



MCCC 2014 Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Marc Korman

Email: mkorman@gmail.com **Campaign Website:** www.marckorman.com

Office you are seeking: State Delegate **District:** 16

Years of residence in the district in which you are running: 11 (but I was born and raised a few blocks outside of the district)

Education Information

College, Post-graduate, Technical School or Certificate Program you completed and the degree(s) you attained.

University of Southern California-BA in History Johns Hopkins University-Masters in Government University of Maryland School of Law-JD, Magna Cum Laude/Order of the Coif

Employment Information

Current Occupation: Attorney **Current Employer:** Sidley Austin LLP

How long have you been employed here? Four years

If less than two years, please provide immediate previous employer:

Questions

In your opinion, what are the key issues facing the business community in the district/county/state you seek to represent?

I believe the key issue facing both business and residents is sustainable economic growth and prosperity. As a Democrat, I know that many of the things I believe in are easier to accomplish when families have a little more money at the end of the month and their child does not have to move back into the house after college or law school (if they can even afford those programs). I believe this is the key issue in District 16, the county, the state, and the country. I believe in our community there are multiple ways to support sustainable economic prosperity including maintaining our education "brand" and improving our transportation network, while also addressing some of the issues that make it difficult for businesses to thrive here.

What do you believe are the core responsibilities of the position you seek and what will you do to carry these out?

I believe a legislator has three major jobs: participate in lawmaking, constituent service, and provide oversight. These require continuous engagement, responsiveness, and a willingness to talk to people throughout the community on a regular basis to make certain the state is being responsive to the needs of its people.

Please explain your budget priorities and describe your approach to the role you will play in impacting the County/State budget.

Maryland has a \$39 billion budget and it funds many important priorities and programs. I believe education is the most important. It is the key to our economic success and important for our children. I also believe we must fund infrastructure improvements, which is important economically but also to our quality of life. Government also has a role in providing a social safety net for those in need. All that said, the budget must always be viewed with a critical eye as we both fund our needs, but also eliminate ineffective or redundant programs.

What improvements do you believe are needed to the transportation infrastructure in Montgomery County and Maryland? Please list them in your priority order.

A top issue I am talking to voters about is Metro. Metro is not easy as it is not just Maryland, but also our regional partners who have responsibility for it. But Maryland is a major player, providing approximately \$300 million a year in operating funding and appointing members to Metro's government board (WMATA). We must take a more active role as a state to ensure that Metro is succeeding because economic centers such as Friendship Heights, Bethesda, and, in the future, White Flint, rely on it. I also support new transit projects such as the Purple Line and Corridor Cities Transitway. Finally, I believe Highway User Revenue (the local share of the state gas tax) must be restored to pre-recession levels. This funding is crucial for filling potholes, paving roads, and smaller road projects such as turn lanes.

If elected, how do you plan to address the perception and reality of Montgomery County and Maryland having a less competitive business climate?

I think there are a number of things Montgomery County can do. First, there must be a change in attitude. People who start businesses in both Maryland and Virginia cite the different approaches in government's attitude towards the new business. In Virginia, forms are auto-filled out, the process is quick, and the needed stakeholders are at the table. The attitude in Maryland can be less welcoming. This can easily be fixed. Second, I believe in increasing the use of small business navigators to assist businesses that cannot hire lawyers and consultants in navigating the state's tax and regulatory structure. Frankly, many regulations are enacted for good reasons but can be difficult for smaller businesses to deal with. The County's current small business navigator is heavily focused on government contracts, but many businesses are not interested in that type of work. Third, I believe some industry-specific, targeted tax programs can be useful. I look forward to engaging with business owners if I am successful to discuss other ways to improve the business climate.

How do you define economic development?

Economic development is the action government and other stakeholders take to set the conditions to allow businesses and people to thrive and prosper. That can take many forms such as specific tax credits, enterprise zones, specific infrastructure investments, public/private partnerships and other activities.

What role should government play to help attract, grow and retain business?

Government has a necessary role in both setting the conditions to attract and maintain business and, when appropriate, reaching out more proactively for this purpose. I think economic development corporations and authorities, business improvement districts, and other innovative structures are a useful way for government to be involved in attracting, growing, and retaining business. In some circumstances, aggressive tax policies may also be used but the state must avoid becoming a pawn in a bidding war with other jurisdictions.

What current economic development initiatives do you support?

Because the definition of economic development is a broad one, there are a variety of initiatives I support. I am an active supporter of the Purple Line which will have a large, beneficial economic effect along its route and for the County as a whole. I also currently serve on the Board of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, which plays a role in making Bethesda an attractive place to do business. If elected, I would support targeted tax credits in key industries that allow Maryland to maximize existing resources such as biotech, cyber-security, and green technology.

What new economic development initiatives would you propose?

I believe increasing state attention to Metro and, ultimately, establishing a regional dedicated funding source (which is how most transit systems are funded) has a direct economic effect on many District 16 communities. That would be a top priority if elected. I would also like to see an increase in useful tax incentives for key industries. It is appalling that the biotech tax credit is \$12 million annually and the film tax credit is \$15 million. Moreover, cyber-security and green technology lag even further behind.

Please use this opportunity to provide any other information you would like MCCC members to know.

Thank you for the opportunity to fill out this questionnaire. Both the Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors and Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board have seats assigned to business members, an important voice in our County. It is great that residents, businesses, and non-profits are all at the table here.