



# 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) 2026 Candidate Questionnaire

Please return the completed form via email to [cpac.dmv@gmail.com](mailto:cpac.dmv@gmail.com) by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2026. Responses will be shared with C-PAC's membership.

**Office Sought: County Executive**

**Candidate's Name: Esther Wells**

**Current Occupation: Senior Tax Manager, CPA**

**Party: Republican**

**Campaign contact information (Address, Phone, Fax, Email, Website): P.O. Box 2882, Montgomery Village, MD, 20886. Phone: 240-751-2582. E-mail: [VoteforEsther@gmail.com](mailto:VoteforEsther@gmail.com),**

**Website: [VoteforEsther.com](http://VoteforEsther.com)**

\*\*\*\*\*

1. If elected, how would you proactively and consistently engage with Caribbean-American constituents, groups, local leaders, and organizations in your constituency?
  - a. As a Caribbean-American, I will **utilize the existing Caribbean American Advisory Group (CAAG)** to ensure it provides actionable feedback on the needs and concerns of Caribbean Americans living or working in the county.
  - b. **Regional Collaboration:** I will regularly host Community town halls, advisory meetings specifically targeted at Caribbean-American residents to seek input on critical issues like the county's operating budget, Student achievement and outcomes, public safety, economic development, Homeownership, entrepreneurship, Health & Human Services, civic engagement and voter participation.
  - c. **Dedicated Community Liaisons:** The Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) will continue to employ a dedicated Caribbean Community Liaison to serve as a bridge between the government and Caribbean-American residents.
  
2. How would your office address barriers Caribbean immigrants face when accessing public services such as healthcare, safe, affordable housing, education or social programs that disproportionately affect them?
  - a. We must move beyond the current one-time "supplemental appropriation" model and focus on reducing the cost of living and



## [The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee](#)

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

fostering a business-friendly environment to create high-paying jobs and long-term financial stability for Caribbean-Americans.

- b. **Housing Affordability:** Reverse the 4.7% property tax rate hike, reverse the 6.3% property tax hike and the 3% income tax hike proposed FY2027 Operating Budget, and reduce the annual property assessment increases by 50% of cap, aligning the county with surrounding jurisdictions.
  - c. **Housing Stability:** Instead of just increasing rental assistance, I will help Caribbean Americans build generational wealth and lasting stability through pathways to homeownership. I will streamline the permitting process for new construction, which will increase the supply of homes, naturally lower costs and provide more entry-level opportunities for first-time buyers.
  - d. **Service Streamlining:** My office will conduct a comprehensive audit of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to eliminate procedural failures and ensure resources reach eligible residents without bureaucratic delay. I will provide workforce development, upskilling for residents and financial counseling as requirements for receiving social services.
  - e. **Education:** Like my Caribbean-American family, I will prioritize high academic standards and upward mobility to ensure that tax dollars directly improve the graduation rates, literacy rates, proficiency rates and college readiness of Caribbean students, rather than funding central office positions in MCPS. I will ensure that the record-high MCPS budget is actually reaching the schools in diverse areas (like Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Gaithersburg) where many Caribbean immigrants reside, ensuring our children aren't left in under-resourced facilities.
3. How do you ensure culturally responsive services for Caribbean-American residents across agencies (e.g., health, education, law enforcement, etc.)?
- a. I will maintain the African American Health Program (AAHP) as the primary vehicle for reaching residents of African and Caribbean descent while ensuring every taxpayer dollar is tied to measurable health outcomes.
  - b. **Professional Standards:** Rather than creating new administrative layers, I will mandate that all county agencies, from DHHS to MCPD, integrate existing translation services more effectively into



## [The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee](#)

*1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498 | [www.CaribbeanPac.org](http://www.CaribbeanPac.org)*

their daily operations. Also, I will focus on health literacy, ensuring residents understand how to manage their own care.

- c. **Fiscal Responsibility:** I will audit existing health programs for waste, mismanagement and outcomes to ensure that funds intended for community clinics actually reach patients in high-density Caribbean neighborhoods.
  - d. **Vocational Training:** I will expand vocational and technical programs to provide immediate pathways to economic independence for Caribbean immigrant youth, bypassing the debt associated with traditional four-year degrees.
  - e. **Community Policing:** I will establish direct communication links through bicultural liaisons to ensure culturally responsive policing where police are visible, accessible, and protective of the neighborhoods they serve.
  - f. **Independent Inspector General:** I will ensure the office of inspector general monitors all county departments, including health and education, to ensure that culturally responsive initiatives aren't just empty labels but are delivering measurable results for Caribbean-American residents.
  - g. **Ombudsman Programs:** I will create a county ombudsman to provide Caribbean-American residents with a direct, non-partisan channel to report issues with agency services or police conduct, ensuring the government remains accountable to residents.
4. What initiatives will you lead and/or support that benefit Caribbean-American small business owners and workers, particularly in industries where they are heavily represented?
- a. **Economic Drivers:** My administration will work with the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) to launch a "Strategic Growth Initiative" that provides Caribbean-American entrepreneurs with better access to private capital by strengthening the SBA's Microloan and Community Advantage Programs, rather than relying on government-managed grants.
  - b. **Regulatory Reform:** I will work to eliminate redundant permits and fees that disproportionately hurt small, minority-owned startups in industries like construction, retail, and food service.



