

**JEWS UNITED**  
FOR **JUSTICE**  
CAMPAIGN FUND

2024 General Election

# Maryland Voting Guide





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# WHO WE ARE

The Jews United for Justice Campaign Fund is a grassroots community organization working in DC and Maryland to advance economic, racial, and social justice by educating and mobilizing our local Jewish communities to advance campaigns for real, immediate, and concrete improvements in people's lives. We work to build independent electoral power alongside partners, leaders, and communities of color — including the capacity to affect who wins elections — and insist that elected leaders advance an agenda for economic justice and racial equity in our region.

# JEWISH VALUES

The JUFJ Campaign Fund strives to be guided by the sacred values of Jewish tradition and by our people's history of seeking justice. These sustain us and provide us with ethical and spiritual direction. As a Jewish organization committed to social, economic, and racial justice for all people, elections call us not just to vote, but to vote our values.



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# ENDORSEMENT CRITERIA

In 2022, we updated our candidate endorsement criteria:

- The candidate's platform/incumbent's record is **closely aligned with our community's agenda** for social, racial, and economic justice.
- The candidate has a demonstrated commitment to **racial equity**.
- The candidate has demonstrated **integrity** as a core value.
- The candidate, their campaign, and our endorsement have the potential to change the public narrative and/or political landscape in ways that result in **concrete improvements in people's lives**.
- The endorsement of the candidate and the impact of their campaign have the potential to **build collective grassroots power**.

The Jews United for Justice Campaign Fund makes our endorsement choices **in dialogue with key partners**.

## OUR PROCESS

During our endorsement process, all candidates were sent a preliminary questionnaire about issues that matter to JUFJ Campaign Fund members and partners. Based on their answers, candidates were asked to interview with our endorsement team.

Candidates who did not return a questionnaire were not considered for an interview or an endorsement.

## ENDORSEMENT TEAM

We are grateful to all of our Board members, volunteers, endorsement team members, and staff who contributed to the endorsement process, giving generously of their time and insights, and to our partners who consulted with us throughout the process. You can view [our full board roster here](#).



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# BALTIMORE CITY ENDORSEMENTS



## **MAYOR: BRANDON SCOTT**

[brandonforbaltimore.com](http://brandonforbaltimore.com)

Brandon Scott's accomplishments as Mayor are not to be understated - of particular interest to us is his administration's significant role in reducing homicides by 20%, developing Baltimore's first-ever Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan with community based alternatives to policing, and a pilot and

expansion of a 9-1-1 Diversion Behavioral Health program, though this program still has much room for improvement.

That said, we and our partners in the Campaign for Justice Safety & Jobs were disappointed and frustrated with his lack of follow-through on commitments he made in the last election to increase community oversight of police, swiftly implement local control of the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD), and examine the BPD's budget to identify areas where spending could be reduced.



## **COMPTROLLER: BILL HENRY**

[billhenry.com](http://billhenry.com)

Comptroller Bill Henry has been a supporter of JUFJ Campaign Fund's campaigns for years, including vocally advocating for local control of the Baltimore City Police Department. Before being sworn in as Comptroller, Henry served as a City Councilperson for three terms. As Councilperson, he was responsible

for sponsoring the bill we helped pass to expand rental licensing and make housing safer for renters. His breadth of experience and his commitment to our values is a win for our city.





**CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT:  
ZEKE COHEN**  
[zekecohen.com](http://zekecohen.com)

Councilmember Cohen has been a longtime ally of our 501c3 sister organization JUFJ, championing many of their issues, particularly on renters rights, and also serving as a founding member of JUFJ's Baltimore Advisory Council (now called the

Leadership Council). He is strongly supported by labor groups and other JUFJCF partners.



**DISTRICT 1: MARK PARKER**  
[markparker.cc](http://markparker.cc)

Mark Parker is a Lutheran pastor who has been deeply involved in serving the Southeast Baltimore community. He is a big proponent for more affordable housing and supportive housing programs.



**DISTRICT 3: RYAN DORSEY**  
[electryandorsey.com](http://electryandorsey.com)

Councilmember Ryan Dorsey has a solid progressive record, supporting all of the JUFJ Campaign Fund's priorities. He has been a strong advocate for affordable housing, public transportation, and equitable development.





