



**GSSCC Candidate Questionnaire**  
**Montgomery County Council – At-Large**

Name: Paul Geller \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: paul@alohapaulgeller.com \_\_\_\_\_  
Web Address: www.AlohaPaulGeller.com \_\_\_\_\_  
Elected Office You are Seeking: Montgomery County Council \_\_\_\_\_  
Legislative District: At-Large \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Years Lived in that District: 26+ years \_\_\_\_\_  
Party Affiliation: Democrat \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant Non-governmental Professional Experience/Positions Held: Immediate Past President of the 42,000+ member Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA); MCCPTA Vice President of Programs 2013-16. (Elected a nearly unprecedented four times in a row to hold one of eight positions on our MCCPTA Executive Committee; and the only one to do it full-time). Host, MCCPTA Presents! television show on MCPS-TV 2013-17. MCCPTA Cluster Coordinator 2013-16. Maryland PTA State Membership Chair 2015-16. Maryland PTA Board Member. Local PTA/PTSA President 2012-16. President, Board of Directors, D.C. Law Students In Court Program; Vice President, D.C. Law Students In Court Program. Writer, Researcher.

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1. GSSCC believes that a thriving business community brings prosperity for all of our citizens by increasing the number of good private sector jobs and expanding the tax base to support necessary public services.
  - Please list all the initiatives/legislation you have supported/or would support to foster the growth of existing businesses and encourage new business creation.

We need to make the business climate in Montgomery County much more user friendly. In my travels around the county, I have heard many people comment on challenges they have encountered in doing business here. To improve things I plan on working with my colleagues, the County Executive, and others to do the following:

Ease doing business with the county itself. I have heard the comment made that doing business with the federal government is easier than doing business with Montgomery County. We need to change that. We need to ease the rules. We also need to break up large contracts into small parts so that more companies can participate in the bidding process.

We need to standardize and simplify our code enforcement. Have heard many people make the observation that they will have a construction project approved by one inspector, and a week later another inspector comes in and says the same work is wrong. We need consistency in inspections. We cannot allow our businesses to try to follow the code to the letter at great expense, only to have a person with a different opinion and from the same office, come in and say the work is not correct. I will work with my colleagues to fix this.

I will work at reducing the Energy Tax right away and using it for its true purpose: installing solar and geothermal energy projects on all municipal buildings and schools that can have them installed. This Energy Tax has been another thorn in the side of business for far too long. We need to adjust it to a more fair level.

Will also work diligently at bringing new businesses here to Montgomery County as well as working at encouraging existing businesses to expand. We need to bring the new Amazon 2 Headquarters here to Montgomery County. It belongs here! I even started up a social media website on Facebook to get the ball rolling: MakeItMontgomery. We need to encourage businesses to move here so that we can more fully utilize the approximately 10,000,000 square feet of available office space. This will help grow our tax base and lessen the burden on our residents.

My support of employer growth and success, two items of vital interest to all of us in the county, begins with one of our biggest draws to Montgomery County, our fabulous Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). As Immediate Past President of our 42,000+ member Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) and a four year member of their eight member Executive Committee, I was a tireless, full-time advocate for making sure our school system thrived.

Other ways I have supported existing businesses are:

The Education First Budget of 2016. This effort, the first time we were ever able to exceed the state mandated Maintenance of Effort (MOE), was begun with a conversation between me and a member of our Board of Education. This person sought me out to make an unprecedented ask for \$100M over MOE. And, with the help of a great many people, we made it happen by eventually securing \$87M over MOE. This effort was needed to reduce class sizes...something desperately needed because teachers had told me, all across the county, that unless this issue was addressed they would either leave the county and teach elsewhere, or stop teaching altogether. This would have had a devastating effect on our community and would have made our county less attractive to businesses.

I was one of the leads in securing the second record setting Operating Budget for MCPS in 2017 that once again exceeded MOE. This budget benefitted our employers by providing greater services to our students countywide...their future employees and our future entrepreneurs and leaders. This budget provided for more teachers, more school psychologists and counselors, more paraeducators, and new programming to address the opportunity gap that affects us all.

I have been a steadfast advocate in Annapolis for the last three years in trying to get our public schools statewide a greater percentage of casino gambling revenues from table games. And this year we are getting some serious traction on the issue. Up until recently, I was one of the lone voices talking about this issue. How does this affect employer growth and success? Simple! If we can get a greater percentage of revenue from casino gambling, we can ease the tax burden on our businesses and residents. This will have a tremendously positive impact on our economy because it will free everyone up to spend more money in the community thanks to taxes that are either held steady or reduced.

