers, including the need for planning time, stopping the revolving door of curriculum and providing incentives for good teachers to stay in MD.

2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you mitigate the conflict?

I believe there must be some outcome based measurements of student performances, but they should not constitute a significant portion of teacher evaluations.

3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans?

Making pre-k available to low-income students is a priority for me. My plan is for the lower-income students and is voluntary. I want to get them started on reading skills early on. I believe children ought to spend as much time at home with their families as possible at a young age. It is often detrimental for children to leave the home too young and there can socialization problems down the line if enough family development is not achieved. Obviously, not all families are afforded this luxury, and the state must be there to assist on a needs first basis.

MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE:

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

The MD Health Exchange has been a complete failure and has never

been more than a political tool the O'Malley/Brown administration has used when it benefits them. The Exchange to this day is not fully functional, Maryland has one of the three worst state exchange enrollment rates in the nation, and we have spent \$200 million in taxpayer's money thus far trying to make it work. It appears most of the contractors involved were either incompetent, massive political donors to the O'Malley administration or both. The people deserve an independent audit of every stage of the exchange's development and at very least the resignation of key people involved in its development. Due to a closed-door procurement process, many contractors with questionable track records in other states and with Maryland contracts were given multi-million deals with limited scrutiny.

ENVIRONMENT:

1.What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

First of all, the method and oversight we are offering will not result in what happened in Pennsylvania. I believe it is most important to note the people who stand to benefit the most from utilizing our natural gas resources are those who have been the most heavily impacted by the Great Recession. We have an opportunity to revitalize our struggling communities, employ tens of thousands of unemployed workers and help make America energy independent. The new technology for extracting natural gas is the most cutting-edge, environmentally safe method ever invented. My record shows a deep concern for finding solutions to cleaning the Chesapeake and maintaining Maryland's natural beauty, and I believe drilling for natural gas is an environmentally sound way to move forward in restoring Western Maryland.

2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

Off shore wind is too expensive. The United States Navy is proceeding with a wind plan I put forward at the north mouth of the Severn River. There is already a grid in place from the old radio

towers. The plan is that the Navy would lease the property to a private company to run it and it will help to supplement the grid. I also brought to the legislature the idea of Energy Net Metering and passed bills to use it for municipalities and non-profits. My bills were folded into our states energy net metering package and allow even poor areas to receive energy credits to put towards the development of renewable including the town of Crisfield on the lower Eastern Shore.

MARIJUANA :

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

I support the limited, controlled use of medical marijuana. I voted for the bill last year. We have some corrections to do to the bill this year, and I anticipate supporting the result. I am encouraged by promising research into treatment of seizures in children with marijuana that contains high amounts of cannabidiol and low amounts of THC providing medical relief without psychoactivity.

I do not believe the full legalization of marijuana is a wise course. I have a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology and am aware of the effects on the developing brain. I am concerned for the young and that their usage goes up. However, I am open to proposals that identify non-violent drug offenders and treat them with civil fines or diversion programs over strict legal methods.

Larry Hogan for Governor

Dear Gubernatorial Candidate and Campaign Staff:

As part of our coverage of the governor's race, Capital News Service is distributing a questionnaire to all Maryland candidates for governor, in order to construct a graphic and news article indicating individuals' stances on several top issues facing the state.

We request that all the candidates provide written responses to the following 12 questions, and return them to Annapolis bureau chief Jackie Incollingo at jincollingo@jmail.umd.edu by Monday, March 10, 2014.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Larry Hogan for Governor

Contact: Adam Dubitsky

MINIMUM WAGE:

CNS Question: What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

The minimum wage law will likely pass this year, increasing income for some Maryland employees but also forcing employers to let go of thousands of other entry level workers. The next governor will have to work very hard to attract new businesses to Maryland to make up for these job losses.

The minimum wage debate is a symptom of a much bigger problem in Maryland – a lack of economic growth. Maryland's stagnant wages are a result of very little economic growth for the past half a decade. Unemployment remains historically high for Maryland and young people have been some of the hardest hit by this disturbing trend.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

The first step in economic diversification is making sure our economic policies attract private sector companies to Maryland – and keep the ones already here, here. Too many times the O'Malley / Brown / Gansler administration has pursued policies that hurt the businesses that remain. When elected, on day one we are going to change the perception that Maryland is hostile to business. We will look at the policies in place that hurt our

economic diversity and find ways to attract new businesses. One area of particular focus will be the Port of Baltimore. Our port is just one of two that can accommodate post-panamax container ships. This places us at a competitive advantage over other east coast ports but is under-utilized.

