

Kevin Kamenetz

AFT-Maryland Candidate Questionnaire

AFT-Maryland is a federation of local unions of the AFT within the state, including the Baltimore Teachers Union and the City Union of Baltimore—whose members work for the city—as well as state employee members of the Maryland Professional Employees Council, AFT Healthcare-Maryland, and the Maryland Classified Employees Association. Together, with the Baltimore County Federation of Public Employees, AFT-Maryland has thousands of members who work to make the region and the state a better place for its residents and children.

The AFT-Maryland has prepared the following questionnaire for candidates running to represent us in Annapolis as a means to familiarize the candidates with issues that our members care about most. It also allows us the chance to see where the candidates stand on these issues.

AFT-Maryland locals participate fully in the endorsement process of the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO Council; the council will announce its final endorsements in early 2018. However, because we are a large contingency within the Baltimore AFL-CIO, the unions of the AFT-Maryland have a heavy influence on who Labor chooses as its candidates for endorsement.

Please take the time to complete this candidate questionnaire. It may be returned to

Todd Reynolds, Political Coordinator
AFT-Maryland, AFL-CIO
5800 Metro Drive, Suite 100
Baltimore, MD 21215

Fax: 410-764-3008
Email: treynolds@aftmd.org

Please return this completed questionnaire no later than January 17th, 2018. If you have any questions, please contact Todd Reynolds, AFT-Maryland Political Coordinator, at 410-764-3030.

2018 Candidate Questionnaire—Representation in Annapolis AFT-Maryland

Candidate for: Governor

Candidate's name: Kevin Kamenetz

Address: _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Occupation: Baltimore County Executive

Who is your employer? Baltimore County

May we make your answers to our questionnaire public? Yes

Party affiliation (circle one):

Democrat

Republican

Independent

Other (please specify)

Have you received an endorsement from a labor union? If so, which ones?

I have been endorsed by TABCO six times, in all of my races for County Executive and County Council.

Have you ever held elected office? When?

I have a combined 23 years of experience as an elected official. I currently serve as the Baltimore County Executive (2010 to present) and I served four terms on the Baltimore County Council from 1994 to 2010.

General

1. The AFT-Maryland is a federation of numerous employee unions, including Baltimore City teachers and paraprofessional and school-related personnel (BTU); professional state workers (MPEC—Maryland Professional Employees Council), state healthcare professionals (AFT Healthcare-Maryland), state classified employees (MCEA—Maryland Classified Employees Association); as well county and city employees. Why should we support your campaign?

I am a lifelong Marylander and lifelong Democrat, and I have spent my career delivering real results for the people of Baltimore County. Under my leadership, Baltimore County is an efficient, compassionate, responsive and effective government.

I firmly believe in the fundamental right of employees to organize and negotiate fairly with management. I also expect management to live up their obligation to negotiate in good faith, which means we listen, discuss, explain and work towards an agreement. In Baltimore County we have embraced binding arbitration with all six of our bargaining groups. Since 2010, in the midst of the great recession, we are the only major jurisdiction in the state, including State government, to have avoided any furloughs or layoffs, and provided every step and longevity increase. When the economy improved, we have provided all general government employees with a 9 percent COLA during the past four years, and an 11 percent COLA for all teachers and certificated personnel. In support of organizing efforts, I lowered the required participation rate for our local teacher's union, making it easier for TABCO to meet requirements for Agency Fee.

As Baltimore County Executive, I have initiated an unprecedented \$1.3 billion investment to build or renovate 90 schools, moving students out of trailers and into modern learning environments. Employees and students need comfortable, safe working environments and I have worked hard to make that a reality.

Since 2010, I have attracted more than \$5 billion in economic investment, creating 28,000 jobs and cutting Baltimore County's unemployment rate by more than half to 3.7 percent—its lowest point in nine years.

We have accomplished a working labor management relationship while also achieving remarkable economic stability in Baltimore County—not once raising the property or income tax rates during my 23 years in office, while still maintaining the highest credit rating in the country.

I have proudly supported efforts in Annapolis to expand the right of collective bargaining among public employees, including community college employees, and will continue to work with leaders to expand collective bargaining across our state.

These are the kind of results Marylanders deserve. And it is exactly what I will do as governor.

2. Have you ever been a member of a union? If yes, please give the union name, local number, and dates active.

No.

