

# Krish Vignarajah



## AFT-Maryland Candidate Questionnaire for Baltimore City Races

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

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Please return this completed questionnaire no later than January 5<sup>th</sup>, 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  Krishanti Vignarajah

Address  F

Phone

Email

Occupation  Gubernatorial candidate  Who is your employer?

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?

Have you ever held elected office? When?  No

**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?

As the daughter of a proud 37-year member of the Baltimore Teachers Union, and the only candidate who is the product of Maryland public schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade, it is not an exaggeration to say Maryland public schools and the AFT/BTU are in my DNA. In fact, both my parents were Baltimore City schoolteachers, and growing up our family struggled as their benefits were cut

while salaries stayed flat. I watched them both work longer and longer hours, while having to spend more of their money to buy classroom supplies for their students.

It's heartbreaking to me that 1 out of 13 of educators leave the public system each year, but knowing the strain it puts on families, I understand. That's why I am committed to fully funding public education and treating our educators like the professionals that they are. My administration will fully support members of the AFT, who make up the heart of our schools and our education system's most critical assets—and protect teachers' collective bargaining rights is one of my top priorities.

Specifically, I will improve educator pay, particularly for those willing to work in the most under-resourced schools. All educators will receive better training, especially in STEM subjects, and be guaranteed access to their full pension benefits. I will further improve working conditions through an unprecedented school construction program and a focus on school safety. As someone who grew up going to Maryland public schools, I understand the vitality of promoting access to quality education for all. This also means that protecting teachers' collective bargaining rights is one of my top priorities.

I will work with the funding inequities as outlined in the Kirwan Commission findings, my administration will work with the AFT and other stakeholders to ensure classrooms remain better resourced and educators have the support they need.

My administration will also partner with the AFT to improve teacher recruitment and retention. We must focus our recruitment efforts on school-university partnerships that focus on students who want to make a career in teaching, rather than temporary teacher tourists who pad their resumes for graduate school applications. We need to invest in teacher education programs that increase retention and preparedness—making Maryland public schools a more attractive workplace for all committed college graduates.

Further, my campaign also focuses on issues that matter most to Maryland's working families, like paid family leave, increasing wages, full-day universal pre-K, expanding health care access and quality, investing in an innovation economy, reducing congestion by investing in public infrastructure, and protecting our precious natural resources.

I seek AFT-Maryland's endorsement because it was educators like my parents who gave me every opportunity I've had during my lifetime. It's time educators and political leaders worked together as partners, and I promise that you will have no better friend in Annapolis fighting to ensure educators receive the honor, respect, and support that they deserve.

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

No. But as I mentioned previously, my Father was a card-carrying member of the BTU for 37 years.

### **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 will sponsor legislation to grant all public employees the right to engage in collective bargaining **during my first 100 days in office.**

Unions are good for Maryland. They improve work conditions, protect the basic rights of employees, raise wages, and decrease inequality. As Governor, I will do everything in my power to support unions and ensure the equal treatment of all working Marylanders; this specifically includes expanding collective bargaining rights to part-time and contractual workers.

Especially given the upcoming Supreme Court case *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Council 31*, Maryland needs political leadership willing to actively fight for public sector employees' constitutional right to unionize.

4. The Fight for \$15. Many municipalities in Maryland and across the country 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?

Yes, I would support legislation to raise the state minimum wage to \$15 per hour (indexed to inflation), and no, the state should not bar municipalities from raising their local minimum wage above the state level.

When my father taught at Edmonson High, we learned what it was like to not be able to afford a car or the importance of saving \$20 a week for groceries. No one in Maryland should be working full time and living in poverty. Change must start with state government leading by example. As Governor, I will ensure that all full-time state employees make at least \$15 per hour.

Maryland must be a leader in increasing the minimum wage. The economic benefits and the security it provides to families across the state are clear. We must make sure that the policy is designed to avoid layoffs, reduced hours, shifting employment to Virginia, Pennsylvania or Delaware, or automation of jobs. We will do so by convening stakeholders from across Maryland to work toward this goal in the most effective manner. Further, it is imperative that the minimum wage is tied to inflation so workers living standards don't diminish simply because inflation rises.

**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, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 interest binding arbitration and would support further strengthening these rights.

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 sponsor legislation that would force government employers to be more transparent about health care costs.