TAXES:

1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

I support proposals to lower the personal income tax across all income levels.

2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated?

Maryland's corporate taxes need to be at a level that makes us regionally competitive with our neighbors and we must consider the overall costs of doing business in our state versus others. We don't necessarily need the lowest tax rates but we certainly can't afford the highest either.

3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

I applaud efforts to lower the current estate tax. The "death tax" hits family-owned farms and businesses particularly hard. Often those who inherit these businesses – that grew our economy, paid taxes and improved standards of living – are forced to sell them just to pay the estate tax.

EDUCATION:

1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensated?

The recent roll out of education reforms in Maryland has been a train wreck and teachers have been asked to shoulder much of this burden. Better planning, more local input from teachers and parents, and more time to prepare the curriculum would have relieved much of this workload on teachers.

I am concerned that all too often increases in education budgets go to administrators and bureaucracies rather than into the classroom.

2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you mitigate the conflict?

I err on the side of more local control of our education system. I believe that those who are in front of students every day understand best how to educate our children.

3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans?

I would oppose expanding pre-K just to qualify for federal dollars that disappear in a relatively short period of time and then mandate billions in additional state spending.

MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE:

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

Lt. Governor Anthony Brown's mismanagement of the development of the state health insurance exchange has been abysmal and recently we learned that the federal government will be investigating this terrible waste of a quarter of a billion dollars in taxpayer money. These funds could have been used to provide actual health services.

I have serious reservations about whether Maryland should maintain its own exchange. In fact, Virginia and 33 other states choose not to build their own exchange saving billions in the process.

As report after report continues to trickle out, it has become abundantly clear that there has been zero oversight of this program. In fact, the Lt. Governor's office indicated that the health exchange was an independent organization and that they couldn't compel them to release invoices. Had the Administration simply instructed citizens to use the now-working healthcare.gov site or private insurance company sites this problem would have been solved at almost no cost.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

States throughout the country have been developing their natural gas resources safely and efficiently for decades. I am concerned that there has been a knee-jerk reaction against any new energy production. Maryland is definitely behind the curve because this administration has decided to politicize the issue rather than take a balanced approach to ensuring we have access to clean and affordable energy sources to power our homes and businesses and grow our economy.

2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

Maryland's energy costs are significantly higher than neighboring states and even the District of Columbia. Growing our economy requires access to affordable sources of energy and protecting our natural resources and open spaces for future generations necessitates that this is done in environmentally responsible ways. I believe we need to set policies which enable all of Maryland's energy resources to be put to use. Wind power is very expensive and requires huge expanses of open spaces; proponents rarely mention the actual costs which include billions in state and federal subsidies. I do not support subsidizing energy companies with taxpayer dollars.

MARIJUANA:

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

I'm currently opposed to full legalization of marijuana but will keep an open mind on our state's laws. Destroying someone's chances of employment and exposing them to violent offenders because they possessed a small amount of marijuana seems unjust. We need to look closely at other states' experiences with decriminalization and legalization before changing existing laws.



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE -- QUESTIONNAIRE & ANSWERS 3.14.14

QUESTION: MINIMUM WAGE

What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

ANSWER:

We intend to focus on improving the overall quality of life by working to eliminate the 74 new taxes and fees that have literally reduced the middle class in Maryland and expanded the less fortunate. We want to make your dollar stronger rather than decrease its value.

I do not support raising the minimum wage at this time. Study after study, including that most recently from the Congressional Budget Office, conclude that 500,000 workers would lose their jobs if the federal minimum wage was increased to \$10.10, particularly when many small and larger businesses are operating on the margin. A similar change in Maryland's minimum wage from \$7.25 immediately to \$8.25, then \$9.00 in July 2014 and ultimately to \$10.00 by 2015 would doubtless have a corresponding negative effect. This is not the time to do this. I do not want to see those currently employed lose their jobs in this very tough job market.

