

State Senator District 1	Dan Cruce	Democratic
Candidate's Full Name	Dan Cruce	
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1. What motivates you to seek this position? And what makes you believe you are the “Best” candidate for this position?

I am seeking reelection because I believe public service is about bringing people together to solve problems and improve the quality of life in every neighborhood we represent. Serving as your State Senator has been one of the greatest honors of my career, and I deeply appreciate the opportunity I've had to work alongside the Council of Civic Organizations of Brandywine Hundred. Through our meetings, conversations, and collaborations, we've built strong relationships grounded in mutual respect, trust, and a shared commitment to our communities. CCOBH has consistently been a thoughtful, nonpartisan voice advocating for residents, and I value the partnership we've developed as colleagues working toward the same goals.

Your input has been especially important as I've led efforts to reform Delaware's property tax reassessment system, where hearing directly from CCOBH, neighborhood leaders, and residents has helped shape, strengthen, and build support for the legislation I have championed and the meaningful results we've achieved together. I believe I have earned the opportunity to continue serving because I have demonstrated that I listen first, respond quickly, and remain accessible to the people I represent. Whether addressing neighborhood concerns, improving public safety, protecting our environment, strengthening our schools, or supporting smart community development, I have worked to deliver meaningful results through collaboration.

My approach has always been to bring residents, civic leaders, local government, and state agencies to the same table to find practical solutions. I have earned the trust of many community leaders by following through on my commitments and maintaining open, honest communication. I respectfully ask for your support so I can continue building on the relationships we've established, advancing thoughtful solutions together, and ensuring Brandywine Hundred remains one of Delaware's strongest and most vibrant communities.

2. If elected, what are your top three (3) legislative priorities that you look to address (either change, fix, or implement) for the coming year and the following year? For each of the priorities you identified, please explain

- **What outcome would you look to achieve?**
- **How do you think it is going to help and positively impact the residents in Brandywine Hundred?**
- **Identify the biggest hurdle you expect to face for each of the priorities and expand on how you plan to overcome it.**

My top legislative priority is making Delaware more affordable for working families, older adults, and everyone who calls Brandywine Hundred home. While affordability touches many areas of life, I will continue focusing on three issues that have the greatest impact on household budgets: property taxes, utility costs, and healthcare costs.

1. Continue Property Tax Reform

I have made property tax reform one of my signature issues, serving on the Special Committee on Property Reassessment and leading SB 228, legislation that addressed the longstanding imbalance in Delaware's corporate property tax system by requiring large commercial properties to pay their fair share, just as homeowners in Brandywine Hundred have long been expected to do. That reform is resulting in millions of additional dollars for our public schools while making the tax system fairer and more equitable. I will continue working to ensure every property owner is treated fairly through a modern, transparent assessment system that gives taxpayers confidence in how their taxes are calculated. For Brandywine Hundred residents, this means greater fairness, predictability, and stronger taxpayer protections. The biggest challenge will continue to be balancing the interests of counties, municipalities, school districts, businesses, and taxpayers, and I will keep bringing those stakeholders

2. Lower Utility Costs

Delaware families deserve reliable, affordable utility services while we continue investing in resilient infrastructure for the future. I supported legislation including SB 265 to strengthen oversight of utility distribution planning and HB 445 to modernize Delaware's utility infrastructure while protecting ratepayers. I was also part of the bipartisan effort urging the Public Service Commission to deny Delmarva Power's proposed rate increase, standing with residents who made it clear they could not afford another increase in their monthly bills. My goal is to reduce unnecessary cost increases, improve system reliability, and ensure investments provide long-term value for customers. The greatest hurdle will be balancing infrastructure needs with affordability, and I will continue advocating for reforms

that strengthen transparency, accountability, and consumer protections so our neighbors are protected from unreasonable utility costs.

3. Reduce Healthcare Costs

Healthcare affordability remains one of the greatest financial challenges facing Delaware families and seniors. I proudly supported Senate Bill 1, landmark legislation that increases healthcare cost transparency and accountability while helping address the rising cost of care, and I have supported legislation to improve prescription drug affordability and expand access to care. My goal is to make quality healthcare more affordable while preserving access to providers and improving health outcomes. The biggest challenge is addressing the complex factors driving healthcare costs, but I will continue working with patients, providers, employers, insurers, and state leaders to advance practical reforms that put patients first.

These priorities share a common goal: making it more affordable to live, work, and retire in Brandywine Hundred. By continuing to address the costs families face every month, from their property tax bill to their utility bill to their healthcare expenses, I will remain focused on delivering practical solutions that improve quality of life for our communities.

3. How do you intend to be transparent in your decision-making and keep residents informed before major votes?

Transparency begins with being present. Throughout my time serving as your State Senator, I have made it a priority to be responsive and accessible, not only in Legislative Hall, but by knocking on doors, attending civic association meetings, participating in community events, and having conversations with neighbors where they live. That track record reflects how I lead and what I value most: relationships. I firmly believe the strongest decisions are made when they are informed by the people they impact, not just by discussions in Dover.

