



MARYLAND COLLEGE REPUBLICANS

**Maryland Federation of College Republicans
Platform and Policy Guide**

2019

OVERVIEW

This document constitutes the Maryland Federation of College Republicans' platform for the 2019 calendar year. Within this document is a comprehensive list of policy stances endorsed by the Maryland Federation of College Republicans, the leading voice for college conservatives in the state of Maryland.

Today, millennials are the largest voting bloc in the United States, a voting bloc with unique and pressing priorities. However, millennial voters present a unique challenge for the GOP. By securing results through principled limited government prescriptions, we have an opportunity to secure the support of millennial voters today, and for the next fifty years.

Throughout this document, we elaborate on how our policy stances address the concerns of millennials across the state and provide examples of existing legislation in Maryland, and elsewhere, that can further our common goal of serving young voters with conservative solutions.

SPECIFICATIONS

In this document, we focus on seven major policy areas:

Free Expression, Education, the Environment, Criminal Justice, Tax Reform, Transportation, and the Economy.

Each section provides a clear and concise synopsis of the millennial perspective on the issue, key areas for reform, and key opportunities for action this legislative session.

Together, we have the opportunity to change Maryland for the better. Please join us in promoting action on those issues most important to conservative college students. With your help, we can ensure the continued strength of the Grand Old Party in the Old Line State.

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Free Expression

The Millennial Perspective

Free speech remains an essential right for a healthy democracy - and 92% of millennials agree.¹ The Maryland General Assembly (MGA) should move to protect free expression in the face of suppressed speech - by means of security fees, the heckler's veto, and bureaucratic headaches - on college campuses throughout the state. Protecting this most fundamental component of liberty, serves students from all across the political spectrum and contributes to the strong public discourse necessary to address the significant challenges that lie ahead.

Areas for Reform

In the realm of Free Expression, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- 1st Amendment Guidance for Public Institutions of Higher Education - Public institutions and students in Maryland would greatly benefit from a codified campus free speech policy shaped by the Maryland General Assembly to avoid biased, bureaucratic policymaking that is often inconsistently constructed and applied.
- Free Expression Training for Students at Orientation - Students in Maryland would greatly benefit from free expression training during campus orientations to promote a culture of open dialogue and debate - something fundamental to a intellectual educational experience.
- Security Fees Guidance for Public Institutions of Higher Education - Public institutions and students in Maryland would greatly benefit from codified security fees guidance that ensures no student or student group is responsible for paying security fees associated with the heckler's veto or other unreasonable security threats, especially those resulting from the presence of political speakers and elected officials.

¹<https://tfas.org/news/new-national-survey-vast-silent-majority-millennials-overwhelmingly-support-religious-social-freedoms>

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of Free Expression, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- North Carolina HB 527 (Restore/Preserve Campus Free Speech)² - The North Carolina state legislature recently acted to protect free speech at North Carolina public universities, a clear blueprint for action in Maryland. Other states, including Colorado, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia have passed similar legislation to protect and promote free expression on college campuses. State legislators in California, Illinois, Michigan, Texas, and Wisconsin are expected to vote on similar legislation this term.
- Tennessee HB 2063 (Tennessee Student Free Speech Protection Act)³ - Requires public universities to adopt policies consistent with the University of Chicago's statement on free expression, prohibits free speech zones on campus, sets a legal standard for student-on-student harassment, bars universities from revoking invitations from invited speakers and denying funds to student groups based on political views.
- Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) Speech Code Ratings⁴ - FIRE has awarded its coveted Green Light speech code rating to just one Maryland public institution - University of Maryland, College Park. To limit administrative abuse and arbitrary application of ambiguous policies, the MGA should pass legislation requiring Maryland public institutions to conduct an extensive review and realignment of campus speech codes to match FIRE's standards for Green Light institutions.

² <https://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2017/Bills/House/HTML/H527v3.html>

³ <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/109/Bill/HB2063.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.thefire.org/spotlight/using-the-spotlight-database/>

Education

The Millennial Perspective

Education, the great equalizer, has increasingly become a large financial burden and concern for millennials of all walks of life. Conservative reform, such as greater school choice and controlling the cost of attendance at public institutions, will garner wide support from millennials looking to start their professional life with minimal debt. Such policies will allow millennials greater opportunity to engage in the economy and promote sustainable long-term economic growth here in Maryland.