Specifically, our Department of Business and Economic Development reports an overall unemployment rate hovering at 6.8%, but the unemployment rates are much higher in Baltimore City at 10.2%, the greater Baltimore region at 7.2%, the Eastern Shore at 8.7% with three counties over 10%, and in the three counties of Western Maryland at 8.3%. Moreover, these unemployment rates are not going to include those "underemployed" or who have left the active workforce, having given up.

Here are some excerpts from the CBO report: “The Effects of a Minimum-Wage Increase on Employment and Family Income” – February 18, 2014

“What Effects Would Those Options Have?”

“The \$10.10 option would have substantially larger effects on employment and income than the \$9.00 option would—because more workers would see their wages rise; the change in their wages would be greater; and, CBO expects, employment would be more responsive to a minimum-wage increase that was larger and was subsequently adjusted for inflation. The net effect of either option on the federal budget would probably be small.

“Effects of the \$10.10 Option on Employment and Income

“Once fully implemented in the second half of 2016, the \$10.10 option would reduce total employment by about 500,000 workers, or 0.3 percent, CBO projects (see the table below). As with any such estimates, however, the actual losses could be smaller or larger; in CBO’s assessment, there is about a two-thirds chance that the effect would be in the range between a very slight reduction in employment and a reduction in employment of 1.0 million workers.

Estimated Effects on Employment of an Increase in the Federal Minimum Wage, Second Half of 2016

Change in Employment	\$10.10 Option	\$9.00 Option
Central Estimate	-500,000 workers	-100,000 workers
Likely Range	Very slight decrease to -1.0 million workers	Very slight increase to -200,000 workers

“Many more low-wage workers would see an increase in their earnings. Of those workers who will earn up to \$10.10 under current law, most—about 16.5 million, according to CBO’s estimates—would have higher earnings during an average week in the second half of 2016 if the \$10.10 option was implemented. Some of the people earning slightly more than \$10.10 would also have higher earnings under that option, for reasons discussed below. Further, a few higher-wage workers would owe their jobs and increased earnings to the heightened demand for goods and services that would result from the minimum-wage increase.

“The increased earnings for low-wage workers resulting from the higher minimum wage would total \$31 billion, by CBO’s estimate. However, those earnings would not go only to low-income families, because many low-wage workers are not members of low-income families.

Just 19 percent of the \$31 billion would accrue to families with earnings below the poverty threshold, whereas 29 percent would accrue to families earning more than three times the poverty threshold, CBO estimates.

“Moreover, the increased earnings for some workers would be accompanied by reductions in real (inflation-adjusted) income for the people who became jobless because of the minimum-wage increase, for business owners, and for consumers facing higher prices. CBO examined family income overall and for various income groups, reaching the following conclusions (see the figure below):

- Once the increases and decreases in income for all workers are taken into account, overall real income would rise by \$2 billion.
- Real income would increase, on net, by \$5 billion for families whose income will be below the poverty threshold under current law, boosting their average family income by about 3 percent and moving about 900,000 people, on net, above the poverty threshold (out of the roughly 45 million people who are projected to be below that threshold under current law).
- Families whose income would have been between one and three times the poverty threshold would receive, on net, \$12 billion in additional real income. About \$2 billion, on net, would go to families whose income would have been between three and six times the poverty threshold.
- Real income would decrease, on net, by \$17 billion for families whose income would otherwise have been six times the poverty threshold or more, lowering their average family income by 0.4 percent.”

QUESTION: ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

ANSWER: Simply, we must make Maryland attractive to business – the job creators – and we must work to make our educational system responsive to the needs of the market place, particularly when it involves young people who do not intend to attend college and will immediately join the work force upon high school graduation.

We don’t want to see Maryland farmers, watermen, and small business owners continue to be penalized by an abusive regulatory system, and will streamline the executive branch to ensure that it is responsive, efficient, and fair.

We reject the policy of the current administration that picks winners and losers in the economy. We do not believe government should be “bribing” businesses to come to Maryland. Instead, we should create a tax and regulatory environment that is naturally attractive to businesses when they look at Maryland and compare us to neighboring states.

