

PEOPLE VOICE ETHICS BALLOT

DUE May 24th at midnight

ETHICS BALLOT QUESTIONNAIRE

Howard County Legislative Primary 2022

Congratulations on your decision to run for Howard County State Delegate. The People's Voice is a civic/political organization in Howard and Montgomery Counties. We have over 4,000 members in Howard

County and sponsor the non-partisan Ethics Ballot. If you would like to seek endorsement please return this Questionnaire to EthicsBallot@Gmail.com by midnight May 24, 2022. Please note that all questionnaires are published on the website, www.EthicsBallot.com

We will be in touch regarding endorsement dates soon after getting the questionnaires back. We pride ourselves in working hard for our endorsed candidates, and look forward to hearing your positions on important County issues. THANK YOU so very much for your time!

Be sure to address all aspects of each question.

Name/District: Jen Terrasa, D13

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Educational History: University of Baltimore School of Law, J.D.,
summa cum laude (editor, law review), 1997; University of
Maryland at College Park, B.A., Sociology, summa cum laude,
1992.

Languages Spoken/Other Skills/Relevant Experience

For the past 4 years, I have represented District 13 in the House of Delegates. Prior to that, I served as the Councilwoman for County Council District 3 for 12 years. Prior to that I was a community activist, and I also served my community on the Howard County Planning Board, Kings Contrivance Village Board, and as Stoneridge HOA president

1. Why are you running for this office? Describe how your campaign is viable.

I am running to continue serving my community, as I have for almost 18 years, and because I think it is critical that we continue to have strong, consistent, experienced, progressive voices in the Maryland State legislature. Having served as a legislator for Howard County for almost 16 years, I have more legislative experience than anyone else running for delegate in District 13. From experience, I know what it takes to be successful in Annapolis - how to work with my colleagues, advocates, and other stakeholders to create better legislation and a better Maryland.

As a Howard County legislator, I have a reputation for speaking up and asking the difficult questions, for being persistent; and for standing up for people, especially those who feel that they have no voice and even when it is not popular to do so. In fact, I am guided by how our actions or inactions as a legislature will impact underserved communities and those whose voices that need to be amplified. I also have a reputation for good constituent services, something my office spends a lot of our time on. It is something I am very proud of, because I am here to serve you, to legislate yes, but to try to help where I can to make interacting with the state smoother, and to make our County a better place to live.

This is my 5th election following four successful campaigns. I am proud to be part of Team 13! We work well together both during the Legislative Session and as a campaign team, combining resources of time, money, and other campaign work. My plan is to do numerous team mailings and knock doors every day that I can.

2. Have you signed the No Dark Money, No Developer Money pledge? If NOT, how do you eliminate the appearance of conflicts?

I have not, but I think I have a clear record of holding developer's accountable, and of fighting to lessen money's influence in politics. For example, in 2016 when I fought with the developer in Downtown to make them build affordable housing and to keep them from getting additional density and a \$90 million TIF. I also was a primary sponsor for the Citizen Election Fund legislation which aims at getting big money out of elections.

3. If you are elected, what are your top priorities for 2022?
Discuss at least three legislative areas in need of change, and how you would address them.

There are many pressing issues facing the state and Howard County specifically, including the climate crisis, school overcrowding, and lack of mental health services. The climate crisis, I address below in Question 10. We are working to address school overcrowding through additional capital funding for schools; however, there is much to be done with local zoning in terms of school overcrowding. I have also worked hard not to allow the state legislature to be used to prevent local governments from putting reasonable restrictions on development and growth. And the mental health services I believe are a big part of what needs to be addressed with health care. Three big issues I have particularly focused on are access to healthcare, campaign finance reform, and housing/eviction prevention.

From my perspective, healthcare is a human right, and I don't truly believe we can address the issue of poverty and inequity without a single payer healthcare system which I support. Converting to a universal, single payer system will also ultimately reduce healthcare costs and strengthen employee bargaining power by removing healthcare from the mix and freeing workers from the fear of losing healthcare if they choose to leave an unfavorable workplace. I think this is better accomplished at the federal level, however, unless and until that happens I support moving forward with medicare for all on the state level. Similarly, when I was on the County Council, Howard County moved forward with Healthy Howard (Howard County's precursor to Obama care) which I championed until the Affordable Act passed and was implemented on the federal level. In addition, the state should continue to expand access to mental health, dental, and eye care.

