

June 26, 2024

Dear Distinguished Members of the MCDCC,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve District 16 and the great state of Maryland. We benefit from a well-educated, diverse community, laws to keep us safe and healthy and the jewel of the Chesapeake Bay. We are indeed fortunate.

I feel lucky to live and work in District 16! I am a 4th grade teacher in the Montgomery County School system, and the parent of MCPS educated children. I LOVE my job! It's one I have held for more than 20 years during which time I have developed an array of community and capacity building programs in my school. Like many of my students, I am an immigrant and speak several languages.

And lest you think that I am "just a teacher," know that in a previous life I was a business developer for local technology companies including Verizon, AOL and MCI. I hold an MBA from Georgetown University and a Masters in Education from George Washington University.

Approach to Legislation:

My legislative lens will be one of equity which is in concert with Governor Moore's vision. Equity can be a misunderstood concept - and can lead some to feel that focusing on one group's needs will come at the cost of another. But I subscribe to the tenet that "we all do better when we all do better." When we apply this litmus test to all legislation we see a benefit to community safety, underserved populations, and the climate.

As an educator, I make data driven decisions, search for best practices, and pilot new initiatives. I would use this same format in policy-making: looking at data, exploring locally generated solutions or ones that other jurisdictions and countries have used.

Legislative Case Study:

Consider pedestrian and cyclist safety. A recent report indicated that Maryland has witnessed an increase in pedestrian fatalities, whereas this metric has decreased in 48 other states. Some of you may know some of the victims. The Montgomery County Safe Streets Act is a good start but let's apply the equity litmus test. More fully dedicated bike lanes, Walking School Buses, more sidewalks on high traffic routes, and thoughtful signage are some solutions that will increase access and safety for children, non-drivers and benefit the environment. We all do better when we all do better. If appointed, I will dedicate my energies to legislation on the management of public funds, the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays, open spaces, the environment and transportation. These, I believe, are complementary to the expertise of Delegates Korman and Wolek.

Don't let my legislative inexperience dissuade you from considering me as a Delegate representing our District. Consider instead my unique perspective as an educator, my equity lens on legislation and my creative and collaborative approach to problem solving. Our community and state need a moonshot and I am that person.

Respectfully,

Heather Weaver