Areas for Reform

In the realm of Education, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- Controlling the Cost of Attendance - Maryland students would greatly benefit from not just capped tuition increases, but an altogether tuition freeze. A mirroring of these policies were put in place by Governor Walker in Wisconsin and have shown to improve retention rates of students at University of Wisconsin by making education a more financially stable investment. Students should not be subject to increased tuition year-over-year, instead paying one guaranteed rate for all four years of attendance and being protected from the creation of new fees, such as differential tuition, part-way through their academic career.
- Expanding School Choice - School choice empowers students to advance beyond circumstances they cannot control - this opportunity is essential for all Marylanders. We ask that you continue to support the BOOST Program, providing scholarships for eligible free or reduced lunch students to attend nonpublic schools. Also continued support for SB 172 and HB 156 which both provide funds to public charter schools for restoration, construction, improvement and maintenance. The MGA must take every step possible to provide the best possible education for all children.
- Tax Credits for College Expenses - Maryland students would greatly benefit from the opportunity to treat tuition as a tax-deductible professional expense. SB 88 and HB 41 are specific bills in which we seek your support as Governor Hogan has used them to provide a Student Debt Relief Tax Plan. In particular, those students that remain working in Maryland and contributing to the Maryland economy post-graduation would be ideal recipients of such a benefit.

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of Education, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- Maryland HB 890 (Tax-Free Periods - University and College Textbooks)⁵ - Introduced by Delegate Robert Long, this bill establishes a specific period of time each year where college textbooks can be purchased tax free by students with valid identification. This is an easy and essential step in limiting the excess cost of higher education in Maryland.
- Maryland SB 88 / HB 41 (Student Debt Relief Act of 2019)⁶ - Introduced by Governor Hogan, this bill allows a subtraction modification under the State income tax for the amount of interest paid by a qualified taxpayer on qualified student loans. This important first step towards allowing students to deduct higher education expenses would significantly benefit thousands of students statewide.
- Maryland SB 172 / HB 156 (Public Charter School Facility Fund)⁷ - Introduced by Governor Hogan in the 2019 session, and effective July 1, 2019 this bill Maryland's charter schools by making it easier to acquire, plan, develop, finance, construct, improve, repair, and maintain public charter school facilities. These funds will make Charter schools another viable option for students in Maryland.
- SB 167 / HB 152 on P-Tech Schools - These bills will repeal the limits on how many Pathways in Technology Early College High (P-TECH) Planning Grants that may be awarded to a local school system in each year. These bills will repeal legislation that limits the amount of P-Tech schools that can operate in Maryland.

⁵ <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2017RS/bills/hb/hb1337f.pdf>

⁶ <https://legiscan.com/MD/text/HB399/2017>

⁷ <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?id=sb0172&stab=01&pid=billpage&tab=subject3&ys=2019RS>

The Environment

The Millennial Perspective

Climate change and the destruction of our environment pose significant threats to the long-term wellbeing of Marylanders. Over 80% of millennials believe in the importance of being eco-friendly to improve their own life⁸, with about 70% even willing to pay more for eco-friendly products and services to ensure a green lifestyle⁹. When given the opportunity, millennials rise to the challenge. To combat pollution and environmental destruction, the Maryland Federation of College Republicans advocates for a free-market approach to environmental policy, offering consumers greater opportunity to live green. Furthermore, the Maryland Federation of College Republicans' partnership with the American Conservation Coalition¹⁰ demonstrates the growing support and demand for Republican leadership on this issue. In short, many millennials believe in a world where the government is not an arbiter of which practices will remedy environmental challenges, but rather where the government encourages and rewards those that remedy problems as participants in the free market.

Areas for Reform

In the realm of the Environment, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- Clean Energy - Incentivizing clean energy technologies and innovations is essential to not just protecting the environment, but also boosting the Maryland economy. The sector provides robust job opportunities for STEM students and professionals, serving as a common sense focus area for lowered regulation and increased incentives.
- Protecting State Parks - With no greater inheritance than the land we inhabit, there is a crucial need to protect existing state lands and to promote the use of them. By fostering a culture of outdoorsmanship, we foster a culture of stewardship, ensuring a healthier future for our lands and waters in Maryland.
- Chesapeake Bay - Funding for Chesapeake Bay recovery efforts has come under threat during the Trump administration; it is more necessary than ever to be proactive with this issue. The MGA must explore and enact new policies to limit pollutants in Maryland and leverage other preventative policies to limit further damage to this delicate ecosystem.

