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MONTGOMERY COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY MCGOP THE PARTY LINE

Sunday, May 03, 2015

District Spotlight

By Sharon Begosh



Government: Whose Side Are They On?

When do you know for sure that your local government has completely forgotten that they work for you, the citizens of their community? The answer to this riddle can be found in our own county where millions of dollars have been spent on a system like 311.

Masterminded by our thrice elected County Executive, this monstrosity of bureaucratic red tape was touted as a way to quickly pair concerns from citizens with the department or county employee who could assist them. However, several years after becoming operational, this very expensive 311 system has instead become a way to protect sluggish county employees from listening to complaints from county residents, resulting in response times of several days becoming the norm for simple questions regarding county service.

Case in point: I am a retired county employee. My daughter was removed from my health insurance coverage due to a clerical error. I wanted to contact the benefits team within the county to have this error corrected before an upcoming doctor's appointment or medical emergency. I called 311 to get the number to the appropriate department and waited several minutes for a "live" operator.

After my call was finally answered, I was told that they were not allowed to give me that number. Instead, I was told she would assign me a case number and would pass my question to the appropriate department, which would then have 72 hours to call me back. I explained that in the past when I had played by these "311 rules" (to have pot holes repaired or bushes cut back from covered STOP signs) no one ever called me back! Still she refused to give me the number. When I asked to speak to a supervisor, she told me none were available and I would have to leave a message on a generic supervisory line.

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Upcoming Events



FOR MORE EVENT DETAILS SEE:

<http://mccgop.com>

MONDAY MAY 4 6:30pm
Conservative Authors' Series
@ The Cuban Corner,
Rockville - History of Cuba by

So let's think about what transpired here. A county employee, whose generous salary is paid by you and me stated that the phone number of another county agency, whose employees we also pay for, was not to be made public, and that she was prohibited from giving it out. So, not only does Montgomery County proudly spend money on items which more conservative taxpayers adamantly disagree with, such as CASA de Maryland and Planned Parenthood, but they now openly state that we have no right to direct access to taxpayer-supported agencies.

We are left with a government that can, as publicly stated by council member Marc Elrich, tax whomever they want at whatever amount they want through the power of special taxing districts, and can apparently keep services we pay for hidden from us at the times when we need them most.

The District Spotlight series features commentaries written by our MCGOP District Chairmen. This week's commentary is written by District 14 Chairman Sharon Begosh.



Time to End "Rough Rides" in Maryland

One of the most basic responsibilities of any municipality is to protect its citizens' public safety. Unfortunately, Maryland's largest city has failed to do so on multiple occasions.

Baltimore's failures include not only the tragic death of Freddie Gray, but also the victims of Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake ill-advised decision to give "those who wished to destroy, space to do that."

These public safety failures are not isolated incidents. Baltimore has the fifth-highest murder among major U.S. cities, according to statistics released last fall by the FBI. Only Detroit, New Orleans, Newark, and St. Louis are higher. And both Detroit and New Orleans saw sharp declines.

While other large cities, such as New York and Washington, have made significant strides reducing crime, Baltimore's improvements have been far more modest. Washington's murder rate is now half of Baltimore's. New York City's murder rate has dropped by 85%

Joaquin Cabrejas Urtiaga - on
May 4, 2015 6:30 pm

FIRST THURSDAY MAY 7
6:30pm w/ Sen. Johnny
Salling and Del. Neil Parrott
@ Ted's 355 Diner, Rockville

THURSDAY MAY 14
7:00pm DISTRICT 18 -
MONTHLY MEETING @
Savannahs, Kensington

WEDNESDAY MAY 20
6:00pm DISTRICT 20 -
MONTHLY MEETING @ Mi
Rancho, Silver Spring

THURSDAY MAY 21
7:00pm DISTRICT 39 -
MONTHLY MEETING @
The Grille at Flower Hill

SATURDAY MAY 23 2pm-
8pm ROCKVILLE
HOMETOWN HOLIDAYS -
MCGOP Tent/Booth @
Rockville Town Center

