

Section 1: Candidate Information

• Full Name (Required)	Michelle García
• District running for (Required)	1

Section 2: Questionnaire

How will you ensure that Prince George's County government leads by example in hiring, retaining, and promoting employees with disabilities, and what accountability measures will you implement?	Disability rights are civil rights, and Prince George's County government should lead by example. I believe we should move beyond a simple compliance model and embrace a culture of inclusion. County government should be the gold standard for accessibility, ensuring that individuals with disabilities are not only hired, but also supported and provided opportunities to grow and lead. I would advocate for initiatives such as creating non competitive hiring pathways for qualified individuals with significant disabilities, establishing a county wide accommodation fund so that the cost of accommodations never becomes a silent barrier in hiring decisions, and creating formal mentorship and leadership development programs that help employees with disabilities advance into senior management and director level positions. Accountability is equally important. I would support requiring county workspaces, both physical and digital, to undergo regular accessibility audits, including County Council operations and public facing systems. I would also advocate for tracking and publicly reporting anonymized data on hiring, retention, promotion, and workplace accessibility outcomes. Transparency and measurable outcomes are essential to ensuring inclusion is not just a policy goal but a sustained commitment.
What comprehensive employment initiatives will you champion to create meaningful career opportunities for county residents with disabilities?	Creating meaningful employment opportunities for residents with disabilities requires both targeted investment and accountability. We first need a comprehensive assessment of workforce needs across county government, small businesses, major employers, and emerging national employment trends. Identifying gaps will help ensure training opportunities align with real workforce demands. Based on those findings, I would advocate for robust job training, apprenticeship, and vocational programs specifically designed to support vulnerable communities, including individuals with disabilities. These programs should connect residents to high demand and high growth industries while creating pathways to long term careers rather than short term jobs. Strengthening these workforce pipelines will also make Prince George's County more competitive in attracting new businesses and investment. I also strongly believe in accountability and transparency. I would work with community partners to establish a Disability Inclusion Dashboard that uses anonymized data to track hiring, retention, and promotion rates of employees with disabilities across county agencies. We cannot improve what we do not measure. Transparency helps identify barriers, creates accountability, and ensures inclusion becomes an ongoing commitment rather than just a goal.

