

[Responses from Neil Parrott to MCMC Candidate Questionnaire for 2024 Congressional District 6 Primary Election]

1. Policy and Budget Priorities:

What are the top five policy and budget priorities you will pursue if elected to represent District 6?

Stopping Inflation and reducing the cost of living, closing the border, ending illegal immigration and the Biden administration's open border policies, and stopping America's violent crime wave are my top priorities. Beyond that, reducing waste, unnecessary spending, and getting America's crippling debt problem under control is important to me. As a traffic engineer, I'm particularly passionate about improving north/south roadways, and widening 81, 270 and US-219. Doing this will improve transportation of goods to and through the area, and will bring more investment and business to western Maryland. This will be one of my biggest priorities for the district.

Our open border is our biggest national crisis. The number of illegal aliens entering our country since Biden took office exceeds the entire Maryland population. The uncontrolled border results in fentanyl deaths, the spread of human trafficking, increased violent crime, and unsustainable ongoing social program costs.

I will work to pass legislation resuming the Remain in Mexico program, completing the border wall, and changing asylum standards which are used for abuse and fraud. I will work with others to increase ICE's ability to locate, detain, and remove illegal aliens, as well as to heavily fine companies that employ illegal aliens.

Recent polls showed crime to be one of voters' main issues in Montgomery County and in Maryland as a whole. Congress can block radical pro-crime legislation that keeps repeat offenders on the streets, prevents police from doing their jobs, and discourages new hires.

We also must prioritize lowering the cost of living, which has increased \$11,434 annually for an average family since Biden took office. We can only do this by reducing outrageous government spending and unleashing American energy. A booming economy and low inflation will bring jobs, new businesses, and young families to our district.

2. Understanding of Muslim Community Issues:

Can you provide specific actions or initiatives that demonstrate your understanding of the issues important to the Muslim community in District 6?

In 2022 when I was running for Congress, I had the opportunity to attend, speak, and listen to concerns at Friday Prayers in three different mosques on three different Fridays. You can be assured that I will work to promote traditional values that both Christians and Muslims adhere to. Sending our children to the public school should not mean that they will be indoctrinated by values that are contradictory to our faith and to moral decency.

3. Combatting Anti-Muslim Hate:

What specific measures do you propose to combat anti-Muslim hate, and to end ethnic and

religious profiling in our society and institutions?

Unfortunately, our country is undergoing a period of anti-religious hatred. Anti-Christian hatred, antisemitism, and anti-Muslim hatred have no place in America. Sadly, the Biden administration is complicit in this, along with left wing organizations throughout the country who seek to implement a radical, secular, morally relativistic worldview in our schools and legal system. In their fanatical pursuit of a radical social agenda shared by only a loud and angry minority of Americans, they want to upend not only American education, but also the ability of parents to opt out of instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs. Religious freedom is under attack. Muslims who believe that men cannot be women, and who believe that parents should have the final authority on what their children are taught in school are under threat from an administration that believes those views are unacceptable.

The anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish and anti-Christian sentiments we see in America are due in large part to intersectional leftism and is a direct byproduct of the decline of America's commitment to equal treatment. Critical Race Theory teaches that everyone is either oppressor or oppressed, that collective punishment is justified, and treating people equally is not justice.

To defeat anti-religious hate we must crush CRT, dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion bureaucracies in schools and corporations, and block leftist social policies that betray the important American principle of equal treatment for everyone regardless of background.

4. Immigration and Refugee Resettlement:

What reforms do you support to address the country's current immigration needs and challenges; how would you approach the refugee resettlement process in the United States?

Existing immigration laws need to be enforced. Sanctuary cities need to be defunded. The border wall needs to be constructed and completed, along with electronic surveillance. We need to pass legislation resuming the Remain in Mexico program and changing asylum standards, which are too often used for abuse and fraud. We must increase ICE's ability to locate, detain, and remove illegal aliens, as well as to heavily fine companies that employ illegal aliens. Congress ought to close the *Flores* unaccompanied minors loophole, and give immigration judges summary judgment and contempt powers, so they can reduce their overwhelming caseloads.