Before major votes, I will continue sharing information through community meetings, newsletters, social media, and direct conversations so residents understand what is being considered and why. Just as importantly, I will continue asking questions, listening carefully to differing perspectives, and using that feedback to help shape my decisions.

My commitment is to remain visible, approachable, and accountable because the relationships we build across Brandywine Hundred matter every bit as much as the work we do in Legislative Hall. That is how I have served, and it is how I will continue to ask, listen, and act on behalf of our community.

4. What is your position on “Sustainability” when addressing its three main pillars, and how will you address them legislatively? Please provide short-term and long-term initiatives for each of the pillars:

- **environmental** (conserving natural resources, fighting climate change, and reducing waste so ecosystems can recover)
- **economic** (supporting resilient, long-term financial growth and jobs without relying on destructive practices)
- **social** (ensuring fairness, equal opportunities, and healthy communities for everyone).

I believe that sustainability must be viewed as a comprehensive commitment that recognizes the connection between protecting our environment, growing our economy, and ensuring every Delawarean has the opportunity to thrive. My approach has always been grounded in finding common-sense solutions, building partnerships, and leading in a bipartisan way. My legislative record demonstrates that commitment, from protecting our natural resources to supporting working families and advancing fairness and opportunity for all.

- **Environmental Sustainability**

Delaware has a responsibility to protect our natural resources and preserve our environment for future generations. I was proud to co-sponsor the Wetlands Stewardship Act, Delaware’s first comprehensive, combined wetlands preservation program, which protects approximately 75,000 acres of freshwater wetlands following the loss of federal protections. This legislation reflects the type of bipartisan, forward-looking leadership I believe in.

I have also supported additional environmental measures focused on conservation, clean energy, reducing waste, and protecting Delaware’s natural resources. In the **short term**, we must continue investing in responsible environmental protections, sustainability initiatives, and infrastructure that reduces our impact on the environment. **Long term**, we must continue building a cleaner, more resilient Delaware while balancing environmental responsibility with responsible economic growth.

- **Economic Sustainability**

A sustainable economy requires both protecting the industries that have built Delaware and investing in the opportunities that will define our future. I believe in supporting our traditional economic drivers, small businesses, entrepreneurs, healthcare, education, and key industries, while also building Delaware’s creative economy by supporting arts, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Economic sustainability also means recognizing that a strong economy depends on a workforce that can afford to live, work, and raise families here. That is why my work has focused not only on economic growth, but also on issues like workforce protections, healthcare affordability, and creating pathways for opportunity.

In the **short term**, we must continue supporting entrepreneurs, small businesses, workforce development, and innovation. **Long-term**, we must build an economy that is competitive, resilient, and creates opportunity for generations of Delawareans.

- **Social Sustainability**

Human dignity is central to my work. As Delaware's first openly gay man elected to the State Senate, I uniquely understand why fairness, equal opportunity, and inclusion matter. My own experience has reinforced my commitment to ensuring that every Delawarean has the ability to participate fully in our communities, our economy, and our democracy.

Social sustainability means building healthy communities where people have access to quality education, healthcare, safe neighborhoods, and opportunities to succeed regardless of their background or circumstances. My legislative record reflects that commitment through my work protecting voting rights, defending individual freedoms, supporting working families, and advancing policies that ensure every person is treated with dignity and respect.

In the **short term**, we must continue removing barriers, expanding opportunity, and making sure government works for all Delawareans. **Long-term**, we must continue building a state where fairness and opportunity are not just ideals, but realities for every person who calls Delaware home.

Sustainability is not a single issue; it is the foundation for responsible leadership. My goal has always been to bring people together, listen first, and act in a way that leaves Delaware stronger, healthier, and more equitable for the next generation.

5. Will you ensure that there is legislation that requires comprehensive “Traffic studies” to be conducted by WILMAPCO & DELDOT to control and prevent the overuse/crowding of major secondary road traffic when residential and business developments are approved by New Castle County? Please elaborate.

Yes. I believe comprehensive traffic studies and thoughtful planning are essential whenever major residential or business developments are considered. The voices of our neighbors and civic associations must be asked, heard, and acted upon because these are their neighborhoods, their streets, and their open spaces that are directly impacted by these decisions.

Development must be responsible and coordinated with the infrastructure needed to support it. That means ensuring WILMAPCO and DelDOT have the necessary role in evaluating traffic impacts, identifying potential concerns, and helping decision-makers understand the long-term consequences of growth before approvals are granted.