What comprehensive, county-wide accessible transportation solutions will you develop beyond existing paratransit services?	People with disabilities are too often forced to plan trips well in advance, limiting independence and creating barriers that many residents without disabilities never have to consider. Transportation should provide freedom and flexibility, not force people to compromise. Beyond existing paratransit services, I support developing county wide, app based micro transit solutions that supplement fixed route buses and prioritize accessibility, ideally administered through County programs and partnerships. I would also advocate for increased funding to expand on demand transportation options for essential trips such as grocery shopping, medical appointments, and connections to Metro and other transit hubs. We must also work directly with residents, disability advocates, and community partners to better identify transit deserts and transportation gaps. By using community input and data driven planning, we can target investments where they will have the greatest impact and create a transportation system that is more reliable, accessible, and responsive to the needs of all residents.
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How will you ensure that all new transit infrastructure exceeds ADA minimum standards and truly provides accessible, reliable public transportation?	Ensuring truly accessible transit requires more than simply meeting minimum requirements. While a County Council Member alone cannot solve this challenge, many transit decisions are made regionally, which is why strong relationships and effective advocacy matter. Throughout my career, I have built relationships with regional decision makers and have earned support from leaders across our legislative districts, including the transit union. Accessibility must be integrated into every stage of transit planning and development. ADA standards should be viewed as a floor, not a ceiling. I support adopting an "ADA Plus" approach that exceeds minimum requirements whenever possible through features such as improved wayfinding, enhanced station design, safer pedestrian access, and more reliable accommodations for riders with disabilities. I also support exploring the creation of an independent Disability Design Task Force that can review and provide input on major transit projects to ensure accessibility and inclusion are built in from the beginning, not added as an afterthought.
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What specific actions will you take to increase the supply of affordable, accessible, and integrated housing options throughout Prince George's County?	I will support policies that increase the supply of affordable, accessible, and integrated housing options throughout Prince George's County while ensuring growth benefits existing residents and families. This includes encouraging mixed income housing developments, preserving existing affordable housing stock, and promoting transit oriented development that connects residents to jobs, healthcare, and essential services. I will also advocate for stronger incentives for developers to include accessible and universally designed units, ensuring individuals with disabilities and seniors can remain in their communities. Additionally, I support streamlining permitting for accessibility improvements, including fast tracking permits for home modifications such as wheelchair ramps and stairlifts. We must create housing policies that allow residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities to live safely, affordably, and with dignity in Prince George's County.
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What policy changes will you advocate to improve healthcare access including provider training and accessible medical facilities?	I will advocate for expanding access to healthcare by strengthening partnerships with local providers and the State to close coverage gaps and ensure residents can access essential services. That includes increasing access to preventive care, mental health services, and treatment for chronic conditions. I also support greater investment in provider training, including disability competency, cultural responsiveness, and trauma informed care, so patients receive respectful and effective treatment. We must also ensure healthcare facilities are truly accessible by improving transportation access, language services, physical accessibility, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities. When residents can access quality care early and without barriers, we improve health outcomes, reduce strain on emergency rooms, and build healthier, stronger communities.
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How will you expand integrated, trauma-informed mental health services specifically designed for children and adults with disabilities?	Expanding integrated, trauma-informed mental health services for children and adults with disabilities requires both sustained investment and innovative approaches that remove barriers to care. Successful community-based models, including mobile crisis response programs, have demonstrated tremendous value in connecting residents to appropriate support while reducing unnecessary emergency interventions. I will advocate for stable funding and expansion of these services so they can continue serving our communities effectively. I also support expanding access to telehealth by providing tablets and high-speed internet support for low-income residents with mobility disabilities, ensuring they can connect with specialized trauma-informed providers beyond their immediate neighborhood. Additionally, I would advocate for repurposing county spaces into low-barrier community hubs that provide counseling, peer support, and occupational services in environments designed with universal sensory standards. Finally, we should continue exploring specialized crisis response options that can be deployed or requested when individuals need mental health support tailored to their specific needs. Access to care should be person-centered, accessible, and designed to meet residents where they are.
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How will you ensure that first responders receive regular training on interacting with and supporting people with diverse disabilities?	First responders have demanding jobs and are often the first point of contact for residents with mental, developmental, sensory, or physical disabilities. I will advocate for regular, ongoing training that equips first responders with the tools to effectively and respectfully interact with individuals with diverse needs. At a minimum, I support annual training that promotes trauma-informed approaches, disability awareness, de-escalation techniques, and effective communication strategies. I also believe we should create and expand opportunities for first responders to pursue additional education and professional development in fields such as psychology, counseling, social work, and human services. Better preparation and understanding can improve outcomes for residents while also supporting first responders in performing their jobs safely and effectively.
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How will you ensure adequate funding and accessibility of programs that help older adults maintain independence when they acquire disabilities?

I will strongly advocate for sustained and adequate funding for programs that help older adults and individuals with disabilities maintain their independence and quality of life. As residents age, access to services such as transportation, home modifications, healthcare navigation, caregiver support, and community-based assistance becomes increasingly important. I will also work to ensure these programs are truly accessible by reducing barriers to participation, improving outreach, and making information and services easier to navigate. We owe older adults, individuals with disabilities, and the organizations serving them more than gratitude; we owe them meaningful support and a commitment to helping them remain safe, connected, and independent in their communities.

What will be your top three legislative priorities to advance disability rights and full inclusion in our county? (Please list and briefly describe your top three priorities.)

Modernize and improve accessibility in County government spaces
I will work to bring the County Council Chambers and other public government spaces up to modern accessibility standards. Currently, the Council Chambers can be difficult to physically navigate, particularly for wheelchair users and individuals with mobility challenges. Our public spaces should lead by example and reflect our commitment to inclusion and equal participation in government.

Advance inclusive and accessible housing standards
I will advocate for policies that expand accessible housing opportunities and build on existing progress. I support requiring that new multi-family developments receiving county tax incentives or subsidies meet Universal Design standards, including features such as no-step entrances, wider doorways, and reinforced bathroom walls. Residents should be able to age in place and live safely and independently in their communities.

Create a centralized accommodations fund across County agencies
I will support establishing a centralized accommodations fund so that accessibility needs are treated as a countywide responsibility rather than a departmental expense. Necessary accommodations, such as ergonomic workstations, assistive technology, or screen-reading software, should never create barriers to hiring or participation. This approach ensures equal access while strengthening inclusion across County government.

Consent & Submission

Consent checkbox (required)

I consent to my responses being shared publicly in full.



Campaign Website or Contact Information:

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