In order to build upon our current economic success, I have designed a social media campaign to encourage current businesses here to expand, and others to move here or open an office here. Found on Facebook at MakeItMontgomery, I include short, folksy postings in an effort to attract businesses and interested parties alike to consider Montgomery County for their future growth plans. The key is making it down to earth so people want to log in and see what is cooking on the site. And so far, many people have checked it out. And, oddly enough, people are finding out about it on their own. Have not even begin to publicize it yet.

Finally, I have been a doggone good citizen.

For many years I have been a dedicated community volunteer. I dedicate no less than three thousand hours annually for the last thirteen years to making our community better through my non-profit work. Yes, I have not earned a nickel for any of my efforts. What I earn are smiles. Plenty of them from people who appreciate seeing someone take on their cause, help them out, or simply to work alongside our students to help them learn in class.

In order to train new advocates in some of the ways of doing things right, I hosted a television show on MCPS-TV for four years called MCCPTA Presents. On that talk show I interviewed everyone from students to elected officials. It was always my goal to make the guests the stars...and to have them share their expertise with our viewers. Elected officials in particular offered the best advice...advice people have told me they followed in their own advocacy success efforts.

I also am a long time Captain with Taste of Bethesda. While this may seem trivial, when I began volunteering with the Bethesda Urban Partnership back in 1992, we all felt it was our job to support our community by making our businesses shine. I still take that same approach to my volunteer efforts more than a quarter of a century later. Many of the small and large businesses that participate in this annual extravaganza support my friends, neighbors and colleagues with good jobs, a good meal, or simply by being great contributors to the community. I do my best to make sure everyone involved feels welcome and appreciated. From the banks that I have partnered with for many years to help sell tickets, to the newest of restaurants, to my most seasoned volunteers, all their efforts are appreciated.

- Please describe your plan for increasing the tax base – rather than tax rates – in the County.

As stated above, I plan on working diligently with my colleagues on the County Council as well as the County Executive to bring new businesses here to Montgomery County. Not only will that increase the tax base, it will reduce the tax burden on all our residents. It will also provide more jobs for our residents so that they do not have to commute to Virginia or Washington, D.C. to get to work. Will also work with the Economic Development Corporation, the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, and other business minded organizations, listen to the suggestions and challenges of their members, and then come up with an action plan for success. We should be giving Northern Virginia a run for their money each and every day. We need to compete with them for companies and jobs and win!!!

- What is your plan for making Montgomery County more attractive to businesses looking to expand or relocate (i.e. increased tax incentives, subsidies, streamlining the development approval process)?

We certainly should explore all avenues available to us for attracting the best companies to our county along with encouraging the growth of existing companies. I am open to discussing possibilities such as tax incentives, subsidies, and certainly streamlining the approval process. We also need to be more pro-active and go seek out businesses nationwide and recruit them to come here. We should be doing our best to attract new biotech and high technology firms to open offices here. We have a well educated workforce, great schools, wonderful quality of life, excellent cultural offerings, a diverse community, and so much more. We need to promote it all!

2. Montgomery County leaders have continued to approve increases in the County's operating budget that require spending at levels exceeding private sector growth. GSSCC believes the County government needs to do a better job of living within its means. This is even more important given the recent announcement of a \$120 million revenue shortfall for the current fiscal year.
  - Did you or would you have supported the 2016 property tax increase?

Considering I was one of the lead advocates for investing in MCPS, I did support the measures needed to get the additional revenue into our schools. The amount worked out to, on average, less than \$1 a day, and will most likely be recouped in enhanced property values in the long run. And this is according to no less an authority than Councilmember Nancy Floreen, arguably one of the more fiscally conservative members of the Council and the architect of the entire proposal.

Now, for the big question...would I support a property tax increase in the future to fund our schools? That certainly is not my plan or anything I would consider unless circumstances were dire. I feel we need to get a greater contribution to our schools from Annapolis. And I most certainly will continue my successful advocacy efforts there that have already helped bring more than \$15M to Montgomery County in the last four years alone. And, there is another one of my signature efforts...securing greater funding for our schools statewide from a greater percentage of casino gambling revenues from table games. We get a ludicrously small percentage of the take on these games: the casinos keep 80% and the schools receive 17.5%. Even in video lottery terminals the split is a relatively acceptable 45%/45%. This needs to change and, as your next At-Large Councilmember, I will continue to doggedly pursue this revenue source.