Until we have a secure border and reform our asylum and immigration parole laws, we cannot entertain legislation that expands asylum rights. Since the Refugee Act of 1980, the U.S. has admitted about 3.1 million refugees. In just the first two years of the Biden administration, more than 2 million illegal aliens have been released into the US on the pretense that they are all asylum-seekers. Another 1.5 million entered as "got-aways," some with significant criminal records, others smuggling fentanyl. Biden has allowed more illegal aliens to enter the U.S. in his two years in office than we've welcomed actual refugees in 42 years. The Biden administration has expanded the scope of "refugee" so far beyond its original meaning that it is effectively a blank check for anyone from anyone to illegally immigrate here for any reason. This absurd situation hurts every American citizen. We need a complete overhaul of our rules on asylum, refugee resettlement, and immigration parole, ideally after we've secured the border and reduced illegal immigration to a fraction of what it is now.

5. U.S. policy towards Israel-Palestine Conflict:

What is your stance on U.S. policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict

- 1. Do you support an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza?*
- 2. Do you support conditioning/halting U.S. aid to Israel due to Israel's war crimes in Gaza?*
- 3. How can the U.S. help achieve the creation of an independent Palestinian state in the next two years?*

1. The US should let foreign countries fight their own wars as they see fit. Civilian deaths in the conflict are a tragedy and I pray for peace in that war.

2. No aid to a foreign country should be unconditional, but now is not the time to halt aid to Israel. Israel remains the only democracy in the middle east, and one of our most important allies and partners.

3. I believe in a non-interventionist foreign policy whenever possible. I believe in foreign policy realism, and I believe that President Trump made some of the most serious progress towards peace in the region in a generation with the Abraham Accords. The Biden administration projecting weakness worldwide and talking out both sides of its mouth on middle east issues, sending mixed signals to Saudi Arabia and Iran, has undone some of that important progress. Steady leadership, foreign policy realism, and a commitment to peace, not ideology, in the region from our next administration can bring peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The establishment of an independent state in the next two years seems unlikely, but after Israel defeats Hamas, and a new administration is inaugurated, anything is possible. I hope and pray for peace among Muslims, Jews and Christians in the middle east.

6. Foreign Policy and Human Rights Promotion:

How would you promote a foreign policy that promotes freedom and human rights, particularly in regions where violations are prevalent?

I believe in a fully funded military and Ronald Reagan's doctrine of "peace through strength." It is important that we maintain the most powerful military in the world. Projecting weakness on the world stage, as President Biden did during our disastrous Afghanistan withdrawal and continues to do with our open border calamity, emboldens our enemies like China, Iran and Russia and makes our allies weaker. When we are weak, we enable human rights violators like China to act with impunity.

There is no doubt the biggest violator of human rights on the world stage is China. By holding China accountable for its currency manipulation, fentanyl production, intellectual property theft, rampant spying, cyber terrorism and espionage, we are more easily able to hold them accountable on the world stage for their human rights violations against the freedom-seeking people of Hong Kong and the Muslim Uyghurs. Going soft on China in one realm of foreign policy encourages us to go soft on China's abuses in all realms.

Promoting a policy of freedom and human rights starts with the example we set at home. Currently, we're not doing a great job with that. Right now, the Biden administration is working on undoing protections for women in Title IX, and overhauling federal civil rights law by executive order, to put men in women's sports (where the consequences are sad) and correctional facilities (where the consequences can be fatal). The Biden administration is issuing executive orders to reinstate rules that discourage freedom of speech on college campuses. It is

issuing executive orders that will curtail parental rights in schools, especially around “gender transitions” for children. The Biden administration’s open border policies are a human rights catastrophe, enabling Mexican cartels’ worst criminal behavior – human trafficking, often including children traveling alone, and drug smuggling. Our “catch and release” policy, and our asylum and parole systems are a laughingstock that have created a humanitarian disaster on our southern border. The absence of meaningful border security, along with nonexistent enforcement in the interior of the US, has made our border a breeding ground for sex trafficking, organ trafficking and forced labor. Closing our border and reforming the way we deal with illegal immigration will be my number one priority in Congress. We need to clean up our own human rights act we can once again be an example for the world.

7. Promotion of Positive Muslim Contributions:

In what ways do you intend to promote and highlight the wealth of positive contributions made by Muslims in the United States?

