

# 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	Dan Medinger
Phone	443-286-4317
Website	<a href="http://www.danielmedinger.com">www.danielmedinger.com</a>
Campaign Account Name	Friends of Dan Medinger
Treasurer	Bryan Coster
Chairman	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Campaign Manager	Sue Geckle
Funds Balance	\$150,000

### 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 because I want to collaborate with others to build the political will for a sustainable future. Many people have lost hope that we can create a better place for our children and others who will come after us. In the areas of education, the environment, the economy, transportation, health care and public safety, we will need to do things differently to get better results.

While I have always been political active (my family has held elective office in western Wisconsin for three generations), I started a career in journalism which developed into creating and leading businesses in communications. I believe that our government at all levels needs to do a better job of being transparent and in touch with constituents. My experience in media and communications will be helpful as we move forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I am an entrepreneur who has started several businesses and I know what it takes to create good paying jobs with benefits. My current business, Advertising Media Plus, has clients from Singapore to Seattle, and experience that will be beneficial as Maryland competes in a global economy. I know Maryland well; I have done business in every county of our state, which includes renovating an abandoned 22,000 square foot warehouse in Baltimore City, creating 45 jobs and contributing to the revitalization of a city neighborhood.

I also serve on several boards doing public service, including the Operating Budget Review Committee for Howard County Public Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, Rebuilding Together Howard County, the Community Foundation of Howard County.

I have experience that demonstrates that I can collaborate with others to get things done.

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

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Our campaign has a winning plan, adequate resources and a broad base of support. We have knocked on every door likely voters in the Democratic primary once and are about two-thirds of the way through Round Two. On some Saturdays, we have as many as 30 people involved. So, we have community support. Our positive message has resonated with voters who are looking for new people to get better results.

Also, I am so pleased with the support of many community leaders and activists who have endorsed my campaign. My campaign website has more than a dozen video testimonials.

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

As a former journalist and strong advocate for “sunshine laws,” I know that the best way to eliminate conflict of interest is transparency. My view of running for office is that I am going to be a representative of the people that I serve. I need to get to know them and they need to get to know me. That’s why I have been meeting people at the doors, personally answering their questions, listening to their concerns and helping them to know me.

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

With the expected release of the Kirwan Report, education will be a major priority of the Legislature. I want to help implement those recommendations that will lift up Maryland’s ability to provide equitable education opportunities to all of our students. I will be a “champion for the environment,” which will brand Maryland as a leader in combatting climate change while creating good paying jobs. I want us to consider options that will ensure that every Marylander has health insurance and I want to help grow the Home Health Care industry because I have learned there is a crying need for this type of compassionate and cost effective assistance. I will promote a comprehensive Aging policy so that seniors can age in community. I will work with others to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century regional transportation system. And finally, I will promote a series of good government reforms that include halting gerrymandering in our state.

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

Yes, absolutely. For school boards to have meaningful authority, they need the right to hire and fire. One without the other isn’t a system that makes sense and it has proven ineffective.

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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, I believe that school board members should be elected by district. Board members should be connected to a community and to represent schools and their stakeholders. Simply put, when all board members are responsible for all schools, then no board members are responsible for any schools. To facilitate clarity for the public and to encourage collaboration between the county and the school system, I believe that using the current County Council districts is the best option. (Parenthetically, I add that it may be time to consider adding members to the County Council. Our county has grown and it may be helpful for representative government to look at having more council members.)

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

Yes. I was very disappointed that Governor Hogan decided the opening and closing of our schools. These are local control decisions which have historically been handled successfully by local school boards. My biggest concern is that the governor's reasoning for the opening and closing dates was not driven by educational decisions. Rather he was considering business interests and vacation plans. Our children and our professional educators deserve leadership that understands the needs of education and the best way for our children to learn. As a legislator, I will do all that I can to return the school calendar back to local Boards of Education.

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, I would welcome the opportunity to be the lead sponsor of such a bill and look forward to working with citizens here in crafting the legislation to get meaningful reform.