- Did you or would you have supported the 2016 recordation tax increase?

Again, considering I was one of the lead advocates countywide for finding a greater source of school construction revenue to deal with the challenging backlog of construction and renovation projects countywide for MCPS, I did support this measure. The logic for this initiative was quite sound. And again, this came directly from then Council President Nancy Floreen. Since people generally move to Montgomery County, or within Montgomery County, for the schools, why not have these folks contribute to the fund to maintain the classrooms? At face value it makes plenty of good sense. And while I understand the trepidation of my good friends in the real estate community, one of the sentiments I conveyed to them was the fact that some of our schools are falling into such a state of disrepair, that they may be a turnoff to potential new residents.

For example, E. Brooke Lee Middle School, is in great need of HVAC work. Yet, until this item was approved, it languished for years on a list of schools scheduled for projects. Maryvale Elementary will soon be co-located with the Carl Sandburg Learning Center. Both of these buildings are in dire need of replacement or serious renovation. These funds will help make these projects possible.

- Did you or would you have supported the eventual phase out of the County's exorbitant energy tax?

The percentage of the Fuel Energy Tax definitely needs to be reconsidered. I have heard many people and businesses comment about this. That said, this revenue source was designed to help place the county on a stronger alternative energy footing. We need to create a lockbox for these funds and use them to acquire solar and geothermal systems for all Montgomery County offices and Montgomery County Public Schools capable of utilizing them. Once this is accomplished, and done with an initial reduction in the Fuel Energy Tax, we should consider sunsetting the increase.

- Other than raising taxes, what ideas do you have for creating an economy that will meet the growing needs of county residents?

One of the hallmarks of my campaign is my focus on the economy. If we expand the economy, our revenue base will grow organically. I want businesses to MakeItMontgomery! We need to grow our businesses here in Montgomery County. We need to streamline or building inspection process that many people have commented to me could be significantly improved. We need to dial back regulations at the county and state levels to make our county significantly more business friendly. This would provide the impetus for growth as well as attracting new businesses to come here.

My ultimate goal after my first four years are complete on the County Council is to see the number of cars entering Montgomery County from Virginia being approximately the same number as those traveling to Virginia each morning and afternoon. Is this possible? Absolutely! However we need to have a mindset in the public and private sector that we all need to be working together, supporting one another and communicating constantly.

We also need to be pursuing housing more federal agencies here in Montgomery County. I will work with our new County Executive and eight colleagues to encourage government agencies to move here. We offer a fabulous way of life. We want them here!!! My staff and other interest parties will come up with a plan for evaluating what agencies will soon be deciding on future office space plans, and do our best to woo them here.

Another way to grow the economy is through reduced taxes. For the last three years I have been one of the lone champions statewide for getting a greater percentage of revenues from casino gambling revenues from table games. Right now the casinos keep 80% of these profits, with our schools receiving a pitiful 17.5%. We need to make this a 50/50 split akin to the 45%-45% split that used to exist for video lottery terminals. This money was implied to be for education. Instead it has gone into the Maryland General Fund and is commingled with other funds. I am working at getting this changed by supporting a lockbox for education in this session of the General Assembly.

- Would you support consolidation of some County Government functions in order to reduce costs? If so, please describe which programs or services you would recommend be consolidated, reduced, or eliminated.

If there are some programs that businesses and residents would like the County Council to consider consolidating, I would be open to hearing their views. There certainly are efficiencies that can be found with the Montgomery County Public Schools in construction projects. And, once elected to the Council, I will make implementing those efficiencies a priority.

- Other comments:

We should consider community support for organizations such as the Montgomery Housing Partnership that do a great job of rehabilitating older buildings, and then providing moderately priced housing along with wrap around services for the residents. Housing costs are a major issue that can be addressed by being creative and innovative.

3. In recent years, our members have faced an increasing number of federal, state, and expanded local regulations that directly impact their ability to remain viable.

- Did you or would you have supported the additional increase to the Montgomery County minimum wage to \$15 by 2020?