Worker Rights

3. Expanding the right to collective bargaining. Right now, even though a number of state employees and public school employees in Maryland have collective bargaining, many still do not. For example, state workers in the judiciary branch; higher education workers like grad students, adjuncts, and tenure-track faculty in the University of Maryland System; and teachers and staff at the Maryland School for the Deaf and at the SEED School; all do not currently enjoy the right to bargain collectively. If elected, will you sponsor legislation to grant these public employees the right to engage in collective bargaining with their employer?

Yes. I believe in the fundamental right of employees to organize, speak collectively and fairly negotiate with management who understands their obligation to negotiate in good faith. The workplace is best served when a constructive honest dialogue is had between management and employees.

I have proudly supported efforts in Annapolis to expand the right to collective bargaining among public employees, including community college employees, and I believe that state entities should embrace uniform collective bargaining.

Baltimore County has embraced binding arbitration with six bargaining groups, and for eight years we have reached agreements all but one time, and in that case the arbiter ruled that we were fair.

4. The Fight for \$15. Many municipalities in Maryland and across the county have introduced ordinances that would raise the minimum wage in that jurisdiction to \$15 per hour. Yet legislation was introduced in Annapolis last year to block local counties and the city from raising the minimum wage

above the state level. Should the state bar municipalities from raising their own minimum wage? If so, would you sponsor legislation to raise the state minimum wage to \$15 per hour, indexed to inflation?

No one working full time should be living in poverty. I support raising the state minimum wage to ensure Marylanders who work an honest day can provide for their families. I firmly believe the State should lead the way in this regard.

While the state should not prevent local jurisdictions from setting their own minimum wage, I do believe we must take statewide action and would support legislation to raise the state minimum wage to \$15 per hour. A standard, sustainable wage which enables families to live with dignity and meet their needs is essential and should be in place across our State thus removing the need for local jurisdictions to act independently.

State service/public employee issues and rights

5. Interest binding arbitration. In 2010 Baltimore County Citizens overwhelmingly agreed that it is important to keep government employees focused on their jobs and not in labor contract disputes (especially Public Safety Employees), so they voted to pass a referendum question supporting interest binding arbitration for all County Employees. Baltimore County employees subsequently won the right to have interest binding arbitration to settle disputes or impasses in contract negotiations but those rights were unnecessarily limited through legislation to wages. According to this process, when during the negotiations process, labor or management declare an impasse and cannot agree to certain provisions of the contract, a neutral, 3rd party professional arbitrator will be called into resolve the dispute. Both the union and management agree that the decision of this arbitrator is binding and final.

Do you support interest binding arbitration for contract negotiations for city, county, state, and federal employees? As an elected official, would you support strengthening those rights for the public employees that fall under your jurisdiction?

Yes, I support binding wage arbitration for government workers to help conclude labor negotiations which reach good faith impasse. As County Executive, I have supported and engaged in the binding arbitration process in Baltimore County with all six of our bargaining groups. I am proud to say that through this process we have reached agreements at the table that provide step and longevity increases, as well as a nine percent COLA for all County employees during my final four years in office.

Under the current Governor, the collective bargaining process for employees is essentially non-existent. Larry Hogan knows he cannot be held accountable by an independent third party arbitrator and thus when the State comes to the table, they do not negotiate—they dictate very harsh, “take-it-or-leave-it” terms of employment. The current State law does not encourage good faith negotiations nor provide an effective remedy when negotiations breakdown or fail to take place. As governor, I will lead the fight to put in place a true collective bargaining process with neutral third party resolution to impasses reached at the table.

6. Health Insurance Transparency. Disputes have arisen around employer's self-insured employee healthcare programs. Audits and budget analysis appear to suggest some governments are running for-profit healthcare programs and healthcare surplus funds are being diverted for use in unrelated areas. This clearly suggests that employees are therefore paying much higher than their negotiated healthcare splits for employer self-insured healthcare coverage.

As an elected official, will you sponsor legislation that would force government employers with self-funded insurance programs to be more transparent with actual claim cost, rebates and other refund programs?

Yes, I would support efforts to direct employers to increase transparency.

7. Retirement for state workers: defined benefit versus defined contribution. Last session, legislation was introduced that would move state employees retirement from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan (401K). Do you support such a plan? Why or why not?

I strongly support protecting the defined benefit pension plan for government employees. I am of the belief that our employees work hard, contribute fairly, and deserve the security of a guaranteed pension for life. Public servants sacrifice higher wages in the private sector to serve; we must ensure they are not penalized in retirement for this dedication. Many jurisdictions have shifted employee benefits to a defined contribution plan, but I oppose that move as inadequately protecting the needs of retirees.

