

TO CONTACT
SENATOR PINSKY:
301-858-3155

Annapolis Advocate

Paul Pinsky, your senator in Maryland's 22nd district



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Scholarships Now Available

Interested in financial help for tuition to attend a Maryland college? If you live in the 22nd district, you can now apply to Senator Pinsky's scholarship committee for a state senatorial scholarship. The scholarships range up to \$2,000 annually for up to four years and are available to residents who have graduated high school or will be graduating high school — or receiving a GED — this spring.

To apply, go to senatorpinsky.org or call the senator's office at 301-858-3155. You can also check with your local high school's guidance office. The application due date: April 1.

Senator Pinsky's scholarship committee, made up entirely of citizen volunteers from the 22nd district, will be selecting the scholarship winners later this spring.

Let's Not Let Ourselves Sink in Trump's Swamp

Dear Neighbors,

The shock of Donald Trump's victory may have passed, but the awe has yet to come.

All those campaign promises Trump made? They started revealing themselves as phony even before Inauguration Day.

Take, for instance, that Washington insider-big business "swamp" Trump pledged to drain. For the secretaries of state, commerce, treasury, and labor, he has chosen corporate insider mega-millionaires.

Other Trump nominees have their collective heads in the sand, if not the swamp. His pick to head the Environmental Protection Agency rejects climate change. His Department of Education selection wants our tax dollars going to schools designed to make profits.

Trump's team is already working to pull apart Medicare, Obamacare, and environmental protections. We cannot be a willing party to all this. Trump received no mandate. In fact, let's not forget he lost nationally by nearly three million votes.

If Donald Trump tells us to "give back" what we've built on Medicare and so much else, we must not sit back. We need to fight back and bring together both people who opposed his election and his soon-to-be-disillusioned supporters.

their kids from getting needed instructional time.

Nationally, President-elect Trump's people are compiling blacklists of federal agency employees who simply attended conferences under President Obama. In Maryland, Governor

We do certainly have challenges ahead. But we're resilient and plenty feisty.

We need to show those supporters, as Trump's promises fail to materialize, that he doesn't represent them. We do.

Here in Maryland, we face a similar challenge. Governor Hogan gets his tricks from the Trump playbook. He tells people what they want to hear, whether sensible or not.

"Lower the tolls," Hogan declares, but he doesn't explain to the public that lowering the tolls will leave no money to fix bridges or roads later on.

"Start schools after Labor Day and shorten the school year," the governor demands, but he doesn't let people know that shorter schedules will keep

Hogan isn't just slashing funding for state agencies that protect the public. He's removing hard-working state employees.

The governor, some believe, even removed one agency head for not agreeing to fire a competent employee simply because that employee sat on the governor's hit list.

We do indeed have challenges ahead. But we're resilient and feisty. None of us want to turn back the clock. As your state senator, I stand ready to work with you and offer leadership in Annapolis to make Maryland a better place to live — for every-

Paul

Want to Run for President? Report Your Taxes!

Senator Paul Pinsky and Delegate Jimmy Tarlau are introducing legislation in the 2017 Annapolis session that would deny a place on ballots in Maryland to any future presidential candidates who refuse to release their tax returns for the previous five years.

Since 1980, every single major party candidate running for president — except Donald Trump — has released tax returns before Election Day. The new disclosure mandate would apply, if enacted, to all presidential candidates seeking Maryland ballot access.



Building Our Neighborhoods

Strong Communities Mean Quality Development

Senator Paul Pinsky was pleased to be able to attend the Whitfield Gardens Civic Association's holiday party in late December.

The event drew a nice crowd eager to celebrate the Association's fine and longstanding work and traditions.

In this past holiday season, the Princess Gardens Hickory Hill and Windsor Green communities also hosted events bringing their respective communities together.

"The strength of our communities lies in people feeling part of a collective effort to care for their neighborhoods," Senator Pinsky notes. "I applaud these and all the civic and condo associations — and their leaders — for putting themselves forward on behalf of their fellow citizens."

Decisions Expected on FBI and Purple Line

The federal General Services Administration is expected to announce the site of the new FBI building sometime around March.

The three finalists to host the new FBI headquarters include Greenbelt, across from the metro station, as well as the old Landover Mall site and Springfield, Virginia.