I will remain vigilant and diligent in making sure community input is part of the process, that transportation impacts are fully considered, and that we are not simply adding density without addressing the safety, quality of life, and infrastructure needs of the communities we serve. Growth is important, but it must be done responsibly and in partnership with the residents who call these neighborhoods home.

6. **“Affordable Housing” is one of the key needs in the Brandywine Hundred for newcomers, young families, and senior citizens who want to downsize, and/or cannot afford to buy or provide the needed upkeep of the currently available houses. This means affordable apartment buildings need to be developed, either through new construction or by converting old office buildings into apartments. This also requires public transportation with new routes and/or increasing the frequency of existing routes from apartment buildings to key locations. Given the current 2027 budget cuts to DelDOT, how do you plan to meet residents' needs when you start your new term in office?**

Affordable housing is one of the most important challenges facing communities like Brandywine Hundred, and addressing it requires thoughtful planning, collaboration, and a willingness to learn from what has worked, and what has not, in other communities. We must look at successful models across Delaware and beyond, as well as learn from failures, to identify the approaches that best fit the needs of our neighborhoods and support our collective future.

Any conversation about housing, transportation, and community growth must begin with the voices of the people who live there. Our civic associations must be at the front of this work with me and with government. They understand their neighborhoods, their streets, their infrastructure, and the needs of their neighbors better than anyone. Their voices must be heard early, meaningfully, and consistently as we make decisions about housing and transportation.

We need to pursue a balanced approach that creates more housing options for young families, seniors looking to downsize, and residents who want to remain in the communities they love while addressing affordability and quality of life. That includes exploring responsible new construction, adaptive reuse opportunities

such as converting underutilized office space, and ensuring that development is matched with the infrastructure and services needed to support it.

Transportation is a critical part of that equation. Affordable housing is only truly accessible if residents can connect to jobs, healthcare, schools, shopping, and community resources. Even with budget challenges facing DelDOT, we must continue advocating for smart investments, improved routes, and partnerships that make public transportation more responsive to where people live and work.

I will continue bringing people together, listening to residents, and working collaboratively with civic leaders, local government, and state agencies to find solutions that respect the character of our communities while preparing Delaware for the future.

7. What legislation will you propose and champion to control the development of the data centers and their energy use without taxing and increasing the power costs of the residents?

Data center development is an issue where Delaware must be thoughtful, proactive, and balanced. I supported legislation this session, including SB312, HB445, HB223, and HB310, because we need a strong framework that recognizes the economic opportunities of new technology while ensuring that growth does not come at the expense of Delaware families, ratepayers, or our natural resources.

It is an absolute that data centers cannot create additional costs, burdens, or challenges for our neighbors or our environment. Any future development must include meaningful protections around energy demand, infrastructure impacts, transparency, and environmental responsibility. We must ensure that residents are not left paying higher utility costs to support private industry growth, and that communities have a voice before major projects move forward.

I will continue working with stakeholders, utilities, environmental advocates, local governments, and residents to champion policies that promote innovation while protecting affordability, reliability, and the quality of life that makes our communities special. Delaware can welcome responsible economic development, but it must be development that works for everyone.

- 8. Just recently, at the end of the 2026 Legislative Session, the state agreed to pitch in an additional \$110 million to help cover a \$189 million shortfall in the Edgemoor container terminal construction (ballooned from originally estimated \$415 million to \$669 million)**
- When the state's budget is already reduced, how will taxpayers be affected?**
 - Please explain what you will do to protect and maintain the existing services?**
 - How do you plan to communicate your legislative efforts transparently so that the services are not eliminated without taxpayers' knowledge and consent?**

The Edgemoor container terminal project represents a significant investment, and I believe it also has the potential to bring long-term economic benefits to Delaware through job creation, increased commerce, and strengthening our position as a regional hub. At the same time, when a project of this size experiences significant cost increases, taxpayers deserve clear answers, transparency, and accountability.

I will continue working to ensure that communication around this project is more open and that the questions and concerns raised by our communities are fully addressed. Strong community input is a critical part of responsible decision-making, and residents deserve to understand the financial commitments being made, the expected benefits, the risks, and the safeguards in place to protect taxpayers.

As we manage our state budget, I will remain focused on protecting the essential services Delawareans rely on, including education, public safety, healthcare, and services that support our most vulnerable neighbors. Fiscal responsibility means making thoughtful investments while ensuring we are not creating unnecessary burdens or putting core services at risk.

My commitment is to continue listening, asking tough questions, and advocating for transparency throughout the legislative process. I believe in the potential of this project, and I also believe that confidence in public investments is built through clear communication, honest conversations, and giving residents the information they need to understand how decisions are made.

9. DNREC listed Shellpot Creek as NOT SAFE for swimming or primary contact recreation. Shellpot Creek flows through a highly urbanized and suburban area in New Castle County (15-square-mile watershed). It is officially impaired by high levels of bacteria and nutrients from urban and storm-drain runoff, and by elevated concentrations of toxic PFAS "forever chemicals" in the watershed. However, DNREC still allows siphoning or the withdrawal of water from Shellpot. Controlling what is dumped into Shellpot Creek relies on both regulatory limits and community practices.

