



# GRETCHEN'S GAZETTE!

Fall, 2017

Dear Friends,

It's been an incredible first few months on the campaign trail!

Thank you for embracing our vision of putting people before politics and bridging the political divide to get things done and bring resources home to District 42- OUR TIME IS NOW!

Over the last few months I've met with thousands of our District 42 friends and neighbors to find out what issues are most important to you and your families! Whether at your front doors, local festivals and parades or during community meetings- I've LISTENED to what's important to you, and then worked with you to TAKE ACTION!

## Some highlights over the last few months include:

**Money for Our Schools!** I was thrilled when the Baltimore County Executive and Baltimore County Public Schools Superintendent put politics aside, and put our children and teachers first, and agreed to include Planning Funds for the redevelopment of two area high schools in the FY19 Capital Budget! After months of organizing parents and testifying at Board of Education hearings, and meeting one on one with School Board Members, the County Executive and Superintendent and their staff, we were able to put PEOPLE BEFORE POLITICS and BRING RESOURCES HOME to District 42! Here's a link to my testimony at the May 24th BOE Capital Budget meeting (start at minute 13:14 <https://livestream.com/accounts/18227463/events/5226427/videos/156923213>), as well as my testimony on September 12th (starting at minute 40:15 <https://livestream.com/accounts/18227463/events/5226427/videos/162669395>). Stay tuned for next steps with the State and County Approval process of the Planning Funds. I also joined my husband Eric (a school social worker) and hundreds of teachers and staff at the Baltimore Kirwan Commission Public Hearing so that our voices could be heard in order to inform how we fund our schools and educate our children in the state of Maryland- thank you to everyone who came out to show your support! [<https://www.facebook.com/events/115244015835643/> Kirwan Commission Public Hearing]



**Access to Quality and Affordable Health Care!** In my role as a Neighborhood Planner, I worked with elected officials and health experts to convene a Community Health Care Forum for Baltimore County on October 25<sup>th</sup> [INSERT invitation and/or FB post from Jim Brochin?] to provide the most recent updates on health care reform, and hear directly from our community about your specific concerns- whether rising coverage costs for small business owners, addressing the surge in opioid addiction, or the prohibitive costs and shortages of prescription drugs- over 100 community members shared their concerns and ideas so that we can effectively craft legislation and policy here in Maryland! We also prepared for the Open Enrollment for Health Insurance Coverage which was cut in half this year from 90 to 45 days- it began on November 1st and will end on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Check out the Maryland Health Connection online for information on updated 2018 plans and pricing- they can help you navigate the options: [www.marylandhealthconnection.gov](http://www.marylandhealthconnection.gov) or call 1-855-642-8572.

## **Jobs and Renewable Energy for a Healthy Environment!**

I've been delighted to pitch in with groups like the Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Initiative who are linking workforce development with the expansion of renewable energy in Maryland- check out their website and sign their resolution to expand renewable energy by 50% in Maryland by 2030! [www.cleanenergyjobs.org](http://www.cleanenergyjobs.org). We also worked with Solar United Neighborhoods (<http://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/>) to bring neighbors together for an information session about how to save money and make going solar easy, while building a network of solar supporters across Baltimore!

**Safe Neighborhoods!** I joined BUILD at a Community Action meeting to brainstorm how we can support our neighbors and ensure safe neighborhoods for all! Our call to action included funding for our schools and after school programs for our young people, good jobs and training opportunities, access to affordable and quality health care and real community policing. A few weeks later, Eric, Sebastian, Spencer and I joined hundreds of our faith-based and lay communities at the rally with BUILD in Baltimore City- watch us on WBAL: <http://www.wbaltv.com/.../residents-rally-to-demand-.../11180261!>

**Empowered Seniors!** During community meetings, going door to door, house parties and receptions, and I heard from our Seniors about their concerns. From the future of Social Security, to access to health insurance and quality care, from the challenges that multigenerational households face to consumer protection, from support for our Veterans to safe and affordable housing- we need to address these challenges head on in the 2018 Legislative Session in Annapolis!



## **Emerge America- Women Leaders for a Democratic Future!**

I was honored to be selected among 40 other women candidates across the United States to attend the Emerge America (<https://emerge.ngpvanhost.com/home>) Boot Camp in Washington, DC, where we crafted a vision of the change and resources that we want to see in our communities! Despite making major gains in business, education and many other areas, American women are still vastly underrepresented at all levels of government. Women are more than half the population of the United States, but hold less than a third of elected offices. The US currently ranks 104th in the world in the number of women serving in their national legislatures. We are behind Mexico, China and Pakistan. Let's change the face of power, politics, and leadership in this country to ensure that ALL voices are heard- OUR TIME IS NOW!

## **Central Baltimore County Democratic Club Meeting! I**

kicked off my 44<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration with the Central Baltimore County Democratic Club- what a great opportunity to listen to folks about their vision for change, and discuss ideas about how to best work together for thriving schools, accountable development, clean energy, affordable health care, safe neighborhoods and a strong economy. Thank you to everyone who joined the conversation, and to CBCDC for so graciously hosting us!

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10210065456289852&set=gm.10155722969167226&type=3&theater&ifg=1>

## **Thank You to Our Volunteers!**

A wonderful highlight of the campaign has been working side by side with lifelong friends, as well as neighbors I've met along the campaign trail- all share our vision of putting PEOPLE BEFORE POLITICS and BRIDGING THE POLITICAL DIVIDE to bring resources home to District 42! Whether it's going door to door with me or hosting house parties, making phone calls or staffing events (and even the exciting task of data entry 😊)- OUR VOLUNTEERS have stepped up and pitched in- this is what Democracy looks like, District 42!

**We'd love to have you join our team- sign up at**  
**<https://www.voteforgretchen.org/volunteer/>**