The Greenbelt location offers the only site immediately adjacent to mass transit. This easy access to mass transit, says Senator Pinsky, should give Greenbelt a leg up in the selection process.

"Situating an 11,000-employee FBI facility without access to mass transit would be a major mistake," notes



The new Pyramid Atlantic Arts Center is helping build the reputation of Hyattsville's emerging arts district.

Senator Pinsky. "That's why northern Prince George's is the best place for this new office."

The Purple Line, the long-awaited light-rail link between New Carrollton and Bethesda, appeared ready last year to begin construction.

But then a last-ditch lawsuit by a small group of Purple Line opponents gained a small victory when a federal judge put the construction on hold until he reviewed and ruled on the group's appeal.

The over two-decade effort to build an

east-west, mass transit connector has had Senator Pinsky's support right from the project's beginning.

"I've worked for this solution for 20 years," says Senator Pinsky. "This latest obstacle represents a Hail Mary from some wealthy Chevy Chase opponents who don't want the Purple Line anywhere near

their neighborhood."

A ruling is expected sometime this winter.

The Hyattsville 'Boom' Continues

Hyattsville's new Pyramid Atlantic Art Center, with its classes and studios focused on paper and book making, is already thriving.

The Pyramid building also includes the Neighborhood Design Center, a nonprofit design group that offers its services to community pro-

jects, and the Anacostia Trail Heritage Area with its Maryland Milestones program.

Just down the street from Pyramid, on the corner of Gallatin and Route 1, Tanglewood Works has now turned its "pop-up" location to a permanent site.

Tanglewood "upcycles" old furniture into new, stylish uses. Check it out!

Assistance in Annapolis

Are you planning a family trip to the state capital anytime soon? Does your child's class have a trip to Annapolis in the works? Or your community group?

If you're headed to Annapolis — and need some help setting up a tour — why not give Senator Pinsky's reliable staff a call? Staffers are ready and willing to help you get the most out of any visit to our state capital.

Senator Pinsky's office can also help out if you run into a problem with one of the state's many agencies or if you would like to know the status of a piece of legislation you've been tracking.

You can reach the office toll-free at 301-858-3155 or at paul.pinsky@senate.state.md.us.

Currently staffing Senator Pinsky's office: chief of staff Ian Ullman and community relations specialist Carole Smith. Jasmine Snead and Meghan Lynch will also be on hand as interns during the 2016 session.

Access to mass transit ought to give Greenbelt a leg up with the FBI

Public Education

Let's Focus on Real Problems, Not Slick Panaceas

Pundits and other self-styled experts on education seem to be writing more these days about how to dismantle public education than how to improve it. Senator Pinsky wants to change that discourse.

"We don't need an about-face on public education," says the senator. "We need to isolate the problems schools face, using data-driven information, and then fix them."

"Here in Prince George's County," he adds, "our schools are showing slow, but steady improvement. We now need to provide the resources and strategies to speed that improvement."

Donald Trump's newly proposed secretary of education, Betsy DeVos, sees things differently. DeVos wants to divert tax dollars from public schools and distribute them to private schools through vouchers.

DeVos is also pushing to redirect federal school spending to *for-profit* charter schools, a move she has already orchestrated in her home state of Michigan.

Maryland currently prohibits state tax dollars from going to for-profit charters.

Locally, in our county, a few local residents have joined the about-face chorus. They're calling for the removal of the current Prince George's schools chief exec and a dismantling of the school board.

We would be far better off examining the actual challenges our schools confront.

In Prince George's . . .

Forty percent of county teachers have five years or fewer of experience, a huge



Billionaire Betsy DeVos, the Trump pick for secretary of education, wants tax dollars going to for-profit charter schools.

imbalance. We simply must retain more experienced teachers and address the reality that nearly 40 percent of new teachers leave by the end of five years. We keep hiring new, inexperienced teachers, and they keep leaving, to be replaced by other new teachers.

Why do teachers leave the profession? They experience a

lack of support during their early years. They lack the time to collaborate with colleagues and feel overwhelmed by paperwork. On salary, they feel underwhelmed.

Every nation currently outperforming the United States in education has a professional teaching force that's valued and given time and resources to succeed. We need to make that same commitment.