- Could you please explain how you ensure that DNREC monitors the Shellpot Creek regularly and meets the requirements as identified in their regulations?
- How do you control and monitor what is being dumped into the Shellpot Creek?
- How often is Shellpot Creek monitored for safety?
- Will you commit to notifying all neighborhood communities under your jurisdiction about the DNREC findings, and to sharing the report DNREC generates, so children and pets are protected from health hazards?
- Will you put this information regularly in your newsletters to your constituents?

Protecting our waterways and the health of our communities requires strong oversight, reliable data, and, most importantly, a partnership between government and the people who live alongside these resources. Shellpot Creek is a clear example of why community voice and transparent communication must be at the center of environmental decision-making.

I believe DNREC must continue to fulfill its regulatory responsibilities by regularly monitoring impaired waterways, enforcing existing protections, and clearly communicating findings to the public. At the same time, residents should not have to search for critical information about the safety of the places where their families, children, and pets live, work, and recreate. Clear, timely, and accessible communication from government is essential.

I will continue to advocate for stronger communication between state agencies and the neighborhoods impacted by environmental concerns like Shellpot Creek. My approach has always been to listen directly to residents, show up in our communities, ask questions, and ensure that people have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their quality of life.

I will continue using my office to share important updates, elevate community concerns, and make sure residents have access to the information they need. Environmental protection is not just about regulations, it is about trust, accountability, and working together to protect the places we call home.

10. Every year, many women experience serious health complications from pregnancy and childbirth in Delaware. Delaware ranks #1 in the nation for hospital maternity practices according to the Delaware Health Association; however, it struggles with maternal mental health and specific birth outcomes. The state has a preterm birth rate of 10.6% and is ranking 30th nationwide. It ranks 15th in maternal mortality and access.

- What are you going to do to ensure that all mothers have access to the desired healthcare and healthcare providers, and provide them with services so they can get proper prenatal and baby care education, nutritional services, so every mother and child in Delaware is equipped to start a healthy life?**
- Please explain the type of legislation you will introduce in 2027 and beyond.**

Ensuring that every mother and child in Delaware has access to quality, affordable, and comprehensive healthcare must remain a priority. While Delaware has made important progress, including being recognized by the Delaware Healthcare Association as #1 in the nation for hospital maternity practices, we must continue addressing the challenges that remain, including maternal mental health, preterm births, maternal mortality, and equitable access to prenatal and postpartum care.

My commitment to this work is demonstrated by the actions I have already taken in the General Assembly. During the 2026 legislative session, I supported maternal health-focused legislation, including Senate Bill 301, which addressed critical needs impacting mothers and families. I also lead efforts to strengthen public health protections as the Senate Prime Sponsor House Bill 338 related to vaccination coverage and Senate Bill 13, to ensure hospitals meet their responsibility to provide charity care for those who need it most. These efforts reflect my belief that healthcare is not just about treating illness; it is about prevention, access, education, and ensuring every Delawarean has the opportunity to live a healthy life.

I also believe we must continue investing in proven programs that provide support before challenges arise. Programs like the ****Nurse-Family Partnership****, which connects expectant first-time mothers with registered nurses who provide guidance, education, and

support throughout pregnancy and a child's earliest years, are exactly the kind of evidence-based approaches that help improve outcomes for both mothers and children. By strengthening connections to prenatal education, nutrition services, mental health resources, and family supports, we can give families the tools they need to thrive from the very beginning.

Moving forward, I will continue working closely with healthcare providers, maternal health professionals, advocates, community organizations, and my fellow legislators who bring valuable expertise and experience in this area. The best legislation comes from listening first, understanding the realities facing families, providers, and communities, and then building thoughtful solutions together.

In the coming sessions, I will continue to support and advance policies that improve access to prenatal and postpartum care, expand maternal mental health resources, strengthen programs like the Nurse-Family Partnership, and remove barriers that prevent mothers and babies from receiving the care they need. Every mother deserves to feel supported, informed, and empowered, and every child deserves the strongest possible start in life.

Thank you very much for completing the CCOBH 2026 Primary and General Election Survey.

If you would like to provide additional comments, please use the space below.

I deeply appreciate CCOBH's leadership and the important role it plays in bringing neighbors together, elevating community voices, and helping shape the future of our district. The relationships I have built with CCOBH's members and neighbors across our community have been invaluable, and I am grateful for the conversations, questions, and perspectives they have shared with me. I have learned so much from these interactions and believe strongly that the best decisions come from listening, learning, and working alongside the people we serve. I look forward to continuing this partnership and building on the trust and relationships we have developed as we work together for the future of our community.