

Science Debate Questionnaire – Federal

Healthcare and Covid-19 Response:

Affordable and accessible healthcare is a priority issue for many American voters in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has killed over 200,000 Americans and has affected everyone in the country in numerous ways. Minority communities have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19; African Americans are approximately three times as likely to contract the disease and twice as likely to die from it compared to the general population. Many Americans have lost their jobs due to COVID-19 restrictions and closings, and thousands have lost their health insurance. Although several vaccine candidates are currently in clinical trials, none are yet available for distribution to the public.

- 1. How do you think Congress should address the disparate effects of the pandemic in minority communities?**
- 2. Once an effective vaccine is approved by the FDA, how do you propose to distribute it and ensure that all Americans have access to the vaccine?**
- 3. How do you propose lowering the cost of prescription medications while continuing to promote medical innovation?**
4. COVID-19 has taken a toll on Americans' mental health. How will you approach mental health care in our country?
5. How can the United States better prepare itself for pandemics in the future?

Environmental Policy:

Securing a greener future is important to many Americans. Global climate change has led to an increase in the severity of storms and the number of destructive weather events. Maryland communities such as Ellicott City, the Eastern Shore, and Anne Arundel County have been economically devastated by repeated floods. Additionally, pollution in air and water are known to decrease life expectancy, especially in lower-income and minority communities like Baltimore City. Green infrastructure and sustainable development can provide solutions to many of these problems while also creating jobs and economic opportunities.

- 1. What role, if any, should the United States and the state of Maryland play when it comes to fighting climate change?**
- 2. How would you balance environmental protections with the need to provide sustainable economic growth in American communities?**
- 3. What plans will you support to improve and maintain water and air quality in our country?**
4. What green infrastructure initiatives, if any, do you plan to support while in office? Do you plan to upgrade and support public transportation systems in Maryland and the United States?
5. What are your plans to support and protect Maryland communities most vulnerable to flooding and storms?

Science Policy:

The United States is a world leader in scientific research and innovation. Students and highly skilled workers come to this country from all over the world for our science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, training, and jobs. The United States' exceptional research enterprise is largely due to many decades of generous funding by Congress for federal scientific agencies, such as the NIH and NSF. Over the past decade, budgets for those agencies have been steadily declining. By working together, scientists and law makers can enact policies to preserve our competitive advantage in research and innovation.

- 1. What policies will you support to ensure that the United States remains a leader in scientific discovery and innovation?**
- 2. What scientific fields, if any, do you intend to prioritize for federal research funding?**
- 3. What role do you think science and scientists should play in policy making?**
4. What is your position on current immigration policy for students and skilled workers coming to the United States for STEM training and jobs?
5. Helium is a critical element for many types of scientific research, including materials development and drug discovery. The Federal Helium Reserve is slated to be closed in September 2021. How do you propose to ensure continued access to liquid helium for scientific researchers in the United States?