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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Absolutely. These fees are artificially low and are contributing to the defunding of our public schools. As a member of the Operating Budget Review Committee for HCPSS, I proposed more than doubling the fees. In the last year, these fees raised about \$7.5 million and we added more than 1,000 students at an average of \$15,000 each. Clearly, the impact fee isn't covering costs, even in this one area of education. Yes, I believe that right to set these fees should be decided by county officials rather than a group in Annapolis. These fees are a local matter and don't need state involvement.

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

As an active member of several environmental groups, I am very concerned about the impact of these pipelines. They pose environmental risks and they are essentially designed to use Maryland as a conduit for international firms to earn money by shipping gas overseas. 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, I believe that we should ban Styrofoam in carryout packaging. And our over dependence on plastic bags is a habit that we need to break. As a champion for the environment, I will lead the fight to ban these products. I also will work to create the communications plan necessary to promote environmental stewardship. We were able to get the public involved in anti-littering and anti-smoking advocacy. We can do the same for environmentally unfriendly products and actions.

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

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We need to develop laws that support the vast majority of people in this country who are calling for stepped up gun safety legislation. I have posted areas that we should explore on my campaign website, which includes banning “weapons of war,” increasing background checks, building effective databases that communicate information about those who want to purchase weapons and prohibiting convicted domestic abusers from owning guns. Of course, we also need a more enlightened Supreme Court.

Schools safety and other public venues is a huge challenge. We will need to increase vigilance at entry ways and train personnel in what to look for to keep our kids and our communities safe. We will need to modify how we build schools and other venues in the future but it will not be easy or inexpensive. I recall how long it took to increase security at our airports – and they already had gateways for intervention. Too many of our schools and public spaces are not so easily controlled. So, our best efforts need to be to cutting down the risk by increasing gun safety laws that reduce the possibility of attacks on innocent children and other victims.

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.

To be successful, we need all members of our community participating. I have worked in several areas to be inclusive and to encourage equity. I am a strong advocate for the gay and lesbian community and a member of PFLAG. I have been active in the Black Lives Matter movement. I have opened the door to Indian business owners to be active in our Chamber of Commerce. As a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, I plan to be a “gateway” to helping those on the margins or those who feel that they are on the margins to get more aware, more involved and to be role models for others. I have recently added Korean, Spanish and Urdu to some of my campaign website. We need to speak the language to be inclusive.

I have listened and I have learned and I am grateful for all of those who have been patient and mentored me along the way.

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

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I support a woman's right to choose a full range of health care options. Our state has been a leader in protecting women's reproductive freedom and I will stand with those who want to protect these rights.

As an employer, I have not just advocated for but practiced equal opportunity and equal pay in the work place. I have provided family leave and promoted women to top leadership positions as part of our business model. For too long, we have been quoting statistics about women earning less than men. It's time that we go beyond the statistics and get the information that we need from individual employers and hold them accountable for unjust wage and compensation practices. When we start naming names and providing stiff penalties for unjust treatment, we will begin the change needed to create a fair and equal workplace.

I am very concerned about human trafficking. Human trafficking is modern slavery and we need vigorous efforts to stamp it out. We will need to increase law enforcement personnel and up the consequences for convictions.

Domestic abuse is a growing issue in our community, especially among the elderly. Education and intervention strategies are needed to treat everyone with dignity and respect.

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

As I have met with people with disabilities and those who live with them, I have learned that they want the same things that we all do – a happy and successful life. We need to provide opportunities for education. We also need to create opportunities for meaningful employment. We need to make sure they can be mobile and that includes making transportation available for work and recreation. We can do this by collaboration. Currently, there are many advocates with knowledge and experience. They need a gateway to develop a plan that can be implemented across the broad range of society. I look forward to collaborating with them to get this done.

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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 am very concerned about elected officials "cashing in." My sense is that they should be prohibited from benefiting financially for their public service at least two years after leaving office.

In addition, I believe that some public employees, such as Superintendents of Schools, should be prohibited from being paid for any outside work while employed by the school system. Their jobs are so all consuming, frankly, they shouldn't have time or energy for outside work and they are compensated well enough that it shouldn't be necessary. The recent conflict of interests and ethics violations in Baltimore County are a signal that we need change.

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

I have been fortunate to have close relationships with many members of the General Assembly and I have been able to make my views known to them directly. I have not, as of yet, testified in Annapolis. I am looking forward to being a strong voice of progressive leadership in the years to come.



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