

Responses from Ashanti Martinez

Ashanti Martinez is running for the Democratic endorsement for Maryland state delegate district 22.

Question: Do you support dedicated, bondable funding for Metro totaling at least \$500 million a year including at least \$167 million from Maryland? How would you achieve this and what funds would you use? Do you require other steps (governance, labor, etc.) before you can support it?

Response: Absolutely. The Metro is in dire need of a consistent and reliable revenue stream. Congressman John Delaney of MD-06 is proposing massive infrastructure projects to be funded by the sale of private bonds. This type of funding should be considered at the state level before we move to raise fares or parking rates. We must improve the governance standards to ensure that these funds are appropriately allocated and utilized, but without a dedicated funding stream, none of that matters.

Question: Do you support Governor Hogan's proposed expansion of I-495, I-270, and/or the BW Parkway? Why or why not? With limited public funding, would you prioritize that, transit expansion like MARC, BRT, the Corridor Cities Transitway, Southern Maryland Rapid Transit, or other projects?

Response: The problem with these proposals is a question of funding. The governor estimates these projects at under \$10bn, while some experts are predicting this price tag will be closer to \$30bn. These lanes would have to be tolled to offset costs, and as history has shown, may do little to actually relieve traffic congestion. Providing safe and efficient alternative transportation methods, like the expansion of MARC, are much better investments.

Question: Do you think the State Highway Administration appropriately balances walking, bicycling, car, and transit needs or does it favor fast car movement to the exclusion of other needs? Would you support changes to SHA oversight and policies to make streets safer for walking and biking even if it slows down car traffic?

Response: As our communities continue to grow SHA must prioritize investments in bike lanes, bus lanes, and sidewalks. Providing our communities more methods of transportation beyond traditional fast car movement. Safety is a top priority and I would support changes in SHA oversight to make our streets safer even if that means slowing down car traffic for an intermediate amount of time while a solution is being developed. Too many of our communities aren't designed for biking and keeping pedestrians safe. SHA must change this.

Question: Should the state take steps to ensure that existing and newly transit-rich areas (such as the areas surrounding the coming Purple Line) accommodate increased demand to live there, remain affordable to residents of all incomes, and enable existing residents and businesses to enjoy the benefits? What policies would you support?

Response: Ensuring that our community remains affordable is a priority. District 22 is home to six Purple Line stops and affordability to both residents and business is a

growing concern. Currently Prince George's County is the only jurisdiction in the D.C. area without a housing trust fund. I'm in support of developing a housing trust fund. The trust fund would allow for a dedicated pool of funding to preserve and build more affordable housing across the county. Creating at the state level, a similar stream of dedicated funding for our businesses along the Purple Line route during construction is needed. This fund would allow them to keep their doors open long enough to reap the benefits expected from the light rail.

Question: Our region shares many things: a transit system, a housing market, even a football team. Would you like to see Maryland, Virginia, and DC collaborate to avoid a race to the bottom? How does your approach shape your views on regional projects like Metro, Amazon's HQ2 bid, and a possible new NFL stadium?

Response: Having a regional mindset benefits our communities. We have to encourage collaboration wherever possible. In the day and age of technology, our region is evermore connected across cultures, ethnicities and communities. Large scale developments drive the opportunity for further growth, but making sure our citizens' interests are at the forefront of any new project is priority. I'm in support of regional pacts similar to the one proposed by Maryland State Del. David Moon to keep taxpayer money from financing Redskins' Stadium.