In Baltimore County, I have consistently taken concrete steps to strengthen the employee pension system to protect employees who have spent their careers serving others. Baltimore County is the only jurisdiction in Maryland, including the state, to strengthen our employees' defined benefit plan. We also are the only jurisdiction in the state to lower the valuation rate and infuse millions into the pension system that ensures workers receive their promised benefit, without being a burden to taxpayers down the road.

The valuation rate is the interest rate of return that a system projects its pension system will earn from its investments. Inflating valuation rates is tempting because it can provide a false sense of security in terms of the funding of the pension fund. Governments are often reluctant to reduce the valuation rate because it requires significant infusion of cash into the system to maintain its viability. Inflating the valuation rate may be good for government, but it is not good for employees. By reducing the valuation rate four times during my term of office, we are ensuring that the employee pensions will be there when they retire.

I plan to take that same approach as Governor.

8. Appropriate staffing levels. This past fall, numerous news reports confirmed what many state employees have already known: that staffing levels in a number of state agencies have fallen to levels such that both the safety of the individual workers and the ability of these workers to carry out their

duties has been compromised. Recent examples of nurses being assaulted at numerous state hospitals (<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/investigations/bs-md-spring-grove-assaults-20171003-story.html>), or of reports from the Department of Legislative Services to the state's Spending Affordability Committee (<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/politics/bs-md-state-understaffed-report-20171116-story.html>) speak to this. What more can the state do to assure that Maryland agencies and facilities are appropriately staffed?

My track record of supporting employees speaks for itself. Despite taking office in the midst of the Great Recession, I have never furloughed or laid off a County employee. I am also the only executive in the state to provide every step and longevity increase for every County employee since taking office in 2010. Baltimore County has worked hard to responsibly raise employee wages, retain and recruit talent and ensure our services are provided in an efficient, effective manner.

By contrast, Governor Hogan has simply failed to appropriately staff multiple agencies, a negligent decision that is compromising the health and safety of state employees and residents. His failure to adequately staff the Department of Corrections, for example, has resulted in a 55 percent increase in assault rates between staff and offenders, and amongst offenders themselves. Safe workplaces require adequate staffing; overworking and underpaying employees is unfair to workers and the public.

Wages, staffing and workplace conditions must be brought to competitive levels with local jurisdictions and compete with the private sector. State government should attract and retain the best employees; it should be a place where talented people aspire to work, not just a place politicians seek to ascend. State employees are dramatically underpaid and their concerns fall on deaf ears in a toothless collective bargaining process; as Governor I will work with labor to re-establish state service as an attractive place for talented employees to work and serve.

Maryland deserves leaders who know the difference between cutting costs and cutting corners.

Public Education

9. General: What do you think are some of the biggest problems facing public education—both in Baltimore City and in the rest of the state—today? If elected, how would you help solve these problems?

For years, Maryland's schools were ranked the best in the nation, but under Governor Hogan's watch, we have already dropped to sixth, exacerbating the disparities that already exist in our schools. Unfortunately this comes at little surprise, considering that Larry Hogan funds only the bare minimum, takes public dollars away from public school classrooms, and plays politics with our children's futures.

I believe one's budgets show where one's priorities are and I have made investing in education a priority throughout my career in public service. In Baltimore County, we have made an unprecedented \$1.3 billion commitment to building or rebuilding 90 schools in the largest school construction project in the

history of our county. For every one dollar received from the state, I invested two county tax dollars and have even forward funded \$166 million of the state's share this fiscal year to keep our program on track. We need a governor who will demonstrate the state's commitment to public education in their budgets—and that's exactly what I would do. Providing statutorily mandated minimum funding is simply inadequate; the state has a constitutional obligation to provide all students an effective education- to ensure opportunity is as equally available as talent is distributed. Students growing up in poverty, students working through learning differences and children whose homes provide little stability must find opportunity and support in our schools to succeed. Maryland must renew and strengthen its commitment to the very principles that brought us the Thornton commission, providing all Maryland students an adequately funded and resourced education no matter their background, region or challenges.