## **DISTRICT 6: SHARON GREEN MIDDLETON**

Vice President Middleton worked to create the Water Accountability and Equity Act. She also led the creation of the City's Security Deposit Assistance Program, providing financial assistance to secure housing. She is the longest serving municipal officer, and will bring her wealth of experience into discussions

in the council chambers and out in the community.



## **DISTRICT 7: JAMES TORRENCE** [jamestorrence.com](http://jamestorrence.com)

Councilmember James Torrence has been a progressive ally for the last four years, and is aligned with JUFJ Campaign Fund's values and policy issues including addressing the inflated police budget, supporting rent stabilization, and speaking out about the importance of regulating facial recognition technology (FRT).



## **DISTRICT 8: PARIS GRAY** [parisgrayd8.com](http://parisgrayd8.com)

Paris Gray is currently the Community Outreach Coordinator for our longtime ally, Councilmember Burnett. In addition to his deep knowledge of the needs of District 8, Gray has a deep understanding of how city agencies work and wants to ensure city agencies run smoothly and work for all Baltimoreans. He has

expressed strong support of our policy agenda, including rent stabilization and reallocating funding from the Baltimore Police Department into anti-violence and mentorship programs.





**DISTRICT 10: PHYLICIA PORTER**  
[porter4baltimore.com](https://porter4baltimore.com)

Councilmember Phylicia Porter has been a progressive ally for the last four years, aligned with the JUFJ Campaign Fund's values and policy issues. She is supportive of rent stabilization, and was one of the key supporters to uphold the veto of the Security Deposit Alternatives bill, which would have hurt renters.



**DISTRICT 11: ZAC BLANCHARD**  
[blanchardforbaltimore.com](https://blanchardforbaltimore.com)

Zac Blanchard is aligned with JUFJCF values. Blanchard is an advocate for equitable development, including levying a vacancy tax to reduce vacant housing. Additionally, he is passionate about investing in education and youth services like after-school programs and vocational training.



**DISTRICT 12: JERMAINE JONES**  
[jermaineajones.com](https://jermaineajones.com)

Jermaine Jones previously served as the president of Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO and is a longtime leader in the labor movement. A lifelong Baltimorean, Jones hopes to improve city and constituent services if elected. As a City Councilmember, he will be committed to addressing the root

causes of crime by investing in education and youth, and ensuring economic development within the community.





## **DISTRICT 14: ODETTE RAMOS**

[odetteramos.com](http://odetteramos.com)

In her first term as Councilperson, Odette Ramos has been a consistent, responsive ally to our 501c3 sister organization, JUFJ. Her focus and diligent work on housing, immigrant justice, water, and police accountability are fully aligned with our values. She has a deep commitment to equity in the city, and is incredibly passionate about ensuring the Latine community has access to City services and City government.

## **OTHER CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS**

The JUFJ Campaign Fund has not endorsed candidates for Districts 2, 4, 5, 9, or 13 in Baltimore City.



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# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

It's time to vote your values to ensure Montgomery County has a school system that cherishes and includes all students, no matter their identity.

There are three Board of Education races on your ballot and you can vote in all three of them, no matter where you live.

The JUFJ Campaign Fund has not issued our own endorsements this cycle, but [Montgomery County Educators Association \(MCEA\)](#) and [SEIU Local 500](#), our union partners who represent educators and other staff who work in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), have made endorsements.

## DISTRICT 2

- Natalie Zimmerman is endorsed by both MCEA's Apple Ballot and SEIU Local 500's Bus Ballot.
- In contrast, we are alarmed by her opponent, Brenda Diaz. Ms. Diaz has made statements in the press, in questionnaires, and in forums that show she does not support all students regardless of their race, sexual orientation, or gender identity. She is anti-union, an outspoken opponent of vaccines, and supported by a coalition of right wing groups. Overall, Ms. Diaz is not aligned with the values we pride ourselves on in Montgomery County.

