



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498 | www.CaribbeanPac.org

Caribbean-American Political Action Committee (C-PAC) Montgomery County - 2022 Candidate Questionnaire

Please upload the completed form here: <https://www.caribbeanpac.org/news-candidate-responses.php> and submit it by 11:59 PM (EST) on Friday, June 13, 2022. Responses will be shared with C-PAC's membership.

Office Sought: County Council District 6

Candidate's Name: Maricé Morales

Current Occupation: Attorney

Party: Democrat

Campaign contact information (Address, Phone, Fax, Email, Website):

**Friends of Maricé I. Morales, 110 N Washington St., Suite 208, Rockville, MD 20850
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maricemorales.com

1. What have you done, or will you do to ensure the interests of the Caribbean community in Montgomery County are being adequately addressed?

The interests of the Caribbean community in Montgomery County, like every community in our county, deserve to be addressed in a timely and thorough manner. As the spouse of a Martinican, it is of the utmost importance to me that we listen to needs of our Caribbean community. Throughout my career as a legislator and attorney, I have a track record of listening to our community members and being accessible. For example, throughout the pandemic, I have been a resource of information for working families through a number of media outlets in Spanish and French: including Telemundo, Univision, Montgomery County Media Television, Prince George's Cable Television, Radio America, and Montgomery County Council Spanish Language Radio. I have appeared in the media informing communities of their work rights regarding sick leave and pandemic precautions, and I have also provided pro-bono legal advice as well. In my law office, I speak three languages fluently, including French, and it has always been my goal to meet people where they are at, in their language, to address their concerns. I would be committed to taking these same actions- meeting face-to-face, in non-traditional settings- to address the interests of the Caribbean community if elected.

2. The Caribbean- American Advisory Group (CAAG) was established by former County Executive Isaiah Leggett and continued by the current County Executive Marc Elrich,



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if you are elected will you support continuity of CAAG in its current form as an autonomous group?

Yes. I think supporting different groups' autonomy allows the County to value different perspectives and come up with better solutions.

3. Will you proactively encourage and facilitate members of the Caribbean community of Montgomery County to be appointed to County Boards? Please explain what mechanism your office would establish to give effect to this policy.

Yes, I would facilitate this. I think it's important that County Boards are diverse and represent the people actually living in our communities. I would give effect to this policy by supporting a racial equity and social justice approach to the way in which we appoint people to County Boards to make sure that diverse groups, including members of the Caribbean community, have representation.

4. Please explain what policies you would espouse and implement to make Montgomery County **a safe haven** for undocumented Caribbean immigrants.

As an immigration and criminal defense attorney, I have worked on this issue and continue to do so on a daily basis. As a delegate, we championed multiple efforts to secure protections for undocumented immigrants, including a bill that prohibited people from committing acts of extortion by threatening to disclose another person's immigration status. I was also the primary sponsor for the Community Trust Act in 2017, which would have halted programs in which local jails screen arrestees for immigration violations, and I was a primary co-sponsor of the Prohibition of Release of MVA Registry to Federal Law Enforcement, a bill that shields access to MVA data without a warrant or subpoena. I also fought to eliminate 287g programs in Maryland, along with progressive coalitions led by CASA, to make sure state and local agencies are not acting as immigration enforcement.

In this same way, I would be committed to supporting any policies or measures that provide similar protections for undocumented immigrants in Caribbean community, if elected to the Council.

5. Will you support continuity of Montgomery County as welcoming Caribbean immigrants and settlement of the Region's refugees?

Yes

6. Will you support availability of books by Caribbean authors and about the Caribbean in libraries and in the schools?



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Yes— books written by a diverse range of authors, with diverse experiences, enrich our children’s education, and I would fully support this.

7. It is difficult to balance crime prevention and community safety with trust and improved relations with local law enforcement. How will you work to strike this balance?

I think this is a nuanced issue, so I would work to balance crime prevention and improve trust with local law enforcement by focusing on community policing and anti-racism training, while also ensuring that we are still focused on crime prevention. For example, I am committed to reducing police involvement in traffic stops or minor vehicular infractions, as this often leads to disproportionately negative effects for people of color, but when it comes to drunk driving or dangerous speeding, I would support law enforcement having a role. By doing this, we can prioritize crime prevention but also improve relations between the community and police officers. Also, to ensure that the police the County does have are being held to the highest standards possible, I would support any measures that focus on police accountability, equitable policing, and anti-racism education for law enforcement. In fact, during my time as a delegate, I sat on a police accountability task force, and I am committed to staying informed and supporting research-based measures that will improve equity and nonbias in law enforcement. Additionally, we can also improve trust of law enforcement and community-police relations by implementing community policing. This means incentivizing people from the county to become police officers in the county, as opposed to commuting from somewhere else, so that the people policing our county share our diverse values and understand our community’s needs. We can use current budget structures to encourage community policing programs to create a pipeline + reward officers based on measurable community building breakthroughs.