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Address: Takoma Park
What office are you seeking?: Delegate, District 20
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: <https://davidmoon.us>

2 Someone new to Montgomery County may ask, "What's the Ag Reserve and why is it important?" What's your answer?

The Ag Reserve is a unique benefit to all county residents that protects 1/3 of our land from development. Instead, we channel development and infrastructure into the remaining areas, where modern planning methods, such as transit-oriented development can be achieved. Our Ag Reserve sets us apart from neighboring states and counties like Virginia and Frederick County, where development is allowed to more easily run rampant. Frederick, in particular, recently allowed landowners to split rural lots, thereby exacerbating traffic through new development.

3 What are your priorities regarding stewardship of the County's natural resources (water, forests, open spaces) and parkland?

As a state Delegate, I'm a supporter of expanded Program Open Space and our Forest Conservation law. We also need to restrict activities that increase impervious surfaces and restrict use of toxic chemicals that pollute our waterways.

4 What is your vision for the future of the County's Agricultural Reserve? Briefly, how would you achieve that vision?

The purpose of the Ag Reserve should be to preserve farming activities, not to grandfather residential development for the heirs to farm estates. Part of this means preserving the spirit of these development restrictions, and not allowing the exploitation of loopholes. We must also look at helping maintain and create sustainable markets for agricultural activities in Montgomery County. We are behind Virginia, for example, in cultivating farm-based wineries and breweries.

5 Can you identify some of the top challenges to the Reserve's local agriculture and what actions you would take, if elected, to address them?

I believe government subsidized industrial farming disadvantages local farmers. Though a difficult problem to tackle, given the heavy hand of federal subsidies, we should look for state policies to rebalance this equation. I previously attempted to pass a chicken tax, for example, to create funds to mitigate the environmental consequences of disposing of chicken waste from factory farms in Maryland. We can also attempt to create more markets for local farmers, such as funding through farm-to-table programs and procurement and sourcing policies for schools, and other volume-buyers. For example, I previously attempted to pass a bill to ban chemical additives and dyes from school lunches. We could go further and more aggressively push local procurement preferences wherever possible.

6 What more can be done to support our local farm businesses and rural communities?

We should boost the tourism marketing for our farms, and as I've noted in this survey, help cultivate markets and customers for local agricultural businesses through favorable business regulations and procurement preferences.

7 How should our County manage its solid waste? What role should incineration, composting and recycling play?

The county should move toward developing an in-house composting system, given the difficulties in outsourcing such services. I'm also a supporter of bottle deposits and bans on styrofoam and materials that are not biodegradable. In the meantime, we need to stop subsidizing incineration and counting dirty energy sources as "renewable."

8 How can we expand the role the County's schools play in the support of a healthy local food system and the success of local agriculture? Do you support a rural schools' policy that provides equity for Reserve cluster schools acknowledging the unique nature of schools in region set aside for farmland and open space preservation?

Other jurisdictions have adopted forward-thinking integration of nutrition, food sourcing and preparation education into their curricula and built farm-to-table ties with local vendors. I am hopeful Montgomery County can move to implement such programs and create a win-win for both students and farmers.

9 Currently the County is exploring how best to support a strong agricultural economy through agritourism and new farming enterprises such as on farm breweries and wineries. What are your thoughts about how best to advance on farm activities within the context of the master plan?

As noted above, we should expand marketing of agritourism and popular new uses such as wineries and breweries. We are behind many other states in these endeavors, but we're beginning to catch up. I worked with Councilmember Hans Riemer, to lower the costs for constructing new wineries, breweries, and distilleries in Montgomery County. I believe this can be done while maintaining the goals of the Ag Reserve in preserving open space and farming in Montgomery County, especially while servicing the residents of the more urban parts of the county, with these new amenities.

10 What are your regional transportation priorities? Do you support M83 and an additional Potomac bridge and outer beltway through the Reserve or adjacent rural zones?

I am a strong proponent of transit-oriented development and oppose the countless highway building and widening projects currently being discussed throughout Maryland and Montgomery County. I am specifically opposed to M83, and Larry Hogan's proposed widening of the Beltway, 295, 270 and more. I'm also on record opposing an additional bridge crossing. In contrast, I'd like to see greater investment in "Complete Streets," MARC, Metrorail, RideOn, and more.