In stark contrast to the aim of the Thornton commission, Governor Hogan has followed Betsy DeVos' lead, and increased the amount of funding to support nonpublic schools. Education dollars spent outside of improving public schools makes it more difficult to provide a world-class education for every student in every community. He has funded schools at the statutorily minimum level, but sought credit for what he terms historical funding based on mandated formulary inflators. Schools are plummeting in national rankings and his tenure as Governor has been historically bad for education. As Governor, I would end the BOOST voucher program that rewards private schools with questionable and discriminatory practices, and instead utilize that funding to support our most vulnerable schools.

Governor Hogan has also politicized the school construction program, belittling educators and school specialists to such a degree that the long-serving head of the IAC resigned in protest. We need to totally revamp the process and eliminate Hogan's demeaning "beg-a-thon" and introduce new formulae that identify each jurisdiction's particular need. For example, one county may need more money in a particular year to "catch up" the needs of its infrastructure, and then less in future years. As Governor, I would identify public school construction as a key priority and increase the level of funding across the state.

Simply put, as Governor I will recommit the state's focus on education, reestablish our public schools as a model for the country, and return us to the excellence our students and teachers deserve.

10. Community Schools: Baltimore City now has 51 of its public schools serving as designated community schools. A community school is a public school that partners with some entity (UM-Baltimore or the Baltimore YMCA, just to name a few examples) to provide either after-school academic or social services to both students and members of the community. How can state government work to expand the community school strategy in Baltimore and the rest of Maryland?

The continued development of community schools is critical to the future of education in our state, especially as we look to make progress in closing the achievement gap and focusing on historically disadvantaged communities. However, we must ensure that the teachers in these schools are provided

the protections of collective bargaining agreements and meet all state certification levels. We cannot lower working conditions, violate collective bargaining agreements or sacrifice quality instruction.

I would look forward to working with AFT to develop additional legislation and funding streams to expand Maryland's community school infrastructure in a fashion that does not trample employee's rights or lower well-established quality thresholds.

11. Public charter schools and local oversight. There are just over 40 public charter schools in the state of Maryland, and the vast majority of them reside in Baltimore City. The large, out-of-state charter operators would like to weaken state law to make teachers and staff employees of the charter board, rather than employees of Baltimore City Public Schools. This would remove all protections that teachers and staff have under the collective bargaining agreement between the teachers union and the school board. This would also limit oversight of these privately run public schools by taking them out from under the purview of BCPS, as well as giving these charters a "blank check waiver" from any local school board policy. Should charter school teachers and staff be considered employees of the charter school or of the local school board? Should oversight of these schools be weakened?

I oppose efforts to remove teachers from bargaining units simply because they teach in public charter schools. Employees who work in charter schools are and must remain employees of the local school system and receive the protections this status provides. Furthermore, employees who work in charter schools must meet all standards for hire, to include certification. While Baltimore County does not operate any charter schools, I believe that oversight should be equal to that of any other publicly-funded school. AFT has lead the way on the establishment of effective charter schools and I will work closely to ensure that charter schools enhance public school offerings for students without sacrificing quality of staff or eroding employee working conditions and protections.

12. Charter School funding. There has been a long-running dispute between certain charter school operators and Baltimore Public Schools over appropriate funding. As a feature of being a public charter school in Baltimore, the charters are largely given cash—calculated on a per-pupil basis—from the district, in lieu of the services that the central administration provides neighborhood schools. Most recently, the system presented a per pupil funding formula that mandated funds intended for students living in poverty or who are English language learners actually receive those funds. Some charter operators have countered with a lawsuit, arguing that those special funds for high-poverty students or ESOL be distributed to every student equally, regardless of need. How do you think BCPS should calculate its charter school per pupil funding model?

Funds established for students living in poverty or facing learning challenges must be protected and delivered to those students to ensure their opportunity to succeed is provided. I will work with the teachers of AFT to ensure charter school funding is fair and not destructive of existing public schools or students with the need of enhanced educational support.

13. School vouchers. Should government give out vouchers (either a tax credit, or even a tax rebate) to parents who want to send their children to a private school? Please explain your answer.

Public funding should support public schools. I do not support a separate system of publicly funded schools in the form of vouchers.

During the 2017 Legislative Session I proudly stood with advocates for public school funding to publicly support the removal of BOOST funds from the state budget. As governor, I would end future funding of the BOOST program.

14. Education Funding, state contribution. The state is currently studying revisions to the formula that determines the amount of aid given to a local school system from Annapolis. Over the past few decades, the number of Maryland public school students living in poverty has more than doubled, going from 22% in 1990 to 45% statewide today. In Baltimore City alone, well over 90% of our public school students live in poverty. What can the state—and the funding formula—do in order to be sure these students living in poverty get the best education we can give them? If the answer is more funding for public schools, from where is that money to come?