As for recruiting business and industries, our Administration will recruit broadly – from energy development and a broad range of manufacturing to IT, bio-sciences, and health care. Specifically, we would like to bring manufacturing back to Baltimore, so that this great industrial port city and its residents can prosper with new economic opportunity.

We would like to open Maryland's portion of the Marcellus shale to responsible, environmentally-sound commercial exploitation. Economic studies show this would create more than 3000 jobs in an economically hard-hit area of our state, while generating significant new revenues.

Specifically, to make Maryland once again economically attractive to job creators, we must:

- (1) Reduce the corporate income tax rate from 8.25% to 5.0%.
- (2) Repeal the "Rain Tax" – which makes us a laughing stock – and the added gasoline tax – both of which penalize and frustrate business, and therefore, job opportunities for Marylanders.
- (3) Fully review all specialized taxes to determine if they serve a meaningful purpose and are not frustrating business growth and job opportunity.
- (4) Fully review the regulations imposed upon business and identify those that are having an egregious impact on business and economic develop – and then either amend or terminate them.
- (5) Conduct a zero-base review of all departments and agencies to ensure their missions are relevant, needed, and duplicative. We have in Maryland 14 departments and over 50 independent agencies. Reform here with lessen the demand for government revenue. We need to stop picking the pockets of Marylanders to fund excessive government agencies and programs.

QUESTION TAXES

Question #1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

Answer: We must work together to PHASE-OUT over 5 years the state income tax on both individuals and small businesses taxed as individuals.

For Individual and Small Business (those taxed as individuals) Income Tax Reductions

2013		2013		2015			LOLLAR - TIMMERMAN TAX REFORM PLAN (Flat Tax Rates Applied to Taxable Net Income – No Marginal Rate)	
Taxpayers Filing as Single, Married Filing Separately, Dependent Tax- payers or Fiduciaries; Tax		Taxpayers Filing Joint Returns, Head of House- hold, or Qualifying Widows or Widowers		GOVERNOR’S PROPOSAL TO LEGISLATURE TIME FOR ACTION!				
<i>Taxable Net Income 2013</i>	<i>MD Tax 2013</i>	<i>Taxable Net Income 2013</i>	<i>MD Tax 2013</i>	<i>MD Tax 2015</i>	<i>MD Tax 2016</i>	<i>MD Tax 2017</i>	<i>MD Tax 2018</i>	<i>MD Tax 2019</i>
\$0 - \$1,000	2.00%	\$0 - \$1,000	2.00%	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$20 plus 3.00% of excess over \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$20 plus 3.00% of excess over \$1,000	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
\$2,000 - \$3,000	\$50 plus 4.00% of excess over \$2,000	\$2,000 - \$3,000	\$50 plus 4.00% of excess over \$2,000	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
\$3,000 - \$100,000	\$90 plus 4.75% of excess over \$3,000	\$3,000 - \$150,000	\$90 plus 4.75% of excess over \$3,000	3.00%	2.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%
\$100,000 - \$125,000	\$4,697.50 plus 5.00% of excess over \$100,000	\$150,000 - \$175,000	\$7,072.50 plus 5.00% of excess over \$150,000	4.00%	3.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%

\$125,000 - \$150,000	\$5,947.50 plus 5.25% of excess over \$125,000	\$175,000 - \$225,000	\$8,322.50 plus 5.25% of excess over \$175,000	4.00%	3.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%
\$150,000 - \$250,000	\$7,260.00 plus 5.5% of excess over \$150,000	\$225,000 - \$300,000	\$10,947.50 plus 5.5% of excess over \$225,000	4.00%	3.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%
Over \$250,000	\$12,760.00 plus 5.75% of excess of \$250,000	Over \$300,000	\$15,072.50 plus 5.75% of excess over \$300,000	4.00%	3.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%

We recognize that many counties and municipalities will seek to continue the so-called “piggy-back” income taxes imposed by counties and municipalities. We believe that as we phase out the state income tax, some counties and municipalities will see the benefit of phasing out these taxes, as well.

- County and Municipality Options preserved in implementing legislation
- State Comptroller provides for collection of County and Municipal taxes – 10% service charge to each County and Municipality imposing income taxes on individuals, including small businesses taxed as individuals.

As this phase-out begins, economic activity will increase – and continue to offset the decline in income tax revenues.