SUNDAY MAY 24 1:30pm-
MCGOP IS SPONSORING A
GAME DAY GOP FAMILY
EVENT - Nats vs. Phillies @
Nationals Park

SUNDAY MAY 24 2pm-8pm
ROCKVILLE HOMETOWN
HOLIDAYS - MCGOP
Tent/Booth @ Rockville Town
Center

THURSDAY MAY 28 7:00
pm Olney Women's
Republican Club Annual
Meeting & Fundraiser
w/speaker Erick Stakebeck @
Argyle Country Club

since 1990.

When cities fail to keep their residents safe, the proverbial "haves" leave town because they can, leaving the "have-nots" who cannot behind. The result produces a more desolate and isolated economy.

The outcomes in Washington and New York are sources of potential optimism. As both cities became safer, they also experienced economic renaissances, as residents and economic opportunities returned.

Baltimore's tumult also lays bare the deep distrust that many residents have for their city's police. Among the most disturbing revelations about Baltimore, the practice of a "rough ride" is especially distressing. This is an unsanctioned police practice during which a handcuffed prisoner is placed in a police van without a seatbelt, and is thrown violently about as the vehicle is driven erratically. That the practice is apparently common enough in Baltimore to have its own slang term should be very alarming.

Baltimore has repeatedly been on the losing end of lawsuits from "rough ride" victims. Relatives of Dondi Johnson Sr., who was left a paraplegic after a 2005 police van ride, won a \$7.4 million verdict against police officers. In 2004, Jeffrey Alston was awarded \$39 million by a jury after he became paralyzed from the neck down as the result of a van ride. Others have also received payouts after filing lawsuits.

Not to belabor the obvious, but Martin O'Malley was Baltimore's Mayor in 2004 and 2005. He should have taken the initiative to stamp out "rough rides" once and for all. As if the serious abuses these lawsuits uncovered were not already enough, did not then Mayor O'Malley also have a financial incentive to take more decisive action to stamp out the practice?

Regrettably Baltimore is not alone in experiencing policy custody abuses.

Last year Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker signed legislation that requires an outside investigation when people die in police custody in that state. It requires reports of custody death investigations throughout the state to be publicly released if criminal charges are not filed against the officers involved. Officers also must inform victims' families of their options to pursue additional reviews, available through the U.S. attorney's office, or a state-level investigation. According to some, this Wisconsin legislation is the first of its kind in the nation.

Maryland should consider similar legislation as an important step to ending the abuses of "rough rides" and restoring faith in our criminal justice system.

SATURDAY JUNE 6 10am-5pm SANDY SPRING STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL - MCGOP Tent/Booth @ Route 108, Sandy Spring

SUNDAY JUNE 14 12-5pm CELEBRATE OLDE TOWN GAITHERSBURG - MCGOP Tent/Booth @ Olde Towne Gaithersburg

MONDAY JUNE 15 7:00pm A PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF THE NEW CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY @ County Office Building Third Floor Hearing Room

[Full Calendar](#)

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District 14 Members

Good Maryland Legislation That Was Buried in 2015

By J. Alexandra Tuttle



Over the next several weeks, you will be hearing about all the bills that passed during this year's legislative session - the good and the bad. What you might not hear about are the good bills that were proposed and quietly slipped into a drawer, after perfunctory hearings were held. According to Melanie Sheranko, aide to Delegate Tony O'Donnell, it

"is up the chairman/woman of the committee which bills come up for a vote. That decision is based on many things: if the chairman likes the bill and/or the bill sponsor; if the chairman thinks the bill will likely make it out of committee on a vote; if the majority party wants the bill to come out of committee; outcry from the public, influence from the governor, etc. "

What about all those **common sense voting bills** that came up in Chairwoman Sheila Hixson's House Ways and Means Committee? Whether it was the Interstate Crosscheck Bill, proof of citizenship, or voter identification, organizations were always "on hand" at hearings to decry the need for any of this legislation. Health Care for the Homeless testified regarding the problem of accessibility in obtaining these documents. For example, for a short time South Carolina implemented "free voter ID rides" as a way of addressing critics. Currently, they allow for provisional ballots after a voter signs an affidavit stating that there was a "reasonable impediment to obtaining a photo ID - such as lack of a birth certificate or lack of transportation." The Interstate Crosscheck Bill opponents noted that there was always the risk of someone being dropped from a state's voter rolls, due to a common name.

