

TO CONTACT
SENATOR PINSKY:
301-858-3155

Scholarships Now Available

Interested in help paying for tuition at a Maryland college? If you live in the 22nd district, apply now to Senator Paul Pinsky's scholarship committee for a state senatorial scholarship.

The scholarships range up to \$2,000 annually, for as many as four years, and go to residents who've graduated high school or will be graduating high school or receiving a GED this spring.

To apply, click to www.senatorpinsky.org or call the senator's office at 301-858-3155. Or check with your local high school's guidance office. The application deadline: April 9.

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

Annapolis Advocate

Paul Pinsky, your senator in the 22nd district

Winter 2010

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Dear Neighbor: Facing the Rocky Times Ahead

Foreclosures have slowed, crime is sinking, and the stock market continues to move back up. That's good news, of course, for our community and state.

Unfortunately, many hardworking local people remain jobless, and the economy is still slumping.

This slump is depressing the revenue the state collects — and that means we have a huge shortfall in the upcoming state budget.

That shortfall, in turn, has shoved budget cuts back onto the political agenda. That's not good. Budget cuts hurt our communities. They jeopardize school spending and safety net programs. They stall needed reforms in every-

thing from health care to the environment.

So what we're looking at in Annapolis this winter figures to be a severely austere legislative session. But this session would be far less threatening if the legislature, in the last session, had taken steps to increase state revenue from the rich and powerful.

Lawmakers last year could have extended the millionaires tax, a levy temporarily put in place three years ago, and implemented "combined reporting," a reform that plugs the loophole that lets giant national corporations avoid paying their fair share of the corporate income tax.

I'll be pushing, again this session, to get both these

steps enacted. Both these initiatives face an uphill battle, but I'm committed to fighting for both.

Working families have borne far too much of the brunt of this "Great Recession" we find ourselves in. They've lost income and savings.

At the same time, we've seen precious little reining in of big-time CEO pay — and hardly any serious effort to shift the economic burden onto more well-off sectors of our society.

In the weeks and months ahead, lawmakers are going to have to make hard choices. We all need to lift our voices to make sure they make the right ones.

Paul

A Guide to Getting Help 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 our state's many agencies or would like to know the status of a piece of legislation you've been tracking.

You can reach the sena-

tor's office toll-free at 301-858-3155 or, via email, at paul.pinsky@senate.state.md.us.

Staffing Senator Pinsky's office: administrative aide Ian Ullman and legislative aide David Kahn. Emma Coll and Molly McKee will also be on hand as interns during the 2010 session.

Big Green Efforts in a Small, Green Town

Step by Step, Track by Track

"I must seem like a broken record," Senator Pinsky recently told a constituent group. "It seems like I'm always talking about the Purple Line."

In a way, that's true. The senator has been advocating for an east-west mass transit route for over 15 years. Now, after many years of study and review, that obvious need is finally getting addressed.

The governor has forwarded a Purple Line proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation. Maryland is now officially in line for federal funding consideration.

Much of the proposed Purple Line route will go through the 22nd district, with one terminus at the New Carrollton Metro and another at the Bethesda Metro stop.

This configuration would allow someone living in Riverdale or West Hyattsville to reach New Carrollton Amtrak without getting in a car.

The proposed "light rail" Purple Line would be mostly "at-grade," meaning at street level. Light rail already operates in our area. You may have seen one at BWI-Marshall Airport or at Camden Yards in Baltimore.

Want to learn more? See the proposed Purple Line route and more at www.purplelinemd.com.

Edmonston, a small town of about 450 homes on the southern edge of the 22nd district, may be one of the D.C. area's most diverse communities.

Now Edmonston has a new claim to fame. The town will soon have the first "green street" in Maryland — and possibly the entire East Coast.

Last month, the chief of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Lisa Jackson, came to town to celebrate the start of construction that's going to turn Edmonston's Decatur Street into a regional showcase thoroughfare.

This landmark "Green



Edmonston's 'green street' groundbreaking

Street Project," funded largely via the federal stimulus program, will put in place rain gardens and bio-retention ponds to capture storm water runoff. Much of Decatur Street will also be resurfaced with "permeable pavement" that lets rain-

water soak through the street into the ground.

Why does that matter? Rainwater on roads — and the chemicals this water picks up — can run into the bay.

The final piece of the Edmonston

project: the installation of low-energy street lamps.

Edmonston Mayor Adam Ortiz, along with the Edmonston town council and staff, deserve all our thanks for taking the time to seek — and win — this important grant. Grass-roots efforts do pay off!

Smart Growth, Older Communities: The Tension

Suburban sprawl destroys green space, forces more cars on the road, and drives up taxes for new infrastructure expenses.

But we have an alternative: smart growth.

What does smart growth mean? Simply this: placing new development where we already have infrastructure in place — schools, transportation, water, sewer, all the basics.

Smart growth keeps existing green space green, by encouraging development — retail, office, residential — around hubs like Metro stops.

The basic goal: have people rely more on mass

transit and less on cars.

The downside? More intense development may inconvenience those living near this intensity. Not everyone attracted to these hubs arrives by mass transit. Traffic and noise can increase markedly.

For people in nearby quiet neighborhoods, that can be disconcerting. Intensive smart growth can, in these situations, turn out to be too intensive.

One example. Developers have proposed a major new project behind P.G. Plaza that features a 33-story office tower. County Council members will soon review this Belcrest Plaza Project proposal and

consider changes.

