**EDUCATION & SKILLS: What is your plan for ensuring that all students with disabilities, including English Language Learners, receive a quality and appropriate education to acquire critical and marketable skills?**

It should be seen without a doubt throughout our state that disability rights are human rights. That is why I believe we need to ensure we reform our education system to be more inclusive and more accessible to students with disabilities. We need to work with nonprofits who are empowering english-language learning students and parents of the disability community and ensuring they are able to better and more successfully participate in Maryland’s education system. Specifically, working harder to stay connected and provide better information to parents of students with disabilities in the black, hispanic, and asian-american communities to enable them to make more informed choices about their children’s education is a top priority of mine. My plan also includes making public transit free for all residents, as well as strengthening specific instruction in such areas as general workplace readiness, vocational skills, and independent living skills for black, hispanic and asian-american students with disabilities so that they can acquire the critical and marketable skills needed for them to both graduate and be successful in life after high school.

**EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP: If elected, what will you do to advance opportunities for people with disabilities who want to work and earn an income, just like anyone else? How will you support employers, large and small, to recruit and hire workers with disabilities? How will you promote evidence-based policies and best practices leading to meaningful careers as well as disability entrepreneurship opportunities?**

As we continue our economic recovery, Maryland cannot afford to leave talent out of the workforce. People with disabilities possess the skills and talent to support themselves through meaningful employment and to make important contributions within Maryland’s workplaces. I am committed both to increasing opportunities for individuals with disabilities and supporting employers in their efforts to increase disability inclusion. I would immediately establish Executive Orders focused on increasing state employment of individuals with disabilities, and commit to increase the number of individuals with disabilities in the state workforce. I am also committed to frequently hosting conferences on disability and employment in every single Maryland county. The conferences would provide businesses and disability advocates with information about new and existing state resources designed to help employers hire more individuals with disabilities. They would also offer opportunities for attendees to share their experiences in diversifying their workforce through effective strategies to successfully recruit, hire, promote, and retain employees with disabilities. It is clear that more work must be done to ensure that people with disabilities have equal opportunities to succeed. Together, we will work to build a more inclusive Maryland where more people with disabilities benefit from work and help play a vital role in Maryland’s economic success.

**ACCESS & INCLUSION: Whether or not you have a formal platform, what specific plans do you have to incorporate the voices of people with disabilities into your decision-making processes, if elected? What steps, if any, have you taken to make your campaign accessible for people with disabilities and to ensure that our voices are heard?**

It is a top priority of mine to ensure people in the Maryland disability community are given a real voice and opportunity to have input across the state when it comes to housing, healthcare, transportation, education, economic and other key policies (in terms of creation and execution of policies). Specifically, I will do this by appointing some of Maryland’s top leaders within the disability community to work alongside me in the Governor’s office. We must also ensure the Maryland Department of Disabilities establishes better communication with each county disability commission and steps up its work to receive, investigate, and act on reports of violations of the rights of Marylanders with disabilities. Upon announcing my campaign for Governor, one of my first actions was to include some of Maryland’s best disability advocates as senior advisors in my campaign. Inclusion and accessibility are the main objectives of my campaign and I’m proud to have some of Maryland’s brightest minds helping me ensure people in the Maryland disability community have a voice that is heard loud and clear.

**FIGHTING STIGMAS: If elected, what will be your plan to fight stigmas, highlight the disability community, and promote higher expectations for success?**

I am committed to fighting for the interests of the disability community in Maryland through legislation and policy, but also by lifting up the stories of Marylanders with disabilities and speaking out publicly against harmful stigmas that create barriers or challenges for the disability community. Some of the most influential people in my life are individuals living with a disability, and it is extremely important for me to highlight the incredible work people with disabilities are capable of and are already doing every day. As Governor, I plan to further, and even more so, promote and acknowledge Disability Employment Awareness Month, Autism Awareness Month and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, among many others. Additionally, I will encourage more people with disabilities to run for public office and have positions of power within government at the highest levels. It is clear we need more people with disabilities in public office throughout Maryland to inspire others and promote higher expectations for success.

**OTHER KEY ISSUES: What additional policies and priorities, other than those already discussed above, do you plan to focus on to improve the lives of people with disabilities? If you have yet to develop them, what is your plan to learn about disability issues?**

Today, far too many of our fellow Marylanders living with a disability are struggling to get by. That’s why I’ve shared my [Disability Rights Policy Memo](https://jainforgov.medium.com/disability-rights-9d766f2c49fc) since launching my campaign in January.

Furthermore – in addition to the over 150 detailed policy proposals in my Relief, Recovery, Reform agenda (found on my website — JainForGovernor.com), I will accomplish the following 5 historic items in my “Maryland Now” plan to help all Marylanders:

1. Eliminate the state income tax for 95% of Maryland workers
2. Make Maryland the first state to guarantee free public transit for every resident
3. Create the nation’s first Guaranteed Jobs Program for anyone struggling to find work
4. Legalize Marijuana and Expunge the records of those who have been wrongfullyimprisoned
5. Make our politics inclusive and accessible by imposing anti-corruption measures

This plan will expand economic opportunities and inclusion for all Marylanders (including those with disabilities); assist those who need a job and transportation; help our climate; create hundreds of thousands of new jobs; reduce social injustices and improve the daily lives of residents with disabilities in every county across the great state of Maryland.