

August 16, 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 General Election in 2018. Click on the "Ethics Ballots" tab at www.ethicsballot.com, and dropdown to Criteria and Logos, for further details on endorsement criteria.

Please return questionnaires via email to ethicsballot@gmail.com by midnight on **Monday, September 3, 2018**. Please email any questions you have about this questionnaire. A Board Member will respond, confirming receipt. We cannot endorse a candidate who does not completely fill out and return the questionnaire.

Candidate Information

Name	Natalie Ziegler
Phone	410-215-3456
Website	www.Nataliefor9A.com
Campaign Account Name	Friends of Natalie Ziegler
Treasurer	John Zirschky
Chairman	N/A
Campaign Manager	John Zirschky

Current Funds
Balance

[Click here to enter text.](#)

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 a farmer, small business owner and moderate who understands the needs and perspective of District 9A. I'm running because I was so disturbed by the hostility of the last election campaign. I want to find a way through these culture wars so that we can focus on our problems. There is nothing wrong with vigorous debate— on the contrary its a good thing— but the debate has to be content driven. What we have now is just an exercise in “us and them”, and it is really harmful to our democracy.

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

There is a tremendous amount of activist energy looking for some changes this year, so we have some wonderful volunteers, and people are willing to get involved. I have been endorsed by the teachers' union, the AFL-CIO, AFCSME, several democratic clubs, the Sierra Club, the League of Conservation Voters and the Carroll County Times among others. Voters seem to appreciate the fact that I am a farmer and small business owner, and not a politician. Lastly I am willing to wear out as many pairs of shoes as necessary to knock all the doors in the district.

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

I don't care about the appearance of conflicts- I care about actual conflicts. I would not accept contributions that came with strings attached that conflicted with what I think is right.

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

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Full funding for education along with accountability and changes in education funding priorities, affordable access to healthcare, preserving our environment and rural character, support for small businesses and farmers

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

Yes.

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?

Yes. Board members should be accountable to parents/voters in specific schools. For simplicity's sake I would use the councilmanic districts.

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

As long as it represents the same amount of total school, yes.

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?

Yes, but it would have to be written carefully. It is in nobody's best interest to have the school system endlessly embroiled in litigation or paying out huge sums because they were unable to meet, for example, an impossible standard.

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?

I hate to see Howard County become completely unaffordable for "normal" people, but I'm afraid that is where we already are, so reluctantly, yes, I would support increasing developer fees, with the awareness that they will be passed directly to consumers. Counties should have that right in perpetuity, but I want to make sure that fees developers pay for infrastructure improvements actually go to those improvements. Our fees are low compared to neighboring counties, but they certainly are assessed, and I don't see that they result in improvements to infrastructure in many cases.

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

I oppose the Potomac Pipeline.

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! We need to get rid of styrofoam— and perhaps could replace with packaging made from corn!

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

I support sensible gun legislation, including a ban on bump stocks and weapons of war, gun violence restraining orders, and increasing the legal purchase age to 21. I also think we need to do some hardening of schools, to include single entry points and more classroom exits, along with smaller classes so teachers can identify troubled students, and better access to mental health treatment.

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.

As a member of the Howard County Economic Development Board, I successfully lobbied for expanded rights for farmers to engage in retail and value-added activities on their farms, such as farm stands and food processing. I also have championed the cause of adult education. I tutor at South Baltimore Learning Center and feel very strongly that we cannot abandon the 500,000 adults in Md who do not have a high school diploma, many of whom are functionally illiterate. In terms of having changed my mind, the thing that haunts me the most are decisions I made as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for children in the foster care system in Howard County. One can never know what the right thing really was, but at the time I was much more in favor of removing children from dangerous and neglectful homes than I would be now, because I have seen more disastrous results from foster care placements.

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

I would like to see the Equal Rights Amendment passed, and there is a significant movement to try again. Maryland, which didn't ratify the 19th amendment until 1941, could get out in front on this one!

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

Transportation is often a critical issue for people with disabilities, and this area is woefully lacking in public transportation. Improving the lives of people with disabilities would be just one benefit of improving public transportation, along with better air quality, less traffic, better options for lower income and elderly residents and making the area more attractive to businesses and young people.

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?

This is tricky because MD legislators are not full time and spend 3/4 of the year in their regular jobs, where presumably this issue could come up throughout their terms. If, for example, a legislator sold software to the government, and changed procurement rules while an incumbent in such a way that he benefitted, that benefit would be immediate, but could be subtle and hard to really trace, and could also be a genuine benefit to the government and the taxpayer. Such compensation is huge problem, but I'm not sure the passage of time is the fix for it. I think we need to look at the kind of compensation and how it differed from previous business. The devil is in the details with these things and I would have to study it much more carefully, but certainly have getting corruption out of our government as a high priority.

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

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I have never testified before the MD General Assembly. I have accompanied Marylanders to Present Gun Violence to create a show of support for those who were testifying on bills to overturn the citizen review board for denied concealed carry permits, and a ban on bump stocks.

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