Specifically, we will see corresponding increases in:

- Sales tax revenues -- because Marylanders will again have more to save and spend as a result of:
 - (1) Income tax phase-out,
 - (2) Elimination of the “Rain Tax” and gas tax increases, and
 - (3) More jobs available due to the reduction in the corporate income tax rate.

- Property values – and the corresponding property tax revenues.
- Opening of new businesses and employment opportunities, again increasing economic activity by business and consumers – further growing sales tax and property tax revenues.
- Current business expansion, spawning further economic growth – and the attendant sales and property tax revenues.

At the same time, we will see reductions in the cost of our state government to Maryland taxpayers, as we move to achieve economies and efficiencies through:

- (1) Reorganization of an executive branch, which now hosts 20 departments;
- (2) Review of the missions, roles and organization of over 55 independent agencies;
- (3) Eliminating waste and duplication among these entities; and
- (4) A thorough review of department and agencies programs toward keeping those of genuine value and service to Marylanders and eliminating those that no longer serve a necessary role.

Question # 2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated?

ANSWER: We must move to similarly reduce the corporate income tax from 8.25% to 5% to make Maryland attractive to out-of-state businesses that would either move to, or locate operations in, Maryland. I would urge the legislature to immediately enact this reduction, phasing it in over 5 years. We will need to examine the credits and deductions available to corporations and evaluate them.

Question 3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

Answer: Both the estate and inheritance taxes – “death taxes – should be totally repealed. I see it as akin to “grave robbing” and government theft of property for which income taxes were previously paid by the decedents in the course of the development of these assets. These death taxes imperil family-owned businesses and farm and simply punish the survivors who receive inheritance which are the fruits of the descendants’ investments and hard work.

QUESTION EDUCATION

Question #1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensated?

Answer: Overall, I am committed to funding, in conjunction with our counties, the growth in excellence of our schools. Our youth deserve nothing less. We must make a genuine investment in our students in order to do our part – and with, of course, the participation of their parents in their studies at home – to prepare them for either continuing higher education or to join the work force.

Why not help high school students who are not college bound develop these kinds of marketable skills while attending high school and give them better a chance to succeed once they graduate? I would like to propose state-sponsored “vocational training” programs be made available in high schools by offering tax-incentives to businesses who partner with the state and provide qualified apprenticeships, internships, and mentoring programs for students about to transition into the working world. Upon graduation, these Maryland students can “hit the ground running” with real-world experience and competitive skills that will greatly increase their chances of finding better paying jobs and long-term careers.

I believe excellent teachers should be rewarded for their excellence – I support the development of a merit pay to reward them for their job performance and achievement in educating our youth. This means that those whose job performance is determined to be lacking or inadequate should not be awarded a merit pay increase.

Question #2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you mitigate the conflict?

Answer: I am very sympathetic to the teachers and believe they should reviewed primarily by their senior professionals. Teachers should not be penalized in their evaluation by poor students and parents who do not participate with their children in homework and obtaining tutorial and other assistance when needed.

Question #3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans?

Answer: While I cannot speak for what plans the other candidates’ have, I do believe early childhood, which includes Pre-K, education and socialization is critical, whether the child is home schooled or stimulated by the parents, or takes part in credentialed publicly funded

programs or private pre-schools. That said, it is clearly the parents' responsibility to determine how to address pre-K education and socialization for the child.

I understand the Lt. Governor proposes an optional comprehensive "early kindergarten" for 4-year-olds in the state' public school systems, which would apparently require further expansions of school facilities, staffing, as well as partnering with private resources. I think any such proposition requires a deeper examination and evaluation as to genuine need, value, and priority in our overall efforts to continually enhance and strengthen the K-12 education our children receive in the public schools.

QUESTION MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

Answer: The Affordable Care Act is fraught with problems. Already, more than 37 significant changes have been made in the implementation of it, at least 20 of which President Obama has made unilaterally. Moreover, the Congress has passed 15 "fix-it" amendments to the Act and the Supreme Court has had to affix an interpretation and meaning to two components.

Frankly, with the millions spent by the Governor and Lt. Governor to unsuccessfully implement the exchange, your question is very difficult to answer at this point. In 2015, if I am elected Governor by the people of Maryland, our administration will inherit what the Lt. Governor has erected – and we will have to see what we need to do then.