Our School Board . . .

The current county school board includes both elected members and members ap-

pointed by the county executive. The state legislature adopted this "hybrid" board structure four years ago at the same time lawmakers gave the authority for selecting the county school chief to the county executive.

These changes came about after the old, fully elected board of education was mishandling the selecting of a new superintendent.

"The three finalists were so under-qualified for the position that it was painful — and scary," recalls Senator Pinsky. "The old board didn't know what they didn't know and, worse, they refused help."

At that point, the state legislature stepped in.

Today, a couple of disgruntled school board members and a small number of state officials want to go back to a solely elected board.

"That would be a mistake," says Senator Pinsky. "No national data says one particular form of school board governance gets better results. Maintaining stable leadership would better benefit our county."

The Promising New Kirwan Commission

Back in 2002, Maryland embarked on a new statewide effort to fund schools based on both equity and adequacy.

This initiative brought an additional \$1 billion additional over five years to local school systems, including over \$300 million to Prince George's County.

Legislation enacted last year has formed a new commission named for its chairman Brit Kirwin. Senator Pinsky has been named to serve on this blue-ribbon panel.

The Kirwan Commission's task? To review the funding formula for Maryland public schools and recommend a path forward that will keep our state a national pacesetter for high-quality public education.

New School Construction

Several new middle school classrooms are now slated for the 22nd legislative district area.

In addition to a replacement school for William Wirt Middle School in Riverdale Heights, scheduled to open in 2019, two more middle schools will come to the Glenridge and Adelphi area to reduce overcrowding in these crucial grades.

Our county teachers need the time and resources to succeed

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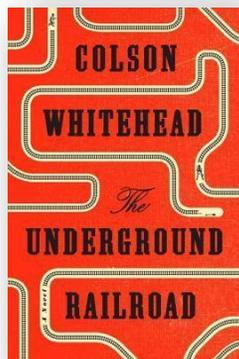
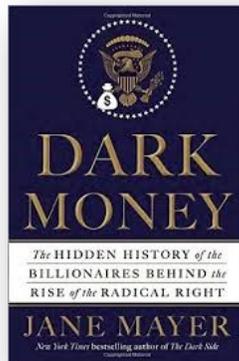
By Authority: Citizens for Paul Pinsky, Anna Frankle, Treasurer

Why Wait? Sign-Up for the E-News

This *Annapolis Advocate* makes up just part of Senator Paul Pinsky's ongoing effort to keep 22nd district residents informed. Paul also sends out a monthly e-mail newsletter. To subscribe, e-mail "update-on@list.senatorpinsky.org."

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The Culture Corner

My Take on Recent Books and Flicks

By Paul Pinsky

On the book front, I finally got around to Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*, a small book — and quick read — that packs a punch much greater than its size.

Coates shares a father's experience as a black man growing up with his son. Very powerful.

Dark Money by New Yorker writer Jane Mayer explores how right-wing billionaires are bankrolling not just candidates, but think tanks and higher education programs. Their prime goal: a coordinated, rightward shift in our nation. Highly readable, with compelling statistics.

The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead offers a fictionalized account of a 19th-century slave escape route — with a few twists. Whitehead, a great storyteller, brings slavery to life in a thoughtful and caring narrative.

On the lighter front, mystery writer Michael Connolly again comes up roses with *The Wrong Side of Goodbye*, a Bosch novel. Focusing on character development as much as storyline, Connolly never fails to bring his characters to life.

On the movie front, I'd highly recommend two quirky and well-done coming-of-age films, *Captain Fantastic* and *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*. Both tell nice stories of family, loss, and growing maturity in strange surroundings.

Moonlight, already nominated for numerous awards, follows a gay African-American from his childhood in poverty to his adolescence and adulthood. Three different — and fine — actors combine to play the lead role.

Hacksaw Ridge has gained a reputation as a violent film, and I didn't have plans to see it. Now I'm glad I did. I'm no fan of the film's director, Mel Gibson, but he has given us here an engrossing look at a conscientious objector who enlisted to help the cause in World War II but would not carry a weapon.

On my "to-see list" as this issue of the *Annapolis Advocate* goes to press: *Fences* and *Lion*.