Supporting smart growth, Senator Paul Pinsky believes, doesn't mean accepting everything developers propose. Localities can and should speak up.

In Hyattsville, community pushback has already helped convince the Route 1 EYA project developer to retain the Lustine show-room building.

Local officials are optimistic that retail construction may soon start on the east side of Route 1.

"Having a vibrant downtown with restaurants and shops," notes Senator Pinsky, "could rejuvenate the entire Route 1 corridor."

Elections and Big Money: An Alternative

In less than a year, every office in county and state government will be up for election, from the governor and state legislature to, locally, county executive and county council.

Where election races multiply like this, we've all learned over recent years, so does the drive for campaign cash.

Running a competitive campaign, for any office, requires a hefty outlay of dollars. But should the ability to raise dollars determine who gets elected? Or should everyone have a fair shot at winning office?

"I think our current system of financing elections is patently unfair," notes Senator Paul Pinsky.

"Promising candidates who come from poorer communities or job situations," he adds, "have much less chance against candidates who are well-funded or connected to big contributors."

And for incumbents already in office, chasing after contributions from big donors takes time away from needed policy work and limits the time officeholders have available to speak with average constituents.

Senator Pinsky has proposed a solution that's currently in use in Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut: the public financing of election campaigns.

In each of these states,



Money talks in politics. But a bill that Paul Pinsky is reintroducing this year could fundamentally change the conversation.

state funds are offered to candidates who agree to spending limits — and not accepting large, private contributions.

These candidates have to prove they're legitimate candidates by first collecting small \$5 and \$10 donations from a large number of district residents.

This approach helps keep candidates who get public support accountable to voters — and not big contributors. This "clean money" approach also ensures that candidates who get tax dollars have significant grassroots support.

Past Supreme Court decisions require that this "clean money" approach must be voluntary. So, if sitting elected officials seeking reelection or candidates don't want to go this route, they can choose not to.

Unfortunately, this public financing approach still scares some people, particularly sitting elected officials. They fear that public financing will make incumbents much too "vulnerable."

That may be the main reason why the "clean money" legislation Senator Pinsky has introduced for Maryland has not yet passed the full General Assembly. The Senate has been the stumbling block. The legislation has actually made it through the House of Delegates.

Senator Pinsky will be reintroducing his clean money bill in this year's Annapolis session. Let's hope for all our sakes, particularly as voters, that this becomes the year real campaign financing reform finally makes it all the way through.

Did You Know?

This past fall, Maryland's Bureau of Revenue Estimates released its long-awaited analysis of how much money Maryland could raise by ending the tax loophole that lets big national corporations shift profits out of the states where they make them into other states where they face rock-bottom low tax rates.

Senator Paul Pinsky has been Maryland's top advocate for "**combined reporting**," the reform that would prevent corporations from playing this tax avoidance game with their Maryland earnings.

If combined reporting had been in effect in 2006, the new Bureau of Revenue Estimates report documents, major corporations would have paid up to \$170 million more in taxes than they actually did.

"The new Bureau of Revenue Estimates report," says Senator Pinsky, "has made the importance -- and necessity -- of combined reporting undeniably clear."

Why Wait? Sign Up Now for E-News

This *Annapolis Advocate* makes up just part of Senator Paul Pinsky's ongoing effort to keep 22nd district residents informed. Paul also writes a monthly email newsletter. To subscribe, e-mail "update-request@senatorpinsky.org" with "subscribe" in the subject field.

This newsletter is totally paid for by citizen donations.

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An Education Commentary

Childhood Obesity: Let the Battle Begin!

By Senator Paul Pinsky

We have, in Maryland and nationwide, far too many obese kids. Overall obesity among children ages 6-11 has over doubled in the last 20 years — and tripled for kids between 12 and 19!

That obesity doesn't just generate cruel playground taunting. Obesity translates into increased risk for cardiovascular disease, bone and joint problems, and even type-2 diabetes.

What's behind this obesity explosion? For years now, advertisers have been aggressively marketing calorie-laden junk food and drink to young people.

Add to that marketing the time kids today spend before TV and computer screens and you have the makings of a health crisis.

The purveyors of junk food and drink, from Coke to McDonalds, only pay lip service to the problem. Yes, these corporations do

offer some healthy alternatives, but their prime business is selling fried foods and sugary drinks. Any move away from junk would hit them where it hurts, in their profits.

The solution? For starters, I've been fighting to restrict the vending-machine sale of junk food and drink in

schools, against the resistance of some principals and foot-dragging by the state's Department of Ed.

The going has been slow. Vendors have met new restrictions by replacing soda with high-calorie "energy" drinks.

I'm also striving to inject more meaningful physical activity into the school day. We need to increase the time for physical exercise in schools and alert — and help — parents when dangerous weight gains

imperil student health.

We also need to lengthen the school day to insure enough time for arts and physical education, both subjects increasingly marginalized amid the current drive to boost student performance in "core" subjects.

Yes, a longer school day can be expensive. But losing art, music, and P.E. endangers our society. Students need both culture *and* fitness.

So what can residents of the 22nd district do?

You can insist that your child's school removes unhealthy foods from vending machines and the lunch room. You can push for greater time in P.E.

You can encourage, above all, the Board of Ed to value the whole child and not simply bow at the high altar of math and reading testing.



We need to get serious about the junk food that endangers the health of our kids.