In the other two races, the unions that represent MCPS employees are split on the candidates they are supporting. Where we have direct experience with a candidate from our issue work, we are including that information on the next page.



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## AT LARGE

- Lynne Harris (incumbent), Endorsed by SEIU Local 500's Bus Ballot. During her first term on the Board of Education, Ms. Harris worked closely with our sister organization, Jews United for Justice (JUFJ), and our partners to promote holistic student safety, including expanding mental health supports and improving the restorative justice program.
- Rita Montoya, Endorsed by MCEA's Apple Ballot. We have not previously worked with Ms. Montoya.

## DISTRICT 4

- Shebra Evans (incumbent), Endorsed by SEIU Local 500's Bus Ballot. Ms. Evans has supported including LGBTQ+ people in the storybooks read in elementary schools, as part of a curriculum that emphasizes diversity and acceptance. She has also consistently voted for budget allocations particularly to increase mental health supports for students.
- Laura Stewart, Endorsed by MCEA's Apple Ballot. Ms. Stewart has been a JUFJ ally on a number of issues, such as defeating harmful ballot questions in 2020 and organizing with the Montgomery County Council of PTAs to reduce harm by changing the role of police in schools in 2021. She also has been a leading advocate supporting the inclusive storybooks policy.

For additional information, including links to candidate websites, questionnaires, and recordings of forums, please visit <https://www.jufjcampaignfund.org/montgomery/>.

**REMEMBER YOU CAN VOTE IN ALL THREE BOARD OF EDUCATION RACES REGARDLESS OF WHAT DISTRICT YOU LIVE IN.**



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# BALLOT MEASURES ENDORSEMENTS

In addition to Jews United for Justice Campaign Fund, our sister organization Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) works on local ballot initiatives races. JUFJ advances economic, racial, and social justice in Maryland and DC by organizing and mobilizing our local Jewish communities to action. Together with coalition partners, JUFJ supports ballot measures and legislation that protect democracy and make real improvements in people's lives.

## PROCESS

JUFJ's positions on the ballot measures are based on the following criteria:

- **Closely oriented with our community's agenda** for social, racial, and economic justice.
- Will advance policies and structures that will protect democracy and make **concrete improvements in people's lives**.
- Have the potential to **build collective grassroots power**.

These decisions were made by the JUFJ local Leadership Councils and State Core Team, with input from JUFJ's staff and partners.

There are other important issues on the ballot in 2024. JUFJ chose to provide official positions on ballot measures where JUFJ has active campaigns or where JUFJ has signed onto the campaign.

## JUFJ'S WORK

To learn more about Jews United for Justice's work, visit [jufj.org](https://jufj.org)



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# MARYLAND

## VOTE **FOR** Question 1: Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Freedom

Question 1 would amend Maryland's constitution to ensure that everyone has the fundamental right to reproductive freedom, including the right to abortion access and birth control.

# BALTIMORE CITY

## VOTE **FOR** Question E

Question E would establish the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD) as an agency of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore. This is the last and final measure that would restore local control of the BPD, ensuring that the Baltimore City Council now has full legislative oversight over the police.

## VOTE **AGAINST** Question H

Question H would limit the political power of Baltimore City residents by shrinking the Baltimore City Council from 14 to 8 districts -- making City Council less diverse and more dependent on wealthy donors and business interests.

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY

## VOTE **AGAINST** Question A

Question A would impose additional term limits for the Montgomery County Executive, reducing the maximum from three terms to only two. This would limit the power of voters to elect the leaders they choose and put more power in the hands of special interests.



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# 2024 GENERAL ELECTION DATES

- October 24 - October 31: Early voting from 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM
- October 29: Deadline to request a mail-in ballot by mail or fax \*
- November 1: Deadline to request a ballot online by 5:00 PM
- November 5: General election from 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM

\* Any registered voter may vote by mail-in ballot for any reason.  
[Click here for more information about mail-in voting.](#)

## EARLY VOTING

You may vote at any Early Voting location in your county. [Click here for a full list of Early Voting locations.](#)



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**THINK JEWISHLY.**  
**VOTE** **LOCALLY.**

[jufjcampaignfund.org](http://jufjcampaignfund.org)