⁸ <http://www.gpi.org/sites/default/files/GPI-TheMillennials-11%206%2014-FINAL.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2015/green-generation-millennials-say-sustainability-is-a-shop-ping-priority.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.acc.eco/platform/>

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of the Environment, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- Free Market Environmentalism (FME)¹¹ - This approach focuses on property rights and free markets as a tool for fostering environmental stewardship and the resolution and prevention of environmental destruction. There are three key principles that constitute FME, as described by The Property and Environment Research Center (PERC), and which should be readily applied to all environmental issues before the MGA this session:
 - Markets, property rights, and the rule of law are fundamental to economic growth, and economic growth is fundamental to improving environmental quality. There is a strong correlation between treatment of the environment and standards of living.
 - Property rights make the environment an asset rather than a liability by giving owners an incentive for stewardship.
 - Markets and the process of exchange give people who have different ideas and values regarding natural resources a way to cooperate rather than fight. When cooperation supplants conflict, gains from trade emerge.
- Enviropreneurship¹² - The MGA should embrace, promote, and reward Enviropreneurship, the act of resolving environmental problems through the use of contracts, property rights, and free markets. Codifying programs and initiatives to incentivize and reward businesses oriented towards solving environmental problems will pay dividends for the Maryland economy and the health and wellbeing of generations of Marylanders to come.

¹¹ <https://www.perc.org/about-perc/free-market-environmentalism>

¹² <https://www.perc.org/programs/perc-enviropreneurs/enviropreneur-institute>

Criminal Justice

The Millennial Perspective

As members of the most progressive and inclusive generation in recorded history, millennials believe in the need for bipartisan criminal justice reform that transforms criminal offenders into active citizens. In particular, there is strong consensus that non-violent drug offenders, the primary victims of crimes of addiction, must be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society. Together, we have the opportunity to promote second chances - a truly American notion - while repairing communities and maintaining public safety. With continued supports from both parties, the bipartisan effort to transform the juvenile justice system in Maryland will also be crucial to the future of our state. Criminal justice reform can lead to a better future for all Marylanders.

Areas for Reform

In the realm of Criminal Justice, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- Prioritizing Rehabilitation and Reducing Rates of Recidivism - In the field of criminal justice, sentencing theories include retribution, rehabilitation, deterrence, and others. We urge the MGA to focus on policies to rehabilitate criminal offenders and assimilate them back into society. Root causes of criminal behavior cannot be erased by prison time alone; we must do more to discover and resolve these causes to reduce recidivism.
- Strengthening Criminal Deterrence - Violent crime and drug distribution remain pressing concerns in Maryland, especially as thousands require attention for life threatening addiction. Strengthening punishments for such crimes will deter criminal behavior and provide for better public safety.

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of Criminal Justice, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- Repeat Drunk Driving Offenders Act of 2019 - For anyone convicted of a drunk or drugged driving offense on three or more prior occasions can be subject to up to 10 years in prison, as well as anyone convicted of causing a death or a life-threatening injury on their second and/or subsequent offenses.
- Gun Crime Sentencing - This session legislation is being introduced to prohibit a person from using a “firearm” in the commission of a crime of violence, as defined in § 5-101 of the Public Safety Article, or any felony, whether the firearm is operable or inoperable at the time of the crime
- Parole for severe sentencing -This Administration bill increases the amount of time that an inmate who has been sentenced to life imprisonment, after being convicted of a crime committed on or after October 1, 2019, must serve before being eligible for parole consideration from 15 to 25 years. With support of this bill for the 2019 legislative session, we can ensure the safety of Marylanders from future criminal behaviors against them. ¹³

¹³<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?pid=billpage&tab=subject3&id=sb0874&stab=01&ys=2019RS>

Tax Reform

The Millennial Perspective

As college graduates consider buying houses, raising children, and paying off student loans, their ability to keep as much of their income as possible is more important than ever before. Millennials will avoid living in the high property and income tax states like Maryland if tax policy remains untouched. Maryland can appeal to and attract the ingenuity and expertise of Millennial college graduates by lowering taxes. A revamped tax system is a long-term guarantee that businesses and individuals alike will be attracted to Maryland, ensuring economic prosperity for years to come.