I believe getting money out of politics is one of the most critical things we can do both for our democracy generally and to achieve our progressive goals. I plan to reintroduce HB93 again to require reporting in local elections and continue to support legislation to get money out of politics. When I was on the County Council, I sponsored a bill that passed which set up a citizen election fund, which supports candidates ability to fund elections with small donations from individual donors rather than large corporations and developers and PACs.

I am very concerned about tenants rights and housing and have either worked on or co-sponsored many tenants rights bills, including a bill to make sure we are tracking eviction data, another bill that would shield COVID related eviction records so people who suffered loss of income due to COVID and subsequently had eviction cases filed against them are able to rent again in the future, and a bill to protect people's pets in case of evictions. Last year we passed a bill which included my language requiring tenants to be given 10 day notice before a landlord files a court case for eviction.

4. What do you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the current Howard County Delegation? How have you demonstrated your ability to work with people who have diverse opinions and party affiliations?

I think we have a strong delegation that works well together consistently, and that is good for residents and our county. One example, in District 13, as is done in other jurisdictions within the delegation, is when we have a big issue like problems with unemployment insurance, our staff works together to make sure everyone gets the attention they deserve and we streamline things so that the Governor's staff which is ultimately responsible for fixing those issues can better work to resolve the problem. One of our weaknesses is how small we are which means we have less power in the General Assembly compared to larger delegations such as Prince George's or Baltimore County or City. However, we are very fortunate to have so many committee chairs (Vanessa Atterbeary, Ways and Means; Guy Guzzone, Senate Budget and Tax; Shane Pendergrass, Health and Government Operations) and other experienced legislators who influence policy.

We have a very diverse county, and the fact that we work well together helps us better appreciate the different concerns in different areas of the county. In terms of working with people in a different party, when I was on the Council I worked well with both democrat and republican county executives, as well as with our sole republican on the council, Greg Fox, who I worked extensively with. On the state level, both parties work closely toward a better Maryland. You can see this in the number of bills that republicans are able to pass despite a super majority held by the democratic party.

5. Do you believe that State or County funded housing trust funds should be utilized to provide affordable housing? If so, should they be restricted to government usage and not private projects? Why or why not?

Yes, the way to get affordable housing is to require developers to build onsite and to have an affordable housing trust fund to help bring prices down so we are also reaching folks with lower incomes, not just middle and workforce housing. I have a preference for government projects but could see some use to working with private developers to develop affordable housing. However, and it is a big however, there must be restrictions on the use and requirements that go along with it. For example, not concentrating affordable housing in certain neighborhoods,

keeping it affordable long term, and not allowing developers to build only in some areas and to pay a fee-in-lieu to get out of doing them in other areas. To be clear, the answer is not lifting all limits on development or merely adding density and hoping that will trickle down to magically create affordable housing.

6. Do you support shifting the burden of proof in Special Education litigation from parents/guardians to the County School System? If not, why? If so, should legislation have a sunset clause?

Absolutely and no sunset. We passed this legislation (HB865) in the House during the 2022 Session, Unfortunately, it did not make it through the Senate. This type of legislation is essential because without it school systems are disincentivized from working with the child to provide the necessary services. In addition, the burden to fund the litigation falls on the parents of the child denied benefits who often have much more limited resources than the school system.

7. Do you believe any State laws need to change regarding reproductive health?

It is essential that we protect a woman's right to choose especially given the impending Supreme Court decision on this issue. This year, I was proud to cosponsor (and then vote to override the Governor's veto of) the Abortion Care Access Act to ensure access and equity for those seeking care.

Additionally, I voted for a bill this year which would have enshrined the right to abortion in the Maryland constitution. The legislation passed the House, but unfortunately, did not pass in the Senate. I plan to support the bill again in the 2023 Legislative Session.

Another important bill I supported was the Pregnant Persons Freedom Act. If passed it would have prevented women from being prosecuted for seeking or obtaining an abortion, miscarriage, or still birth. I also plan to support this bill again in the 2023 Legislative Session.