## The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498 | [www.CaribbeanPac.org](http://www.CaribbeanPac.org)

- c. **Occupational Licensing Reform:** I will lead the initiative to streamline our reciprocity-base occupational licenses, which would benefit Caribbean immigrants with professional backgrounds, allowing them to enter the workforce faster in skilled trades or healthcare without costly re-certification.
      - d. I will reform the Minority, Female and Disabled-Owned (MFD) Business Program to focus on results rather than just certification.
5. What support would you provide for Caribbean-American students and parents, including language assistance and help navigating the school system?
  - a. **Focus on Core Competencies:** I will advocate for a return to rigorous instruction in math, science, and literacy. Culturally responsive education should mean ensuring every student masters the skills needed for high-paying careers, rather than social experimentation.
  - b. **School Choice:** I will lead an initiative to provide vouchers or education savings accounts. This allows Caribbean-American parents to move their children out of underperforming neighborhood schools and into private schools that better align with their cultural and educational values.
  - c. **Parental Empowerment:** I will expand the Newcomers Initiative with a focus on helping Caribbean-American parents navigate the school system and advocating for vocational-technical training as a viable path for students.
  - d. **Simplified Portals:** I will work with MCPS leaders to implement a more user-friendly, multilingual digital "Parent Portal" to help families track grades, attendance, and graduation requirements without needing to navigate a complex physical bureaucracy.
  - e. With the MCPS budget now exceeding \$3.7 billion, I will demand greater accountability for how these funds support immigrant families.
6. How would you advance partnerships with Caribbean-American community organizations to promote mental health, chronic disease prevention, or other wellness initiatives?
  - a. **Empowering Faith-Based and Community Organizations:** I will ensure culturally responsive care, delivered best by those already



## The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498 | [www.CaribbeanPac.org](http://www.CaribbeanPac.org)

trusted within the community. Instead of creating new government-run clinics, I will increase the role of faith-based organizations and community-led nonprofits. These groups are often the first point of contact for Caribbean-American residents facing mental health challenges or chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

- b. **Outcome-Based Partnerships:** Contracts with community organizations will be tied to measurable health outcomes (e.g., lower rates of uncontrolled hypertension or increased mental health service utilization) rather than just the number of people reached.
  - c. **Health Literacy and Prevention:** I will form partnerships to focus on health literacy programs that teach nutrition, exercise, and preventative care tailored to the Caribbean diet and lifestyle.
  - d. **Private-Public Screenings:** I will encourage partnerships with local pharmacies and private clinics to host mobile screening events in neighborhoods with high Caribbean populations, making chronic disease detection accessible without expanding the public health bureaucracy.
  - e. **Community-Led MHPSS:** I will support Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) initiatives that respect Caribbean cultural values, such as the importance of extended family networks in the healing process.
7. How will you build trust and conduct robust oversight on local, law enforcement to protect the rights, security, and safety of Caribbean-American residents?
- a. I will prioritize full funding for the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) to address staffing shortages while supporting the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) model.
  - b. **Bicultural Recruitment:** I will support aggressive recruitment within the Caribbean-American community to ensure the police force reflects the demographics of the neighborhoods they serve, reducing cultural and language barriers.
  - c. **Effective Oversight:** I will work with the Public Safety Committee to ensure oversight is transparent and focuses on building trust



## [The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee](#)

*1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498 | [www.CaribbeanPac.org](http://www.CaribbeanPac.org)*

through neighborhood engagement and crime reduction, not just administrative review.

- d. **Public Access to Data:** I will support initiatives that make crime statistics and officer conduct data publicly available online. This allows the community to hold the department accountable through measurable results rather than political rhetoric
8. What programs, funding opportunities, or policy efforts will you champion that are aimed at improving outcomes for Caribbean-American communities?
- a. **Stable Property Taxes:** I will prioritize stabilizing property taxes and oppose further income tax increases to prevent Caribbean-American homeowners from being "priced out" of their homes as property values rise, thereby protecting generational wealth.
  - b. **Public Safety as Economic Infrastructure:** I will advocate for fully funding the police and School Resource Officers (SROs) to create safe commercial hubs. This policy ensures that Caribbean-owned businesses can thrive in a secure environment, protecting both customers and owners from theft, carjacking, vandalism.
  - c. I will champion the use of Opportunity Zones to revitalize Caribbean-American business corridors like those in East County and Silver Spring.