This is the hot button issue of the last couple of years. Would I have supported this measure had I been on the Council at the time? It places a huge burden on small businesses that are trying simply to stay afloat. That said, it is nearly impossible these days in this county to live on what amounts to \$30,000 a year without having a second or third job, or having two wage earners in a house. It also is going to have quite an effect on our non-profit community...which in turn, will affect the County Council. The Council provides funding in the form of grants to many non-profits doing great work here in the county. They are going to need to increase the salaries of their employees. How will they do that?

My sense is the Fight For \$15 effort needs to be a nationwide matter. This is a greater conversation than just in our county. It involves what we as a society value. It involves fundamental fairness. And it involves self reflection. Do we need to legislate a minimum wage if employers are willing to pay a good living wage to employees?

My concern about the \$15 minimum wage here is that we are going to lose jobs. Employers who are on the margins of making a profit will either do without hiring some people currently employed, mechanize some of

their tasks and eliminate existing jobs, or go out of business or move elsewhere. And what a tragedy that would be. The premise of a \$15 minimum wage is a good one. What remains to be seen is if it will work out in practice.

- Did you or would you have supported mandatory sick leave, even for part-time employees?

This is a major expense for small businesses. In this case, the state or federal government should figure out a way to address this issue. While I think health care should be available to all, mandatory sick leave being imposed on say a two person small business could place tremendous financial burdens on the business should one person take ill.

- Do you support an employer's right to hire and schedule its employees according to its individual needs?

While I support an employer's right to hire and schedule employees according to its individual needs, we need to be fair to employees as well. Changing schedules at the last minute places vulnerable employees, such as those with families or attending school, in a bad position. We need to be cognizant of this and make sure to be fair and reasonable with scheduling changes.

- Do you support legislation that dictates minimum work hours or scheduling requirements?

It depends on how the legislation is drafted. We do not want to place undue burdens upon our small to medium sized businesses.

- What policy ideas do you have to enhance the success of our member job-creators?

Advocacy is key. I have been successful as an advocate because I like to tell the officials I am addressing what the challenge is and weave it into a narrative if at all possible. Hearing GSSCC members tell their stories about how the increase in the minimum wage will affect them would make for powerful testimony.

- Other comments:

We need to seek out greater investment from Annapolis. They are lagging behind in supporting our schools and community. This alone would help free up funding for other purposes.

At least once every eight weeks I will meet with a variety of business leaders to discuss what they need from government in order to thrive. I will pro-actively seek out and meet with employers of all sizes to get their input on a variety of issues.

The job of being a good County Councilmember involves being a good listener. It is about taking what you hear and putting it into practice. And that is what I plan on doing.

Based on what I have heard, we need to immediately begin working on streamlining and standardizing codes and inspections. This is an unnecessary burden for any business. When one inspector approves a project, another will come by a week later and say changes need to be made. No. We will work with the agencies to make sure an approval sticks unless dire safety consequences need to be addressed.

I also support efforts to get more Montgomery County businesses bidding on countywide projects by breaking up contracts into small pieces so more businesses can participate. For example, instead of a project being put out for bid for installation of solar panels on twenty buildings, we break it up into five projects of four buildings a piece.

4. Prior to considering any legislation, the County Council seeks a Fiscal Impact Statement to determine the impact of that legislation on the County's budget.
  - Would you support a law that requires the same kind of analysis to determine the fiscal economic impact on businesses and non-profits, prior to consideration and enactment of any new law or regulation?

While a great idea in theory, this would be quite expensive to put into place in practice. This is where strong advocacy would come into play. If you can explain why legislation would be too onerous for your business or organization in a powerful way, you can indeed change the discussion. I heard many business owners, restauranteurs in particular, testify about the \$15 minimum wage. They said they would actually eliminate jobs because they could buy bagged produce that was pre-sliced for less than the cost of having to pay someone \$15 an hour to prepare it in the kitchen.

- Would you require that this analysis include interviews and discussions with actual business owners?

This is what the power of testimony is all about. If you can gather your facts, tell a story, and be reasonable about your request, you can move mountains. Members of the GSSCC can testify and share their experiences in business, especially how challenging it can be, with your Councilmembers. Having worked with our Council for a while now, I can tell you they are all reasonable people. You just need to make your testimony powerful, heartfelt, and polite.

- Why or why not?

Hearing from constituents makes all the difference. With the right testimony any argument can be swayed.