QUESTION ENVIRONMENT

Question #1. What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

Answer: Development of Maryland's Marcellus Shale natural gas reserves in Alleghany, and Garrett Counties will be a priority of my administration. I have read and listened to the debate on the safety of fracking, and, frankly, I think the environmental threats have been grossly exaggerated for political purposes by those who simply do not support development of our natural resources.

When the Governor O'Malley issued his 2011 Executive Order establishing the Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Advisory Commission, he essentially used the "study commission ploy" and glacial regulatory procedures to stall and delay development for years. Now, the price of natural gas plummeted and energy companies are withdrawing drilling permits and letting long-standing leases in Maryland lapse without renewing them.

As governor, I will support development of Maryland's Marcellus Shale National Gas Reserves. I believe it is in our national interest for every state to responsibly help America become energy independent and be less reliant of foreign sources of energy in the future. While West Virginia and Pennsylvania are fully engaged in extracting natural gas from these reserves, Governor O'Malley's delaying tactics have denied this same opportunity to citizens and businesses in Allegany and Garrett Counties as well as the additional economic expansion of supporting businesses and jobs throughout Maryland.

Question #2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

Answer: The economic viability of developing alternative energy sources needs to be proven for each – and that proof is in the economics of the market place. These alternative energy sources – and those who are investing in them for their own enrichment – need to compete in the market, and that means continuing to invest in improving the respective economics of each. I do not want – and it is not fair – to use the power of government to saddle Maryland taxpayers with additional costs to subsidize those who have made their own investments in developing these alternative energy mechanisms.

QUESTION MARIJUANA

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

Answer: Its popularity notwithstanding, marijuana is a gateway drug and it does affect those that use – some more than perhaps many others. I also understand that its widespread recreational use has reached “Prohibition proportion,” and I am concerned for those who choose to take the risks associated with it. For example, I am concerned that those parents who smoke it in their homes may well be adversely affecting their children by the primary or secondary smoke with its added hallucinogenic effect.

And beyond marijuana, I am greatly concerned about the use abuse of so many other drugs and the rise in heroin use. Rhetorically, when will our people stop using and abusing drugs and falling into addiction, crime, treatment, or prison – or all of the above. The Nation's drug control laws continue to fail, because our people – members of family, friends, neighbors, or generally in our community – buy it illegally and abuse them, ultimately to their own detriment and that of their families.

The answer is not simple any more. Nonetheless, I do not support legalization of marijuana, except for prescribed medical needs. I am sure, however, this debate will continue and as Governor, I will thoughtfully engage.

QUESTIONNAIRE – HEATHER MIZEUR FOR GOVERNOR

MINIMUM WAGE:

What is your stance on Maryland's minimum wage? Are you in favor of an increase? If so, how much of an increase would you like to see, and do you believe the rate should be indexed to the cost of inflation? If you are not in favor of a statewide increase, please explain why.

No one working 40 hours a week should live in poverty.

While I voted in favor of legislation this session to increase most minimum wage workers to \$10.10 per hour, it will still leave far too many in poverty. We leave tipped workers at a staggeringly low \$3.63 per hour. There are loopholes for seasonal workers, and no provision indexing the wage to address cost of living increases. This is a step in the right direction but not the relief middle and low-income families deserve. I have advocated a more comprehensive approach.

The conversation we need to be having is not about a minimum wage, but a living wage. I've put forth a plan where all non-tipped workers earn \$16.70 by the year 2022, and we index increases beyond that to inflation. We increase wages for tipped workers, too, pegging their wage to 70 percent of non-tipped workers.

Details are found at www.heathermizeur.com/jobs

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:

As military and other government budgets get cut, Maryland suffers economically. What are your plans for economic diversification? Please cite specific industries and measures you would pursue if elected governor.

Every part of my ten-point jobs plan is dedicated to growing our private sector economy. My progressive income tax reform and living wage plans mean middle class families will earn more and be taxed less—directly leading to more consumer spending. My \$197 million small business tax rebate plan means community businesses will be able to expand and bring on more workers. My job training expansion plan means that businesses that cannot find skilled workers will finally be able to fill jobs that are available now.