Right now, Maryland has massive disparities in educational outcomes and the eighth-worst achievement gap in the country. The Kirwan Commission's pending report provides an important opportunity to reset our education priorities for the next generation. There is no question that right now Governor Hogan is significantly underfunding public schools and we must revise antiquated funding formulae that have contributed to the historical underfunding of Baltimore City public schools.

I look forward to reviewing—and responsibly implementing—the Commission's recommendations in collaboration with educators.

It is important to note that a \$3 billion price-tag, like we are expecting with Kirwan, is something that cannot happen all at once and cannot be expected to be implemented overnight. Anyone who says differently just is not telling the truth. It is not about "political will" as much as it is about setting priorities, creating sustainable budgets, protecting employees, and being smarter with government to maximize taxpayer dollars.

That is the type of governing I have accomplished in Baltimore County. It is what I will do as governor. And I will work closely with AFT to ensure that Maryland's schools are stronger for students, educators, and support staff, and our schools return to the best-in-the-nation. Together, we will honor our constitutional obligation to provide every child an effective education and opportunity to work in safe, supported and resourced environments.

15. Education funding, local contribution. For the past three years in a row, the Baltimore City Public Schools System had dealt with a reduction in state aid to its schools. Some in Annapolis have argued that the city should be contributing more to public schools, as property values (especially in and around the Inner Harbor area) have rapidly increased. Do you agree with this assessment?

To ensure City Schools are funded at an appropriate level, it will require additional support from all invested parties.

Mayor Pugh has already committed to increasing the city's contribution to support City Schools and that is absolutely part of the equation. However, the State must do its part to ensure the students of Baltimore are provided safe, effective learning environments equivalent to those of their suburban counterparts. Geography cannot continue to determine quality of educational opportunity; funding effective education in impoverished areas is a difficult task requiring the commitment of stakeholders at the local, state, federal level in conjunction with education experts from management and labor.

In order to provide all Baltimore City public school students with the education they deserve, we must revise the antiquated funding formulae that have historically underfunded City Schools and have forced the system to face significant budget shortfalls in recent years. I will work closely with AFT to ensure we achieve our constitutional obligation to provide adequately funded educational opportunities to all students.

16. School Staffing. Due to a lack of funding, a number of specialized services our students need are being staffed by employees who are not trained properly to administer those services. For example, Due to the limited number of certified nurses in Baltimore City Public Schools, administrators and/or staff are forced to administer medication to students, share nurses between multiple school locations, and utilize part-time nurses. And in other cases, students who have experienced extremely traumatic events do not have access to social workers trained to help them through these times. How would you help solve this staffing crisis?

While schools may have similar numbers of students, the needs of those students vastly differ due to a variety of factors outside of the classroom. Funding formulas and staffing formulas must recognize this reality.

To properly support our students in the ways they need to succeed, we should pursue a differentiated staffing model that would allocate resources to school systems in a dynamic way and allow schools with the most significant needs to expand support for specialized services including certified nurses, social workers, and therapists. I will work with AFT and the local board to ensure we provide adequate support services to students.

17. Violence and trauma in the city schools. Far too often, children in the Baltimore City public school system witness very traumatizing events, and indeed may also be victims to those events—either in the classrooms or outside the walls of the schools after the dismissal bell has rung. What do you think is the best strategy to assure that our school buildings are safe and welcoming environments for children, teachers, and other education professionals in Baltimore City? How can we work to minimize the impact of traumatizing events on our school children?

Our students, educators, and support staff must feel safe and secure in learning environments in order to learn and thrive. This is a basic and fundamental necessity that has been ignored for far too long.

In Baltimore County we have invested \$13.6 million to safeguard our schools by installing security cameras and card reader door locks in all Baltimore County elementary schools and enhancing these security measures in middle and high schools. These types of enhancements are a critical component of ensuring our school buildings are safe.

To reduce incidents of trauma in our schools, we must also provide increased support for mental health services and mindfulness-based stress reduction programs in educational settings that can mitigate the diverse inputs of trauma our students face every day.

By better protecting students and educators in the educational setting as well improving the level of care we directly provide in the classroom, we can minimize the impact of traumatizing events on our school children.