8. What changes, if any, do you support regarding employment law?

I support increasing the minimum wage so that it is enough to live on, to house and feed your family, and to live a decent life. People shouldn't have to work multiple jobs just to support

themselves and their loved ones. \$15 dollars should be a minimum. You really can't afford housing and food and healthcare even on \$15/hour nevermind the current minimum wage in many areas other than Howard County.

We also need to follow through on the commitment we made by passing the Time to Care Act, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program to provide up to 12 weeks of paid time off for workers facing personal or family medical issues. No one should have to choose between putting food on the table and getting treatment for cancer, caring for their newborn, or comforting a parent during their last days.

I also support legislation strengthening the right of workers to unionize which will help secure better working conditions and pay.

9. Do you believe there is a need to change the MD Forest Conservation requirements or any other environmental protection or storm water management requirements?

I'm extremely concerned about the continuous loss of mature forests in Howard County and all of Maryland while we as a state are furiously trying to build up forestland, plant trees etc.

Stormwater management is also a big issue. However, while we are addressing storm water management, we have to be extremely cautious that we are not allowing for/rewarding the removal of many mature trees. One of my biggest concerns related to this is about creating private markets for this, which in my opinion may incentivize the wrong type of actions. For example, stream bank mitigation banks are concerning because they allow developers out of onsite stream bank mitigation and instead allow them to "buy" credits from a private for-profit engineering company. There is also an incentive for private property owners to allow this type of work because it is often done at little or no monetary cost to the private property owner by the engineering company because they make their money from other private developers who are getting out of their onsite mitigation requirements. The developer, the engineering firm, and even the private property owner may like this because of the cost saved by the original developer, the money made by the engineering firm, and the "free" work being done for the private property owner.

HOWEVER, the problem is that this work is rewarded by the number of miles of work done, not the positive impact on the environment which takes longer and is harder to evaluate/measure. This incentivizes removing more miles of trees. All too frequently, stream restoration projects involve the removal of large swaths of mature trees along more and more miles of stream bank and create additional land disturbance. In addition, some projects significantly degrade or

destroy existing habitat and deny the public the ability to enjoy the beauty of the existing environment. All without proof that there is a net benefit for Maryland.

10. What legislation do you feel is necessary to address Climate change concerns?

Maryland passed landmark legislation this Session, the Climate Solutions Now Act, which strengthens our commitment to mitigating the effects of climate change. The Act requires the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% from 2006 levels by 2031, which is 20% greater than requirements under current law. Additionally, the state is required to achieve net-zero statewide greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. The next steps will be to use the data that comes out of Climate Solutions Now to work on concrete steps to achieve those goals, including electrifying buildings and other parts of the economy, expanding EV infrastructure throughout the state, and expanding renewable energy so that electricity is coming from clean, renewable sources.

I have put in several bills and cosponsored many others on climate change related issues including several related to expanding EV charging infrastructure and reducing the use of plastics while creating a market for recycled plastics. I also worked closely with Delegate Sheila Ruth on a bill to give the Attorney General the ability to sue the fossil fuel industry for the damage caused by their impact on climate change they knowingly cause. I am hopeful that this legislation will pass next year, but also that the next Governor will cooperate more with the attorney general to bring these types of lawsuits and recover funds expended by taxpayers on the damage caused by fossil fuel companies.

11. What changes or extensions to the MD agricultural preservation program do you believe are necessary?

The primary purpose of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program, is “to preserve sufficient agricultural land to maintain a viable local base of food and fiber production for the present and future citizens of Maryland.” To do this, particularly in Howard County where so much of the ag land in the western part of the county is already preserved, we need to preserve more land in the east where there are a number of large pieces of farmland remaining. Preserving farmland in the east is just as likely to serve the purpose of ensuring the viability of “local base of food and fiber production for the present and future citizens” as preserving land in the west. To make this work, we will have to change the criteria for preservation, recognize that land in the eastern part of Howard County (or similar areas statewide) will be more expensive, and therefore, we will also have to invest additional funds into this type of preservation.

The People's Voice, LLC

Ethics Ballot ™

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