Access to quality, affordable health care is a right, not a privilege. As Governor, I first and foremost support the development and implementation of a state-run public option that would offer coverage through the existing ACA framework. This will increase coverage, particularly in rural areas, it will lower costs (the government has no profit motive), increase competition and lower premiums, would reduce "churn", which occurs when adult incomes fluctuating above and below 138% FPL – the income level eligible for Medicaid, and would stabilize the marketplace.

Unfortunately with continuously rising health care costs, employers are looking to self-insurance as a way to cut costs and gain control over employee's health care costs. This has, in select instances, been misused by employers who are seeking to profit from employee's health care costs. Yet the problem is much deeper, extending to monitoring rising costs of health care, of vital drugs, and of hospitals. Healthcare must be approached holistically, which is why as Governor I will approach self-insured employer malpractice with the following priorities:

- 1) Introduce a Basic Health Plan as a public option for adults with incomes above 133% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and for those ineligible for Medicaid due to their immigration status.
- 2) Expand the all payer system, which allows all entities – businesses, individuals, government, and private insurance – to pay the same price for medical procedures regardless of severity. It incentivizes hospitals to focus on treatment and care rather than profit, and controls rising costs in the health care industry.
- 3) Launch public health initiatives that address preventative care rather than reactive care, targeting key health issues in Maryland like obesity and the opioid crisis.
- 4) Require self-insured employers to produce annual budgeting health care expenses, and establish mandatory maximum employees can be charged by employers for self-insurance

Health care requires a holistic approach that takes into account rising costs as well as health issues that the people of Maryland face. Without addressing all facets of health care, we will be unsuccessful in making sure employers aren't cutting corners and making a profit from their employees on health insurance.

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?

Growing up in a household where my father taught for more than three decades in the Baltimore City Schools, I know how hard public employees work to earn their retirement benefits. I oppose any action to diminish or threaten pension benefits, and the proposal to move state employees' retirement from a defined benefit to defined contribution plan represents an underhanded attempt to destroy a hard-earned public safety net for our state's educators. Fundamentally, defined contribution plans are not pensions, and I believe an educator who gives their life to public service should receive adequate financial support when they retire.

I further support efforts to lower defined employee contributions to from 7 to 5 percent, since state pension funds are now on track to be 100% funded.

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?

As Governor, I will work towards making sure that each agency fills unfilled positions that are necessary for safety and/or to fulfill duties, rather than passively letting them go unfilled as my predecessors have done. However, with turnover rates above 7% for many agencies, more needs to be done to ensure our staff aren't just hired, but retained. As Governor, I will make sure public service employees have access to quality healthcare, are ensured the right to unionize, paid family leave, access to training, and opportunities for advancement. I believe this is both the right thing to do, but also good business, because providing good benefits and support encourages worker productivity and increases retention rates.

The State of Maryland now faces a deficit of 1,200 unfilled jobs — the unfortunate result of decades old spending limits. This deficit has left key agencies like the Maryland Transportation Authority and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services understaffed, affecting not just these individual agencies, but also the state's ability to govern effectively. I intend to address this issue during my first year in office by bringing back an employee-centric approach to management and governance.

### **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?

The biggest problem facing public education today is persistent and structural achievement gaps across race, class, and ethnicity lines that are exacerbated by the chronic underfunding of lower income schools. Under prior Democratic administration, Maryland's schools were the envy of the nation but Governor Hogan has allowed quality and funding to lapse, which negatively and disproportionately affects students of color and students in poverty. I plan to eradicate these funding gaps by investing more state dollars into our schools, fixing funding inequities that exist between districts, by giving every family access to universal pre-K, and by ending childhood hunger in schools. I believe that every Maryland child deserves access to a world-class education and serving all students well and equitably will be my highest priority in the Government House.

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?

I applaud the Baltimore City Public Schools for their thoughtful policy surrounding community schools, released in 2016, which creates the systems and processes to replicate community schools in City Schools -- ensuring that Baltimore students get access to a high quality education and much-needed

social services at the same time. To scale the reach of community schools in Baltimore, I would follow their school district's lead, and also hope to create a statewide fund to support expansion of these innovative models in Baltimore and around the state. If elected, I would also convene a commission of Baltimore community school educators, service providers and principals to capture lessons learned from the current community schools effort, so my administration would best know where barriers to scale exist and how to minimize them through state support and coordination. Finally, I would work with local initiatives to mobilize public support, recruit additional service organizations as school partners, and leverage private and philanthropic investment to allow for community school expansion.