My comprehensive plan will also provide a boost to 21st Century industries: clean energy, biotech, and cyber security. By encouraging more growth in our already strong innovation economy, we can lead the nation into a new era where our communities are anchored in work that both improves our sustainability, health, and safety outcomes, and champions our private sector economy.

Details are found at www.heathermizeur.com/jobs

TAXES:

1. Where do you stand in debates surrounding the current personal income tax rates? If you think they should change, should they be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Or should a flat tax be imposed, and at what rate?

My tax proposal is comprehensive and revenue neutral. Ninety percent of Maryland families and seniors will benefit from over \$100 million in personal income tax cuts, paid for by making our tax code more progressive and asking the wealthiest in the state to pay a bit more.

We cannot stand by while the middle class disappears. We know that when we put more money in the hands of the middle class, it goes right back into the economy—families going to the movies or buying their children new shoes and school supplies. This is how we grow our economy—from the middle out.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/jobs

2. What are your thoughts on the current corporate income tax rate of 8.25 percent? If it should change, should it be raised or lowered, and by what percentage over what period of time? Are there specific tax loopholes that you would proposed be eliminated?

Lowering Maryland's corporate tax (already the second lowest in the region) does not increase our competitiveness – rather, it is a race to the bottom that would limit state revenue for critical investments in education, health care, public safety, and infrastructure. My administration would focus on improving the business climate by streamlining, updating, and eliminating confusion in our regulatory system.

When I'm governor, Maryland will enact combined reporting to ensure that big businesses currently benefiting from a tax avoidance scheme are required to pay their fair share. In doing so, we'll create almost \$200 million in revenue that we would dedicate to small business tax relief. We should be encouraging robust competition in our state—rather than looking the other way to allow multi-state corporations the ability to hide their revenue with accounting gimmicks.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/jobs

3. Should the current estate taxes remain the same, receive a higher or lower unified credit exemption, recouple with the federal version of the law, or be repealed altogether? If there should be a change in the exemption level, at what amount should it be set?

Make no mistake: the plan to roll back estate taxes is an election-year giveaway to millionaires, and an enormous loss of state revenue. The price tag on this plan, just over the first five years of implementation, would be \$432 million over 5 years – funding that will be cut from our schools, our roads, our hospitals to pay for this policy that benefit only 3% of our state’s population (note that spouses and family farms are already protected under our current law).

I voted against this legislation pending in the current General Assembly session and have called on Governor O’Malley to veto this plan. If he fails to stand with middle class families, then I will reverse this tax break for the wealthy when I become Maryland’s first truly progressive governor.

EDUCATION:

1. Across the state, many teachers complain that their salaries have been insufficient or even frozen, despite an increased workload from recent education reforms. How will your budget proposals as governor allow for teachers to be compensated?

I want to transform how we view educators in this state. If you look around the world, the countries with the best education systems and the best educational outcomes all have one thing in common: teaching is a respected profession. Few people in our lives will have a greater impact on our futures than those who educate us in our formative years.

As governor, I will reconvene a successful school-funding commission from 2002 with updated charges to recommend how we can make all of our schools the best in the nation. One of the central commission recommendations will be how we can improve the salaries of our educators.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/education

2. The Maryland State Department of Education and many of the local school boards disagree with the weight that student assessments should carry in teacher evaluations. How will you mitigate the conflict?

Without more local control, our education system will continue to force educators to teach to the test instead of using the methods they know work best to inspire our children in the classroom. I will work with the legislature to pass a four-year moratorium on the use of statewide test scores in educator evaluations.

In an effort to return more flexibility to our local school boards, I will work with the Maryland State Department of Education to allow counties with successful evaluation models to keep such policies in place. I also support a rigorous evaluation of the new

PARCC statewide test to see if it is the best course for our children. We need to make sure it adequately assesses problem solving, creativity, and innovation in a world dependent on such skills. We need to strive towards ending the high stakes testing culture in our state.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/education

3. How does your plan to improve pre-K differ from the other candidates' plans?

Voters are going to hear throughout this campaign that the three Democratic candidates for governor generally have the same plans for Maryland's pre-K expansion. But it could not be further from the truth.

