

350 Action 2019 Candidate Questionnaire

McKayla Wilkes

12/06/2019

About You

Your Name: McKayla Wilkes (MD-05)

What office are you running for, and as which party?: *Democrat running for Congress in the primary for MD-05*

Policy Positions

Do you support a Green New Deal that ends fossil fuels and provides an immediate and just transition to 100% renewable energy? Explain what that means to you. *

Yes

How will you center racial, economic and social justice in your climate policies?

It is essential that those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change — racial minorities, the poor, indigenous communities, the disabled — are intimately involved in the development and implementation of the Green New Deal. Fossil fuel burning power plants are overwhelmingly placed in poor, indigenous and/or communities of color. I support mobilizing on a national scale to ensure that, in the next ten years, 100 percent of domestic electricity demand will be supplied by clean, renewable and zero-emission sources. Moreover, I will fight to ensure the replacement of existing fossil fuel plants, like the coal plants in my home of Charles County, MD, employs residents from those communities through a federal jobs guarantee. This mobilization will center guaranteeing access to clean air, clean water, and other natural resources for those most impacted by weakened environmental regulations.

Do you support a moratorium on all new fossil fuel infrastructure, including pipelines, fracked gas and oil, compressor stations and coal power plants? Please tell us with specifics what you'd do, if elected to stop the expansion of the fossil fuel industry and keep fossil fuels in the ground? *

Yes. I support nationalization and rapid decommission of the fossil fuel industry, using eminent domain to reclaim all land lost to the fossil fuel industry, and I will refocus the economic benefits that giant oil and coal companies currently enjoy towards green energy producers, namely solar and wind.

Do you support investigation of the fossil fuel industry's role in causing climate change, blocking climate action, and misleading the public? If so, do you have plans for a process to hold the industry financially accountable for that role and related harms? * (For more context: InsideClimate News has done detailed investigative reporting showing that Exxon and other companies understood the risks of climate change 50+ years ago and suppressed the research instead of taking action. Investigations into Exxon have launched in New York, Massachusetts, and more.)

Yes. In addition to nationalizing the fossil fuel industry, I support a Congressional investigation into the personal liability of executives who were/are complicit in attempts to deceive the world and propagate climate change denial. It is not hyperbolic to suspect these executives committed crimes against humanity and should be tried as such.

Running a Progressive Campaign Do you pledge to reject any contributions from the fossil fuel industry, as defined by the "No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge"? * More information about the No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge: <http://nofossilfuelmoney.org/>

Yes

Do you support plans to create an immigration policy that allows a path to citizenship for undocumented people? *

Yes.

What are your specific plans on addressing the refugees and other migrants at the US borders? *

The Trump administration's immigration enforcement policies have rightly been derided as cruel and inhumane. But callousness toward immigrants has been a matter of bipartisan consensus long before 2017. That consensus must end. I fully support abolishing ICE, securing a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States, a path to citizenship for holders of Temporary Protected Status, legislation to expand acceptable justifications for seeking asylum to include gang and domestic violence and increasing funding for legal services for undocumented individuals and individuals seeking asylum in the United States.

How do you see climate change impacting mass migrations and what are your plans to address the increase in refugees as a result of the climate crisis. For background on climate impacts on human migrations: <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/climate-change-and-disasters.html>

My campaign has developed a specific plan to address the impact of climate related mass migration known as The Teeming Shore Promise. The Teeming Shore Promise stems from the understanding that we have a dual obligation to respond proactively to this looming crisis. Climate efforts must include helping coastal areas in the United States prepare and respond to rising sea levels and intensified natural disasters. Additionally, there will be people around the globe whose homes, communities, and nations are destroyed by climate change. We must expand the legal definition of refugee to include those who have been displaced by climate change, and create a program to admit them. Finally, we must provide

countries in the Global South with the climate aid necessary to help prevent and prepare for the catastrophes that will create climate refugees in the first place.

How do we do this? Centering Coastal Resiliency as a key provision of the Green New Deal through proactive investment to fight both the causes and effects of climate change on coastal communities, expanding the legal definition of "refugee" to include those displaced by climate change, creating a program to accept climate refugees with no cap on the number admitted, and ensuring that the Global North is meeting its commitment to provide \$100b in annual climate aid to countries in the Global South to fight both the causes and effects of climate change.