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?

Any school that receives public funding should be subject to strong oversight from state and local education bodies. I oppose any effort to weaken accountability over Maryland's charter sector. Charter educators and staff should be considered employees of the local school board and no waivers should be granted to allow them to skirt certification and other quality standards that we ask of our traditional public schools.

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?

I support the current Maryland charter school law which mandates high standards and the protection of collective bargaining rights while keeping local autonomy. These aspects are what keeps charter schools accountable and makes Maryland's current law among the best in the nation.



The per-pupil basis of funding for charter schools is a suitable way for allocating the budget. Additionally, further funding to replace the absence of some central administrative services available to public schools, but not to charter schools, is reasonable. When it comes to funds specifically intended for students in poverty and/or English Language Learners I am of the belief that those funds must go there, and not be distributed to other students throughout the system. Extra allocation intended for students living in poverty and those learning English is essential, and we cannot take away those funds to distribute to other students who are not in such situations.

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 funds must absolutely go to public education. Private schools or voucher programs for private schools should not receive public funding. School vouchers often become an easy way for politicians to claim they support education, without actually working to improve the public school system. While many well-intentioned voucher programs try to create opportunity low-income families in underperforming school districts, they too often develop into a state-sponsored subsidy for private education that benefits children across a wide variety of income levels. This distortion of education policy is unacceptable and deemphasizes the need for a more equitable system of public education. In Maryland, we need to focus on improving public schools; a voucher system will likely create state-sponsored subsidies for private and religiously affiliated schools, not opportunity for low-income students and their families.

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?

Budgeting is about priorities and we have spent decades paying for the consequences for underinvesting in our children and schools, such as spending well over \$1 billion on prisons and public safety. I will build my administration's proposed budget based upon the areas with the greatest return on investment—and there is no higher ROI than providing a quality education to students living in poverty. I wholeheartedly support the Kirwan Commission's recommendation that the state legislature close the nearly \$3 billion funding gap in the public education system. Funding education first will be the top priority of my administration. We can't afford to short-change our kids and we can't keep asking teachers to use their own hard-earned money to plug funding gaps. Unless we commit to making investments in public education, we will never make world-class public education available to all Maryland students.

To do this, we need to do five things:

1. We must reallocate resources within the existing budget away from programs like prisons (by funding treatment which is ten times cheaper than incarceration), etc. to increase funding for education.
2. We must secure outside funding for investments like Pre-K that can pay for themselves by monetizing the long-term savings and using the future savings to repay social bonds, etc.
3. We must generate new revenues from private sector jobs growth.
4. We must raise revenues by taxing things that we want less of like vices/pollution and modernizing our tax code.
5. We must earmark the amount of lottery and casino revenue that goes toward education and restore the promises made that gambling would increase overall education spending, rather than allowing cuts to base funding.

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?

Development in Baltimore is a welcome sight to many, but it appears Annapolis does not fully understand the nuance of this situation. Yes, in theory, rising property values should lead to an increase in property tax revenue, meaning cuts in Annapolis should not affect funding for Baltimore City schools. However, this is not true. Whether you agree with the policy or not, these new developments have often been built due to tax-break incentives, causing the actual property tax revenue to lower than it otherwise would be. When Annapolis cuts funding without a sufficient increase in property tax revenue (as is clearly the case) the City school system will suffer and our students are much worse off. Under these circumstances there should be absolutely no cuts to state aid for education.

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?

This staffing crisis is tragic and entirely preventable. Our students deserve to receive medical and mental health care from trained professionals, and while increased funding to BCPS would help hire more of these specialized staff it would not entirely solve the staffing pipeline issue. I propose to work with Maryland's public colleges and universities who are training the next generation of nurses and social workers so as to establish a program specifically targeted at training new in-school nurse and social work professionals. I would also consider establishing public-private partnerships with local hospitals,

encouraging them to support community health efforts by funding these types of school nurse or social work positions in neighboring schools. By committing more funding to BCPS, leveraging partner funding and working with our nursing and social work schools we can ensure that medical and mental health care is a reality for every Maryland child.

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?