One of my opponents claims that universal pre-K is too expensive, despite supporting expensive tax giveaways to millionaires and big corporations. The other has a plan to cover all four-year-olds, but only if Maryland families lose enough bets at casinos to generate the revenue needed for such an expansion.

My proposal covers a full day of pre-K for all four-year-olds, and three-year-olds from working and middle class families as it is implemented over four phases. I would put in place a special pre-K fund, with steady revenue from the legalization, regulation, and taxation of marijuana.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/education on the pre-k plan and at www.heathermizeur.com/marijuana on the legalization plan.

MARYLAND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE:

Given the technical difficulties and relatively low and slow enrollment in Maryland's health insurance exchange, what direction should Maryland take in the future under the Affordable Care Act? Should the state continue to maintain its own exchange? What sort of oversight is necessary to make the program more responsive to Marylanders' needs?

If I were the current governor, we would never have faced these problems. I understand that making progress requires more than passing legislation—reforms must be properly implemented as well. We must excel at the unglamorous side of governing. Under a Mizeur-Coates administration, Maryland will never see a mistake like this again.

Earlier this year, I released a set of practical options for fixing our exchange and worked with my colleagues in the General Assembly to put them into action. Since then, several of the recommendations have been adopted, including an oversight panel working to provide a full, transparent accounting of remaining problems, and a realistic timeframe for a fully operational program and properly functioning

technology. Armed with this information, after the first open enrollment period concludes at the end of March, we must decide whether we abandon the Maryland exchange in favor of the federal website, partner with other more successful states in a regional exchange, or stay the course to fix our troubled site.

Health care is a right, not a privilege. If we put politics aside and work together, we can still guarantee that right for every person in our state.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. What do you think is the best strategy for balancing the potential economic benefits of fracked natural gas and the environmental concerns associated with it in Maryland?

Other states—several of our neighbors—have fracked first and asked questions later to disastrous consequences: earthquakes, livestock kills from toxic chemicals in streams, and contaminated drinking water. Second chances are expensive. We have to get this one right the first time.

We need to let science, not the special interests, dictate our fracking future in Maryland. Under my leadership, we have followed a pragmatic course that requires independent, robust, scientific reviews of the impacts on the environment, public health, and local economies before we allow any drilling permits to be approved. The oil and gas industry must be held accountable to prove whether there are safe ways to extract natural gas. But unfortunately, these studies have been underfunded, behind schedule, and incomplete in their scope of review. We need a governor who will demand oversight and accountability on this issue.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/environment

2. What do you think is the best strategy for utilizing Maryland's energy resources, including alternative energy sources such as offshore wind power?

One of the primary components of my ten-point jobs plan is the critical investment in our clean energy economy. My plan includes: making Maryland a wind energy manufacturing hub, increasing the amount of renewable energy that Maryland must generate to 40% by 2025, incentivizing biomass energy, and creating a green building loan program. I will also expand Maryland's investments in wind and solar energy.

Unfortunately, our progress on shifting to a cleaner energy future is in jeopardy. The proposed natural gas export facility in Cove Point would be the state's largest lifetime greenhouse gas polluter ever, spewing 3.3 million tons of CO₂ annually, more than from all of our state's coal fired power plants combined. I am the only candidate in the governor's race to take a stand against this dangerous project—and I have also called

on Dominion, the company looking to build this facility, to make investments in our clean energy sectors instead.

Details can be found at www.heathermizeur.com/jobs and www.heathermizeur.com/covepoint

MARIJUANA :

What is your stance on the state's marijuana laws? Do you support decriminalization or legalization of the substance, or do you believe the current law should remain unchanged? Please explain why.

I am the only candidate for Governor that has proposed legalizing, taxing, and regulating marijuana. It will be a top priority in the 2015 legislative session for the Mizeur-Coates Administration.

While it will likely take an election and a mandate from voters to change old ways of thinking about this topic in Annapolis, we can make progress right now, in this session, by decriminalizing small quantities of marijuana. I have introduced bipartisan legislation with forty of my colleagues in the House of Delegates to make this important reform a reality this year.

But in order to make our communities safer, keep marijuana out of the hands of children, and generate much needed revenue, we must expose this underground industry to the light of day by legalizing, regulating, and taxing marijuana and my plan can be read at www.heathermizeur.com/marijuana