

# The People's Voice, LLC

## Ethics Ballot™

3205 B Corporate Court Ellicott City, MD 21042

March 5, 2018

### 2018 Howard County Candidate Questionnaire

#### MD General Assembly

Thank you for taking the time to fill out The People's Voice (TPV) / Ethics Ballot 2018 Candidate Questionnaire which will be used in the TPV endorsement process.

**Publication:** Your answers are considered "on the record." They will be circulated to all members of the TPV Board and may be published on the [TPV website](#).

**Endorsement Process:** TPV will endorse in several local races for the Primary Election in 2018, and will likely add more races to The Ethics Ballot for the General Election. Click on the "PAC – Ethics Ballot" tab at [www.ethicsballot.com](http://www.ethicsballot.com), and Star Logo info, for further details on endorsement criteria.

Please return questionnaires via email to [ethicsballot@gmail.com](mailto:ethicsballot@gmail.com) by **Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 1:00PM**. Please email any questions you have about this questionnaire. A Board Member will respond.

#### Candidate Information

Name	Katie Fry Hester
Phone	443-878-8046
Website	<a href="https://katiefryhester.com/">https://katiefryhester.com/</a>
Campaign Account Name	Friends of Katie Fry Hester
Treasurer	William J. Hester
Chairman	Elyse Devries
Campaign Manager	Katie Mettle
Funds Balance	Contributions: \$32,129.00; Balance: \$20,946.58 (as of 01/10/2018)

### 2018 Questionnaire Howard County –

#### MD Delegate and Senator Candidates

1. Why are you running for this office? What qualifications do you uniquely bring to hold this office?

I am running for Maryland Senate in District 9 as a citizen legislator, bringing 20 years of real-world experience and a fresh perspective to Annapolis. I have worked with governments, Fortune 500 companies, and nonprofits around the world to create win-win partnerships for sustainable and international development. I have helped grow sustainable agricultural markets, helped government agencies create jobs, advised companies on engaging key stakeholders, and trained hundreds of individuals in partnership building. I know that innovative solutions are possible when people come together to look at common challenges from diverse perspectives.

I was inspired to run following the extraordinarily divisive 2016 presidential election. Even in a diverse district like Maryland's 9<sup>th</sup>, I believe that we are more alike than different. We can move beyond personal and partisan politics and focus on creative, innovative, evidence-based solutions to our shared problems. We can create public policy that reflects our common values and interests: great public education, affordable health care and responsible growth.

2. Describe why you feel you have a viable campaign.

District 9 is 39% Republican, 38% Democrat and 22% Independent. The eastern portion (9A) of the district has always been a swing district, however with changing demographics and national political trends, the entire district is now winnable. I am running against a Republican incumbent who is very conservative, with views not reflective of the majority of voters in District 9.

I am building a strong ground game, knocking on doors and phone banking with a sizable group of 300+ volunteers. I am partnering with three other women candidates who are running for other offices in districts that overlap with mine and have substantial support from the Senate caucus in Annapolis

3. How do you believe one eliminates the appearance of conflicts regarding campaign contributions?

In the face of current campaign finance law and practices, I vow to be completely open about all contributions to my campaign, identifying their sources explicitly. Once elected, I will manage my office in a way that is open and transparent. I will serve the interests of the community, not campaign contributors.

4. If you are elected, or reelected, what are your top priorities for 2019?

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- 1) Adequately fund education
- 2) Ensure that Marylanders have access to affordable health care
- 3) Find win-win-win opportunities for business, communities and the environment
- 4) Support small local businesses

5. Do you believe that local Boards of Education in MD should have the right to terminate their Superintendents for cause?

Yes, Boards of Education are elected to represent the community and the Board employs the Superintendent. If a Superintendent is not responsive to community needs and demands (as was the case several years ago in Howard County), the Board of Education should have the power to require responsiveness or end their tenure.

6. Would you be willing to sponsor a Bill that elects the Howard County Board of Education members by district, and voted on by district? What districts do you believe are best to use? Why?

Local communities should be represented by their Boards of Education. In a county as diverse as Howard County, one way to ensure proper representation is to elect Board members at the district level. As shown in other states like California and South Carolina, school board elections at the district level can ensure that minorities are adequately represented. I would need additional information before making a decision on which districts should be used.

7. Do you believe that local Boards of Education should control their calendars without mandated dates to start or end the school year?

Yes. Local boards should be able to control the start and end dates for the school year to enable more flexibility and more responsiveness to their community,

8. Would you be willing to sponsor a Bill that shifts the burden of proof in Special Education litigation from parents/guardians to the County School System?

We need to address the achievement gap between children with and without disabilities. By closing the gap, litigation can be reduced and there will be a greater capacity for trust between all parties. In the meantime, Maryland should not be left behind in addressing this issue. At a minimum, Maryland should seek consent from parents before changing a placement or changing an Individualized Education Plan (as do CA, DE, FL, KS, MA, MN, MT, NH, OH, VA) and should ensure that parents have the information they need to keep our schools and our parents on the same team.