5. Many of our small- and medium-sized business members feel that the policies adopted most recently by County government reflect a lack of appreciation for the contributions they make to our community. Please describe your understanding of the difference between the challenges faced by large multinational companies and small locally owned/operated businesses. Provide three specific examples of how you will support small businesses and ensure opportunities for them to grow and expand.

Small, locally owned and operated businesses have a completely different set of challenges than large multinational companies. I come from a family with a proud history of generations of small business ownership. Most smaller businesses are simply getting by with little margin for additional expenses. And the minimum wage bill certainly creates a larger challenge. My ongoing concern is this increase may actually cause jobs to be eliminated simple because profit margins were already pretty thin to begin with. Large corporations can absorb these types of changes more readily because they can afford to do things based on economy of scale.

I will support small businesses in three ways:

First, we should have an active Small Business Commission within the County Executive's office to provide input and feedback on any potential legislation that may affect small businesses here in Montgomery County.

Second, we need to relax the stringent permitting process for small to mid-sized businesses. Again, we need to make sure costly renovation or construction work does not have to take place because one inspector approves something and another disagrees later.

Third, we need to make doing business with the county much easier. The entire procurement process in Montgomery County is far too cumbersome. When you need to take a required/recommended training class in how to do business with the county, you know things are too complicated. We need to simplify this process.

There should also be zero tolerance for cronyism as well. I have heard someone say it is not what you know, it is who you know. That is not fair nor should it be tolerated. We also need to break up large contracts into smaller ones so more of our small to mid sized businesses can bid on them,

6. The Silver Spring Central Business District was envisioned to become a smart-growth live/work/play community. However, in recent years, Silver Spring has evolved into a primarily residential neighborhood (bedroom community), with virtually no commercial office development in the past 10 years. Local retailers and restaurants are feeling the brunt of having fewer and fewer customers during office hours. What will you do to address this and help bring more businesses back to Silver Spring?

Montgomery County as a whole needs to pursue bringing new businesses here. We should be on a level footing of competing with Northern Virginia for attracting companies to move here. And we certainly have a golden opportunity to do this in Silver Spring. I will not hesitate to contact any company I, or anyone feels, should be opening an office here in Montgomery County, Maryland. We need to attract the best companies to set up shop here. And we need to work with all interested parties in making sure this happens: community leaders, developers, business leaders, and so on.

7. The Route 29 Corridor in Eastern Montgomery County has suffered from a lack of commercial and other development for many years. Traffic congestion has increased, and most of it is through traffic to the Beltway or downtown D.C. Few, if any new employment opportunities have been created to provide jobs that would take these cars off the road. What are you going to do to ensure economic development that brings new businesses to Silver Spring including downtown and the East County/Rt. 29 Corridor?

We need to completely transform the Route 29 Corridor into someplace extra special. We need to gather the business leaders and community members in the area for a series of town hall style meetings to figure out what people want to see in commercial, residential, and retail development in the area. Once we have a good idea of what the community wants, we need to assemble a task force of people to go out and work at attracting the businesses they want to see in the community. This should be a community led endeavor from start to finish. I will definitely be willing to work at bringing in whatever new businesses are desired, as well as encouraging existing businesses to expand.

8. The Chamber supports a balanced approach to transportation policies that take into account the needs of our member businesses, their employees, their customers, and their vendors. That balance must accommodate those who use public transit, drive on our roads, travel by bicycle and on foot, and need sufficient parking options at their destination.
  - Please describe your approach to finding the right balance of transit, roads, parking, and other transportation options.

There is a right balance of transit, roads, parking, and other transportation options. The key is finding it. I am very pleased that the BRT project is moving along. We need to eventually expand this type of service to possibly include a similar service to Bethesda, Rockville and Germantown from Silver Spring. I was very fortunate to attend the Transportation and Infrastructure Forum sponsored by Roger Berliner a few years ago. We need to have another such event for Silver Spring in which we discuss all the options available and what people who live and work there would like to see.

One of the cornerstones of my campaign is improved transportation. And one of the things I will work with all involved parties on at all levels will be intelligent, coordinated signaling countywide. We need traffic lights to be smarter. How many times have you driven down the road only to encounter red light after red light? On one recent trip along the entire length of Shady Grove Road from Muncaster Mill Road to the Universities at

Shady Grove, of the twenty-four traffic signals along that route, nine were red lights. Why? Our signals along main streets should all be coordinated to be green for up to a minute and a half at a time, then turn red to allow for cross traffic. And then back to green. And when no one is on the roads, the traffic lights should cycle to green faster. There is no sense wasting time and gasoline if we can get to green traffic signals sooner.