Areas for Reform

In the realm of Tax Reform, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- Corporate and Business Taxes - In the Tax Foundation's 2017 State Business Tax Climate Index, Maryland ranked 42nd in the country¹⁴ To attract new investment and jobs, Maryland must improve this abysmal ranking by revamping its corporate and business tax rates.
- Individual Taxes - With many Maryland graduates flocking to Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia, the MGA must work to revamp individual income tax rates to incentivize the best and brightest minds to live, work, and raise families in Maryland. A failure to do so, will lead to a continued loss of potential revenues and economic growth.

¹⁴ <https://taxfoundation.org/2017-state-business-tax-climate-index/>

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of Tax Reform, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- More Jobs for Marylanders Act Expansion - The original More Jobs for Marylanders Act, introduced by Governor Hogan in 2017 and passed by the MGA, has led to overwhelming success and interest in new business investment. Forthcoming legislation seeks to expand the program to new, economically depressed jurisdictions, allowing more locales and businesses to take advantage of the program's tax credits to boost growth. This is essential to creating new jobs in Maryland and a priority for the Maryland Federation of College Republicans.
- Hometown Heroes Act Expansion - The original Hometown Heroes Act, introduced by Governor Hogan in 2017 and passed by the MGA, will be considered for expansion this session. The expansion will now exempt all retirement income received by law enforcement, fire, rescue, emergency response, and correctional personnel completely tax free. This expansion rewards these community heroes and encourages their retirement in Maryland. We seek your support for the most recent house bill SB 0161 as it will increase the amount of a subtraction modification under the Maryland income tax for certain qualifying volunteer fire, rescue, and emergency medical services members.
- Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act - Governor Hogan has introduced legislation in response to passage of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that will cut income taxes for Marylanders affected by the capping of the state and local tax deduction. It is necessary to support this measure to ensure that Marylanders do not suffer from an increased tax burden or consider leaving Maryland for lower-tax states.
- Maryland Economic Development & Business Climate Commission - Tasked with providing recommendations for boosting economic growth, the Augustine Commission issued its final report in 2016, ultimately recommending a cut in Maryland's corporate tax rate to attract businesses and create new job opportunities. It is necessary for the MGA to continue to push for the adoption of these recommendations, despite progress being blocked in previous years. These reforms remain essential for the long-term growth of the Maryland economy.

Transportation

The Millennial Perspective

Millennials are leaving school and heading into the workforce, where they require a mode of transportation to get to and from their jobs. It is important to millennials now more than ever that public transportation is accessible, and affordable to major cities such as Annapolis, Baltimore, and D.C. It is also a priority that highway travel is convenient, accessible, and that the roads are in proper conditions for driving. This requires that when construction is taking place, that there be alternate routes, or clear lanes during the week, and specifically during work hours. Millennials thank Governor Hogan for the lowest toll taxes in years, and look forward to the continued support of the MGA as we navigate our way through our careers.

Areas for Reform

As previously mentioned, with a growing population, and specifically a growing population in the workforce as more students are graduating from Maryland Higher Education Institutions, it is important to keep up with their ongoing transportation needs.

In the realm of Transportation, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- Expansion of I-495 - Governor Hogan has worked to expand I-495 in an effort to lower commute times for those who travel on the capital beltway to get to work in Washington D.C.
- Continued work on I-270 - Governor Hogan proposed a \$9 billion project to widen the highways to add managed toll lanes through a public-private partnership. The concept is now part of a complex federal review that explores a variety of possible improvements before settling on a preferred alternative. The goal of this transportation improvement project of I-270 will turn HOV lanes into tolled lanes, and seeks to lower commute times while still being financially viable. This effort will be sustained for years to come, and will drastically change the ability of commuters to get in and out of the city where jobs are dense. This effort is critical for young, busy and fast pace professionals.
- Continued efforts for the D.C. Metro system - The MGA and Governor Hogan have come together to find a permanent solution for the ever needed change to the D.C. Metro system; the most used form of public transportation in D.C. Maryland Legislature has pledged \$150 Million a year to restoration, upkeep and operation of the metro so be it that Virginia and the District of Columbia pledge a matching amount. The MGA should

support Governor Hogan in his efforts to make public transportation accessible, safe and affordable for working people.