What are your plans for criminal justice reform? Our criminal justice system must be one of rehabilitation, not punishment. It must stop going after people of color for low-level drug offenses and make it easier for low-income individuals to defend themselves. Mass incarceration and the "War on Drugs" has been a failure; it's time for a new era in American criminal justice. I plan on enacting change by ending the federal prohibition on marijuana, expunging the records of people convicted of federal marijuana crimes, investing in treatment programs for individuals struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues, prohibiting government contracts with private prison companies, abolishing the federal death penalty, ending the use of cash bail and ending the exploitation of prison work and modern-day slavery by expanding federal minimum wage laws to those who are incarcerated.

Do you support a worker's right to unionize?

Yes

Do you support a \$15/hour minimum wage?

Yes

How do you plan to address the resurgence of white supremacy in the public discourse? Please tell us your plan to respond to white nationalist terrorist acts in this country?

Our country was built on white supremacy, and runs deep in the bowels of our institutions. If we have any hope of addressing the resurgence of white supremacy in public discourse, we must first revolutionize the age old systems of wealth and hierarchy which use hateful discourse to pit the working class against each other to preserve their power. We can achieve this by:

Returning the economic systems to the people, not the wealthy elite, through progressive taxes, increased wages, building worker power, guaranteed housing, Medicare for All, and The Green New Deal.

Meaningfully addressing our legacy of slavery through reparations for the descendants of slaves. This starts with H.R. 40, Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act.

Strengthening voting rights in our community, especially through support of H.R. 1, For the People Act.

Ensuring that African-American cultural traditions, such as certain hairstyles, are embraced rather than policed in schools and the workplace, as seen in the California Senate CROWN (Create a Respectful and Open Workplace for Natural Hair) Act.

Finally, we must address the increase in violent white nationalism. This will not be easy. It is well documented that our current justice system is rife with white nationalistic beliefs, both systemically and individually. We can not trust our current FBI or local police departments to investigate hate crimes or violent extremism. I support creating a federal agency dedicated to investigating and preventing white extremist violence. This agency may use the resources of the justice department, but must include deep vetting, and be allowed to operate outside of the executive branch, while remaining accountable to both the House, Senate and an independent civilian review board.

What is your plan to reduce gun violence and mass shootings? A majority of conversation and coverage of gun violence surrounds highly publicized mass shootings, which only constitutes a small proportion--less than 1 percent--of all gun deaths in the United States. While it is important to address mass shootings, our policies must also address the many other types of gun violence that we face. Those in office are quick to send their thoughts and prayers, but slow to take any real action, and the American people deserve better.

I support implementing comprehensive universal background checks including medical history for gun purchases, establishing licensing regulations that require training for safe use and storage, a credible/reasonable justification for ownership, and a minimum age requirement of 21, passing a federal Extreme Risk Protection Order, establishing a federal trust that will grant funding for any evidence-based gun violence prevention and intervention programs based on public health models such as Cure Violence (grants will be awarded to any organization who meets a set of standards), establishing a two week waiting period for the purchase of all firearms, prohibiting of access to firearms to anyone with a history of interpersonal violence, including actual and threatened violence, ending the creation, marketing and sale of guns that enable the killing of a large number of people and improving how records of gun owners are kept.

Do you support the payment of reparations and/or related structural adjustment to remunerate the descendants of enslaved African Americans to addressing America's history of codified and systemic racism? For more background on reparations:

<https://sites.duke.edu/lit90sresearchprojectlauramarty/introduction/> Yes. In addition to H.R. 40, Medicare for All, and The Green New Deal and criminal justice reform (which all include structural adjustments) I support combating the school-to-prison pipeline by targeting increases in funding for public schooling toward underserved communities — particularly in counseling and mental health resources in order to address the disproportionate rate of suspension and expulsion for Black students. Additionally, I support spending \$2 billion to reduce tuition and fees at private institutions that educate historically marginalized groups. HBCUs and Minority Serving Institutions have long been pillars of our

communities. HBCUs and MSIs whose student bodies are at least 35 percent low-income would be eligible for this funding.

Do you support the return of unceded lands and territory or related royalties to Indigenous Populations as a form of redress for America's history of codified and systemic racism?

Yes

Do you support Medicare for All?

Yes