9. Do you believe that development fees should be increased in Howard County? Would you be willing to sponsor or vote for a Bill that allows Howard County to increase those fees? Would you be willing to enable Howard County that right in perpetuity? For all, why or why not?

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The quality of our educational system is a major driver of economic growth. If we don't maintain and improve our schools, we risk entering a cycle of economic decline in the county. I would vote in favor of giving counties the right to raise development fees as they see fit.

10. Do you support or oppose the Potomac Pipeline? Would you allow the transportation of natural gas through Maryland by pipelines?

The Potomac Pipeline would cross under the C&O Canal and the Potomac River, potentially threatening the water supply of Maryland and the Washington D.C. region – a risk we can't afford to take. Instead we should do more to encourage the development of renewable, clean energy, which can be an engine for economic development and growth in jobs.

11. Do you support the ban on styrofoam in carryout packaging? Would you sponsor or support a ban or a fee on plastic grocery bags?

Yes, Maryland should join other states and ban Styrofoam (expanded styrene) carryout packaging as it is an environmental and health risk. We should encourage alternatives that are recyclable and/or biodegradable and support small businesses in their transition to these products.

Yes, I would support a fee on plastic grocery bags. It has been used successfully in other counties and only requires a short adjustment period.

12. What is your position on increased gun control? How would you go about increasing safety for our schools and/or other public venues?

We need to look at the complex issue from all angles: school protection, gun safety, mental health, and collaboration across state & federal agencies. I will champion collaboration across the diverse interest groups working in this space.

In terms of school safety, we need to:

- Increase security in schools based on evidence from other jurisdictions
- Support schools in identifying young people at risk of violence
- Provide better mental health care and follow up of people who are likely to present a danger to themselves or others
- Ensure that the county, state and federal authorities are communicating effectively to ensure nothing is overlooked

Although Maryland has some of the strictest gun laws in the nation, there remains room for improvement. I believe that the following provisions should be considered:

- Increasing effective background checks (including for private sales)
- Banning bump stocks and rapid-fire trigger activators
- Allowing for restraining orders on people who pose a danger to others and confiscating their weapons, especially for people charged with domestic abuse
- Requiring NRA (or equivalent) safety training for anyone purchasing a rifle

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13. Describe positions you have taken, or votes you have made, or causes you have championed, which you feel are the most important. Include information on any position or vote you regret, or about which you feel differently.

My advocacy work has been intertwined with my professional work. Some highlights include:

- Working with companies on reducing their environmental footprint, contributing to their local communities, improving the lives of those in their supply chain and increasing transparency and engagement with communities and key stakeholders.
- Working with the Zambian Government to engage the private sector on the National Job Creation & Industrialization Strategy.
- Co-authoring [Delivering on the Promise](#) with The Partnering Initiative and World Vision International to advocate for multi-stakeholder collaboration on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Supporting partnerships between large development agencies, NGOs and Fortune 500 companies on topics as diverse as childhood literacy, chronic disease, water and women.

14. Choose from topics below on womens' rights and describe your positions, especially regarding any MD law you believe needs changing.

Employment (wage disparities, family leave)

Safety (human trafficking, domestic abuse)

Reproductive health

Access to affordable and high quality reproductive health care is essential to Maryland's women and families. This includes prenatal care, delivery services, post-natal care, and family planning. Good reproductive health care improves maternal and child health, and reduces birth injuries, premature births, and low birth weight. Access to family planning helps families decide when and how many children to have, prevents unplanned and high-risk pregnancies, and helps ensure financial well-being. I support a woman's right to choose abortion and am committed to making abortion a rare event through comprehensive health education and access to contraception.

15. How would you improve community living opportunities for people with disabilities?

People with disabilities also face problems with access to both affordable housing and health care services, particularly mental health and addiction counseling. I support efforts to increase both affordable housing, state and county housing vouchers and the availability of mental health and addiction services to our community, especially for people with disabilities. I support organizations like The Arc, which provide employment opportunities to people with disabilities and would like to learn more about how we can support this population.

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16. How much time do you believe should pass before it is allowed, in Ethics Regulations, before a prior elected official can be compensated by a private company that could have benefited from the decisions of that official?

I would need more information before answering this question. I'll be looking to ethics advocates to help inform me of the current regulations and how they could be improved.

17. Have you ever testified before the MD General Assembly? If so, describe positions you have taken.

I have testified before the Howard County Council on several issues. For example:

- In favor of amendments to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (CB61-2017)
- Identifying discrepancies between the Task Force Recommendations and CB60 (Natural Wood Waste (Mulch) and Composting Regulations)
- In favor of extending the High-Performance Building Tax Credit FAVOR of CB5-2016

By Authority, The People's Voice PAC, Lisa Markovitz, Treasurer