To improve the regional transportation network, we need to be more innovative. We also need to consider long-term benefits and keeping costs in check. If we happen to land a major new employer like Amazon, something many of us are working to achieve, we may want to consider utilizing higher end buses throughout more of the county that look entirely different from regular buses. These vehicles would provide an enhanced experience by offering WiFi, USB ports, video monitors with estimated time of arrival at various stops, and more. This would also free up time for commuters to be more productive. It would also keep a few cars off the road.

- How will you assure the future success of the Metro?

We need to support dedicated funding for WMATA. We need this vital transportation system to have a reliable source of revenue to address the backlog of issues we are currently facing, as well as to position it for the future. There was a time when it was a pleasure to take Metro. It was quite a novelty...and I say this as a long-time commuter who has travelled on the subways of many major cities. We need Metro to regain its lost luster. I will work with the County Executive and my fellow Councilmembers to make sure long overdue repairs and improvements are made, and that WMATA keeps up with improvements continuously.

- What will you do to address the needs and concerns of businesses that expect to be harmed financially during the construction of The Purple Line?

The County should consider expanding loan programs to help businesses affected by the construction of the Purple Line so that they can make it through these potentially lean years. We can also work with local businesses to see how else we can assist them: possibly with county contracts, providing them with discounted advertising on buses, and much more.

9. What is your vision for the future of greater Silver Spring and Montgomery County over the next 5 years?

In five years, I see yet another renaissance for Silver Spring. So much has been done to improve the downtown area. Now we need to see the entire area shine even brighter. Do we like the mix of high rise buildings and smaller storefronts? Do we want to consider expanding informal redevelopment to include tax incentives for rehabilitating storefronts and buildings? We need to work with the community to find out what their priorities are. We need to start raising the bar for everyone in the downtown area.

Then there is the Discovery building. We need to find a marquis tenant for that property. This will provide us with new jobs. And we need to bring in other world class businesses to Silver Spring.

For Montgomery County, my goal is to bring in several major companies to set up shop here...the largest being the Amazon 2 Headquarters. By gaining a major employer such as Amazon, we broaden our tax base and reduce the burden on individuals countywide. I see our spare square footage of office space dropping to 2,000,000 square feet or less..a fraction of the current space available. And I see just as many people coming here for jobs from Virginia as there are people leaving here to travel to Virginia for work.

10. If elected, how will you measure your success at the end of your term?

I plan on keeping track of my success the same way I did as leader of MCCPTA. Every year I will have a list of priorities based on what I hear from listening sessions I will hold, meetings I have, and tireless outreach efforts to all stakeholders. And, at the end of each year, I will review the list to see what we managed to address

and what still needs work. By doing this review annually, by the end of the first four year term we will have accomplished addressing a good many of the issues on the minds of our residents.

In conclusion, along with Melissa McKenna, I am one of the only At-Large candidates who has actual countywide experience as an elected officer of what many consider the largest membership organization in the county with 42,000+ members at 190+ schools. This is a key difference that sets us apart from other candidates. We are the only two candidates, to the best of our knowledge, to be elected to countywide office. Four times in a row, a nearly unprecedented occurrence, I was elected Vice President (three times) and President (once; left to run for County Council) of the 42,000+ member Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA). Former Rockville Mayor Steve Van Grack said it best when he told a person talking with us that being MCCPTA President is the same as any other elected position in the county. It required a tremendous amount of hard work, lots of diplomacy, listening to all, assembling a great team of people to work with, and tremendous amounts of goodwill, care, dedication, and countless hours of service. I would guess there were many weeks as a PTA leader, sometimes serving concurrently at the local, cluster, county and state levels, that I put in well north of one hundred hour weeks. I am often working around the county during the day and then attending meetings and gatherings at least four nights a week. And this has been going on at this level since 2013. I am well prepared to take the next step and be your next Councilmember. It was my pleasure to serve the residents of Montgomery County as PTA leader of one of the largest and most effective PTA advocacy groups in the country. During my time there I received local, county, statewide and national recognition for my work. And it will be my honor to continue my service to the residents of Montgomery County by being your next At-Large County Councilmember. Thank you, Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, for giving me this opportunity to share some of my vision with you for a greater Montgomery County.