Eliminating and mitigating the effects of trauma on our students is hard and necessary work. Confronting trauma in school settings is not just the work of the school social worker or principal, but also will require educators and paraprofessional to lead trauma-informed classrooms. More professional development for educators and school leaders to support students who have experienced trauma is key, as is offering opportunities for socio-emotional growth and development in the classroom, in addition to dedicated social workers and counsellors on-site.

### **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?

The new Baltimore Link bus system has been an underwhelming and ineffective solution to Baltimore's traffic problems. The new bus line has improved upon the efficiency concerns of the previous bus system, but ridership has remained stagnant. With no significant increases in Baltimore residents using this service, the traffic problems of the past decade will continue to worsen. The severe congestion problems of Baltimore will not be solved with a one-time \$135 million investment. It is clear that small investments aimed at temporary or marginal improvement will not solve Maryland's \$2 billion traffic issue. All traffic problems will not disappear after the implementation of the Purple Line and Red Line rail systems, but these are crucial steps in the right direction that show a commitment to long-term, sustainable solutions. Hogan's current solutions carry a price tag of \$9 billion and focus on highway expansion, a tactic proven to be ineffective at reducing congestion in the long term. Hogan has approved the Purple Line system in the Washington DC area, but we must now stand with Baltimore and build the Red Line that will provide access to over 250,000 jobs by rail to a population of 217,946 people. Over half of these residents earn less than 80% of the Area Median Income and 28% do not own a car. The potential reduction in commute times by 34 minutes and the productivity increase from

completing the Red Line make this project a critical step toward tackling Baltimore's traffic congestion problems.

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?

Across the nation, we've repeatedly seen poorly conceived contracts that privatize various public services increase costs for residents, shortchange workers, and, too often, lead to corruption and profiteering. The privatization of public services can erode accountability and transparency, and drive governments deeper into debt. I desire to make Maryland's state services the best available in the country, accountable to the elected officials, citizens, taxpayers, consumers of public services. This, not privatization, is my focus. I stand with public servants like Baltimore City Council President Jack Young and Baltimore Public Works' director Rudy Chow in fighting to retain assets and not giving them away. Privatization puts profits first and people last, and when considering state services, particularly vital infrastructure that delivers water, we can't afford to risk prioritizing monetary gain over a human right.

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 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 addition resources?

Just last week the CDC released a report showing an alarming escalation of the opioid epidemic. Opioids now kill more Americans than breast cancer or guns, with reverberating consequences for our families, communities, and the economy. Governor Hogan's emergency declaration, finally instituted two full years after his original campaign promise, has been too little too late to address this public health crisis. Across the state, as some community health centers are being actively shuttered and health departments have been forced to ration access to lifesaving overdose reversal medications, overdoses from fentanyl have increased 70% from just last year.

This is the time when real leadership and resources are needed to fight back. While community leaders across Maryland are working to do their part, state leaders must lead an all-hands-on-deck approach to reducing overdoses and ensuring that people suffering from the disease of addiction have access to quality, on-demand treatment. This means using real-time data to send "overdose response teams" to the hardest hit communities as part of a proactive, data-driven approach to saving lives. It means building on success stories like Baltimore's 24/7 addiction and mental health crisis hotline, and supporting recovery communities across the state that enable people to live lives free of addiction. Most of all, it means a commitment that anyone who ready to seek help with opioid addiction has access to treatment resources without waiting days or weeks to get the help that they need. Expanding access to quality treatment is not an easy task, but ensuring that we have the

resources and commitment to protect Medicaid, support community health centers, and invest in treatment workforce and infrastructure are crucial steps to reversing the tide of the overdose crisis.

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?

I completely support earned sick leave for Maryland employees, and I strongly support the recent successful legislative effort to override the governor's veto. Elected officials in Maryland have worked for years to craft a sick leave bill that balances the needs of employees and employer, and that recognizes the basic human right to work while taking care of one's health. It's unfortunate that Governor Hogan quashed this effort, despite the bi-partisan broad support it received in the General Assembly and among Maryland voters. Governor Hogan's efforts since, including appointing a secretive task force to supposedly look into sick leave, further indicate his insufficient support for Maryland's workers. I support the Democratic party's goal of making a veto override a priority in January. Maryland citizens deserve sick leave, and Maryland employers deserve a healthy workforce.

I will also fully support a providing every Maryland family a minimum 3 months of paid family leave. As a new mother and the daughter of aging parents, this issue is a top priority for my campaign.