The first foreign leader to recognize the United States was a Muslim, Mohammed Ben Abdallah, sultanate of Morocco, who maintained correspondence with George Washington throughout this lifetime. Thomas Jefferson hosted a dinner at the White House for Sidi Soliman Mellimelli, a representative from Tunisia. Jefferson specifically wrote admiringly of Islam in his writings on religious freedom in Virginia. John Adams and Benjamin Franklin wrote in support of religious freedom specifically for Muslims. Muslims fought in the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Though small in number in a largely Christian country, Muslims have been a part of the American story from the beginning.

I’m an engineer, so in addition to promoting the little known story of Muslims in early America, I’m happy to highlight the great contributions of some of our most prominent Muslim-American engineers: Asad Adibi, an electrical engineer who helped develop the technology we use in our cell phones, and Fazlur Rahman Khan, the “father of tubular design” and “greatest structural engineer of the 20th century” who designed the Sears Tower, once the tallest building in the world, and the John Hancock center, both in Chicago.

8. Housing Crisis:

How do you propose to address the housing crisis and lack of affordable housing across the country, to include District 6?

Housing is too expensive across the country, burdening renters and homebuyers. We need more housing supply, more freedom, and more opportunity. The housing crisis is inflationary — too much demand chasing too little supply. “Affordable housing” is often just another word for inefficient and ineffective government subsidies, market interventions, and regulations. We need the reduction of barriers to allow abundant housing production.

In Congress I will work to incentivize the building of more housing nationwide. More supply will lower costs. More government spending will not. Getting inflation under control by reducing government spending and ending illegal immigration will ease pressure on the housing market. The federal government should stop subsidizing localities’ bad housing policy. Federal dollars going toward housing vouchers, tax credits or capital investment must be conditioned on localities building more housing. Deregulating housing will lower housing costs for families much more than incentivizing more subsidized housing.

In addition, the United States needs to balance the budget. By borrowing and spending significantly more than we have, the government is devaluing the US dollar and causing prices on everything to increase. This has had a significant effect on housing and rental costs.

9. Gun Violence:

Tens of thousands of Americans die each year by firearms, while mass shooting events are becoming all too common. What policies would you pursue to reduce gun violence?

Legislation empowering police and prosecutors to put violent criminals behind bars is a solution. Restricting law-abiding citizens' constitutional rights to own firearms is not. More investment in proven mental-health infrastructure would help curtail our violence epidemic. Congress can seek better enforcement of existing gun laws, especially those that combat straw purchases and black-market guns. Tough on crime, anti-gang violence initiatives at the local level have proven remarkably effective at reducing gun deaths. They fell out of favor as Democrat leaders called for defunding the police. Congress should incentivize their return.

10. Unique Qualifications:

What unique qualifications do you possess that distinguish you from the other candidates in this race?

I served for 12 years in the Maryland House of Delegates and was the Republican nominee for Congress in Maryland's sixth district. I fought against Maryland's undemocratic, gerrymandered congressional maps, and won, making the sixth district more representative for the people. I listen to people and love helping my constituents. I was born in Bethesda, grew up in Maryland, became an Eagle Scout, a professional engineer, an MBA, and a small-business owner. I'm a husband and father of three and I like working for practical, common-sense solutions to big problems.

The House Freedom Caucus just endorsed me, because I have a proven record of conservative accomplishments, not just talk. In the Maryland house, I fought against illegal immigration, gerrymandered maps, and dangerous soft on crime policies, and for lower taxes, smaller government and more personal freedom.

In addition, the Family Research Council has endorsed me. They indicated that the, "FRC Action PAC is confident that Neil will be a dedicated advocate for life, freedom, and strong family values. He is the leader that Maryland needs, and we are pleased to offer our endorsement of his candidacy for Congress."¹

Winning this race will take experience. I came close to beating David Trone in 2022, even while being outspent 10 to 1 against the richest member of Congress. His campaign smeared me, lied about my record, and attacked my family. I weathered those storms and fought back. I know I have what it takes to beat whoever the Democrats put forward in the fall.

¹ <https://frcactionpac.org/get.cfm?i=PR24D02&f=>