However, in 2013 the Federal Presidential Commission on Election Administration endorsed the use of this program, and 30+ states are currently using it. Moreover, information is exchanged with another state to investigate claims further when discrepancies arise. According to Delegate Pat McDonough, he intends to "reintroduce the legislation again next year," and (notes) that "it is fine the way it is."

Tax Relief Anyone? You have heard by now that the Motor Fuel Tax Repeal, a regressive tax hitting low income people particularly hard, received an "unfavorable report from House Ways and Means. The corporate tax rate reduction from 8.25% to 6% would have also signaled" that Maryland is open for business. "

HB 249, the "Right to Work" comes to Maryland? No, Maryland won't be joining the other 24 states yet, and the requirement to be part of a union for affected employees continues in this state.

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SB 806/HB 1200: **State Board of Education** - This bill would have provided that the State Board of Education require each student to take a standardized government high school assessment in order to graduate from **high school**.

Handgun Permits Reciprocity - SB 491/HB 465. This bill specifies that a permit issued by another state to an individual to carry a handgun, including a concealed handgun, is valid in Maryland.

How You Can Help Victims of Baltimore Riots

Many of us watching the news of the unrest in Baltimore City over the past several days have wondered if there is anything we can do to help.

In response to the state of emergency, the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) under the leadership of Secretary Sam Malhotra, has mobilized a **Maryland Unites Emergency Response Center** to support efforts to restore stability to Baltimore City. Residents may call the **Maryland Unites Emergency Response Center at 1-888-756-7836** to request assistance and detailed information regarding DHR services. Governor Larry Hogan has established a new Maryland Unites website www.governor.maryland.gov/mdunites/ where residents may report new incidents to the police, donate to local charities and volunteer their time to help Baltimore residents.

For those looking to help Baltimore communities impacted by the riots, DHR has partnered with the United Way of Central Maryland to create a website where people across the state and across the nation may make tax-deductible donations.

Visit www.uwcm.org/MDUnites, or **text keyword MDUnites to 71777** to provide humanitarian aid to the victims of the riots in Baltimore City. 100% of the funds donated will go directly to those impacted, helping to rebuild Baltimore City and restore peace and stability to affected communities.

*Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
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Rockville, MD 20850
301-610-4524*

The Conservative Authors Series at the Cuban Corner

Joaquin Cabrejas Urtiaga, the owner of the local restaurant Cuban Corner, has released a new book, The History of Cuba. Hear him speak about his book and his experiences as a Cuban-American immigrant at special event on May 4, 2015 at his restaurant.

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Tickets are \$45 for attendees \$75 for sponsors. All attendees will receive a free copy of the book. It's not too late to reserve your space at MCGOP.com.

For a sample of what will be discussed, read:
<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/14/r-emmett-tyrrell-reminding-obama-about-cubas-histo/>

New Web Design in Next Newsletter

We're pleased to let you know that the next issue of the newsletter will feature a brand new design, and we'll be moving to the MailChimp email platform. The new design will be optimized for mobile devices, so you'll get the same reading experience whether on your phone, tablet or desktop computer. We hope that you find the new format useful! To make sure that you continue receiving The Party Line newsletter, make sure to add newsletter@mcgop.com to your email program's whitelist.

Kentlands Day 2015



The MCGOP was out in full force at Kentlands Day 2015. We met a ton of Montgomery County residents who are fed up with the tax-and-spend policies of our leaders!

Montgomery County Republican Party
 Tel.: (301) 417-9256
 by authority Mark Uncapher, Treasurer

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