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of Transportation, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- Further Expansion of Roadways in the Baltimore Region - Baltimore is home to 611,648 people and provides jobs to 1,401, 700 individuals as of MArch 2018. By expanding road ways, we can allow for more and more people to play a role in the growing Baltimore region that provides so many job opportunities to young professionals. Governor Hogan has expressed interest in offering funds for roadways and has been able to keep toll fees sustainable for the people Maryland in the D.C. area, and we look for the same support north of our Capitol in Baltimore.
- Continued Work With Other State Legislatures to Provide Transportation Solutions in the D.C. Area - Governor Hogan's budget provides for safety for the D.C. Metro, and we as a federation hope this this level of safety protections will be continuously provided in D.C. as well as in the Baltimore region on 1-70 and I-95 as they are heavily used by commuters to travel to Baltimore, and have been found to be accident prone especially during commuting times and rush hour.
- Bay Bridge Safety Work - The Bay Bridge (US-50/US-301) connecting the rural eastern shore of Maryland to the urban Western region has been a crucial development to allow for development and expansion of the Maryland Economy, and is a major tool for transportation. We call on the MGA to continue to provide efforts to reduce accidents on the Bay Bridge, and make it the safest and fastest option for travel with a toll of only \$4.00. This movement toward lower tolls is crucial for people who are valuable players in our economy. With 25.5 million travelers crossing annually, it is important to focus our time and financial efforts on keeping the bridge safe and in working-order.

The Economy

The Millennial Perspective

As Millennials graduate from college and look for jobs in the current economic environment, there is opportunity everywhere. To ensure that the tens of thousands of annual college graduates remain in Maryland, the MGA must support economic policy that actively competes for these graduates. Millennials will continue to seek those job openings with the highest growth and wage potentials across a wide variety of industries. Maryland's cutting-edge cybersecurity sector remains a strong pull for new graduates, and a model for future economic growth throughout the state.

Areas for Reform

In the realm of the Economy, the following key areas require legislative attention:

- Tax Reform - As already noted, tax reform will remain a constant need to attract new businesses and jobs to Maryland. With such reforms, we can expect an influx of talent and capital as investment and the economy soar to new heights.
- Workforce Development - Workforce development and education remain paramount to the long-term growth and stability of the Maryland economy. During this age of acceleration, more and more displaced workers will require new job training to stay afloat. The MGA should strive to support programs that foster investment in human capital in all industries.
- STEM Investment and Development - With cybersecurity and life sciences serving as leading industries in Maryland, the MGA must support policies that continue to promote growth in these advanced fields and others. Investing in cutting-edge sectors will ensure the long-term stability of the Maryland economy in a quickly-evolving business world.
- Deregulation - It is necessary to continue removing unnecessary and duplicative regulations to increase the ease of creating and growing businesses in Maryland. By eliminating government overreach, businesses and the economy will flourish.

Opportunities for Action

In the realm of the Economy, the following examples represent opportunities for the MGA to take action this legislative session:

- STEM and Cybersecurity Tax Credits - Governor Hogan has expressed interest in offering new tax credit incentives to cybersecurity companies to increase investment in Maryland. This plan will create many new job opportunities for STEM graduates, and could pave the way for further incentives for STEM industries, a positive move for long-term investment and job creation.
- Apprenticeship and Job Training Programs - Governor Hogan's budget calls for an expansion of apprenticeship programs in Maryland to prepare young workers for jobs, as well as new internship stipend incentives for STEM employers. The MGA should embrace and bolster these programs to promote the further creation of high-value-add jobs in Maryland and the hiring of Maryland graduates.

Legislators,

The Maryland Federation of College Republicans wants to again thank our elected officials for their service and dedication to the GOP. Your service as legislators in Maryland does not go unnoticed and we thank you for your commitment to preserving conservative principles and working with us to give Millennials a voice in our state government. Your time spent working to make this great state even greater is appreciated by all, and we admire as students interested in politics, your ability to see beyond your primary duties to work with groups like ours who care so much about the people you represent and who want to see you succeed in office at passing life changing legislation.

Thank you again for your support,
Maryland Federation of College Republicans

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