Vision for Baltimore Metropolitan Area and Maryland in General

18. Transportation. When Governor Hogan cancelled the Red Line rail project, he replaced it with a revision of the MTA regional bus lines and renamed the system the Baltimore Link. How effective do you believe this new bus plan has been? How can the state improve the transportation needs of Baltimore's citizens?

After more than a decade of smart growth planning, Governor Hogan killed the potentially transformative Red Line project with the stroke of a pen, forfeiting \$900 million in federal funds in the process. In its place, he introduced a realignment of bus routes which has forced Baltimore's residents to suffer long waits, navigate confusing reroutes, and transfer more times to get to the same destination. BaltimoreLink is simply a patchwork and failed attempt to Band-Aid in the place of a substantive solution. And it is a consolation prize that attempts to pander to the Baltimore region after the Governor failed to deliver a 21st-century rail transit network. Governor Hogan has fallen woefully short of providing adequate public transportation in Baltimore and its surrounding jurisdictions.

If we want Baltimore to be the world-class city we know it can be, we must provide world-class transit and that means getting the region's integrated rail plan back on track. Each state dollar invested in the Baltimore region will reach more than 25 percent of Maryland's population. This return on investment is exactly why it is in Maryland's best interest to provide sustained support for the region's infrastructure. We should provide faster, more reliable service to current high population areas, including where millennials want to be. And by recommitting to an intermodal mass transit plan that integrates existing infrastructure, we can serve major employment centers and ease congested corridors—all while tapping the potential of the region to drive Maryland's growth for generations.

19. Privatization. Many rumors have been circulating that the city has been looking into privatizing water services. This comes at a time when the Maryland has been quietly attempting to privatize a

number of state services—like closing many state hospitals or turning them over to private companies. When, if ever, do you feel it is appropriate to privatize public services or to sell off or privatize city-owned resources?

I oppose privatization of the Metropolitan District water and sewer service. In my experience, privatizing public services is rarely, if ever, a viable option. Handing off public resources provides a short term gain at a long term loss. Privatization must meet a true balancing test—better service, more efficiently delivered with long term sustainable economic gain. Rarely do privatization proposals meet this high standard.

20. State's opioid crisis. This summer, Governor Hogan declared a state of emergency in Maryland in response to the opioid crisis, calling it a “rapidly escalating” threat. Yet, even as opioid overdoses and death rates continue to climb, the state is actively de-funding, privatizing, or, as in the case of several Maryland health departments {can we name any of them here?} actively shutting down numerous institutions designed to treat this crisis. What can you do as a legislator to assure Maryland gives its citizens safe and affordable access to addiction resources?

Maryland has utterly failed to appropriately respond to the opioid epidemic.

Year after year, opioid-related overdose fatalities continue to skyrocket in communities across our state. These are not just statistics; these are our friends and family members who are suffering from substance use disorder and we have a moral obligation to offer them the support they need.

Specifically, we need to focus on four things. First, we must treat addiction like the disease it is and expand education efforts to inform our communities about the nature of the disease and end stigma so people are not ashamed to seek care. Secondly, we must make sure that the opioid overdose reversal medication, naloxone, remains accessible and we must do more to keep it affordable. While naloxone is a critical first step, it cannot be the last one. We must also expand access to evidence-based, on-demand treatment, so individuals can enter treatment as soon as they are ready. That requires Maryland to significantly expand the number of treatment beds available. Lastly, we must expand police interdiction efforts to break the illegal networks that continue to funnel heroin, prescription opioids, and synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl, into our communities.

21. Earned Sick Leave. In the 2017 session, the state legislature passed a bill greatly expanding the requirement that employers provide earned sick leave to their employees, but Governor Hogan vetoed this bill. Do you support the legislative effort to override the governor's veto on paid sick leave?

Earned sick leave is a public health priority. People should not have to choose between their livelihoods and their health. It is also good business—healthy workers are more productive, and sick employees impact their own productivity, and the productivity of others around them if they get sick, too.

By vetoing the General Assembly's bill, Governor Hogan made his position clear: he is willing to put political interests above the needs of nearly 700,000 Marylanders, instead pushing his bill—a business tax giveaway disguised as an earned sick leave plan.

While I was supportive of and proud to see a successful override of the Governor's veto, this would not have been an issue in a Kamenetz Administration. I would have proudly signed the Assembly's bill into law. I will always partner with entities seeking to responsibly better working conditions and increase the productivity of Maryland's workforce.