

BARRIO DE LANGLEY PARK

A Neighborhood Planning Newsletter Published by Action Langley Park
Issue Number 255, October 2012

March for the Dream The Maryland Dream Act

The November ballot includes an item, Question 4, that seeks popular approval for the legislation approved by the legislature and governor that enables Maryland residents who are without papers to attend public institutions of higher education paying in-state fees. Most people who work with immigrants favor the legislation (so vote YES), and most people who view immigrants from afar do not favor it (so vote NO).

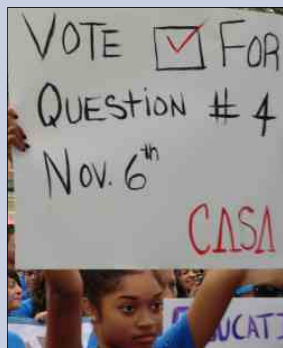
On October 6th, a rally was held at the CASA headquarters in Langley Park in support of the legislation. (See first photo, below.) Following the rally, the participants marched at the side of University Boulevard, ending at the University of Maryland campus. (On campus, there was another rally with remarks by a leading university administrator.

The enthusiastic marchers chanted "Si se puede" and sung about the Dream. May the dream become reality.

NOTE: See also Pages 4 and 7, below.



The orange-yellow signs (above) are for El Zol



The bands marched and played!



Hundreds of marchers spread the Dream Act word!

"College Park Hopes to Get Early Jump on Community Center"

"A new community center might be in College Park's future sooner than expected Currently, there is [only] one community center [in College Park]...."*

Poor College Park only has one community center. Only one. But Langley Park's 20,000+ population has none. Sure, there is a building named Community Center and Senior Center, but is not a serious center for neighborhood activities, hanging out, and more. (The seniors take over much of the west wing's available space during the day, and regional administrators have exclusive use of the east wing of the building.) Director Lourdes Sulc has done a great job in offering some activities that belong in a real community center, but it is not the kind of center that the neighborhood needs. Needed is a building with enough space to offer a variety of exercise and service activities—perhaps a small clinic, a library, a mentoring and tutorial suite for school children, and much more.

Needed is something like the Long Branch Community Center or the Laurel Community Center—to name but a few. But at the least, Langley Park needs much more space for activities and services. And the need in Langley Park is much greater than in College Park. For instance, the persons per square mile in College Park is 5,396, but in Langley Park it is 18,862! (With the Census undercount, it is well above 20,000!) The greater the density, the greater the need for a quality community center. But perhaps once again (think health services), the county is looking away rather than at such a crucial need for a real community center.

It might be ideal to tear down the current building (built in the 50s as an elementary school) and replace it with a quality community center building. Alternatively, a second storey could be added or a structure could connect the Community Center with the elementary school next door so that there would be a needed fusion of neighborhood and school.

If the senior center and the regional administrators would move to other locations, that would be a reasonable alternative, but turf control appears to prevent that.

*The quotations are from the front page of The Gazette, 27 September 2012. Our title is the five-column headline in the newspaper.



HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE POLICE OR OTHER COUNTY AGENCY?

If so, call the new **311** number in Prince George's or Montgomery Counties or the District of Columbia. If there's an emergency, **911** is still the number to call.

NEWS

1. IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRANTS

IDENTITY

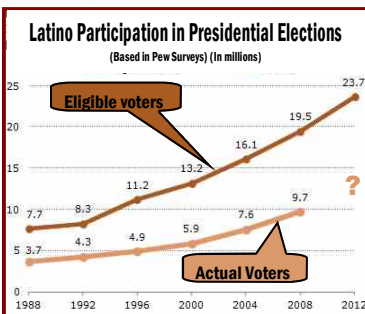
In an effort to better reflect social, cultural and economic trends on its decennial survey of residents, the U.S. Census Bureau is exploring whether to drop the word "Negro," add ways for Middle Easterners to reflect their countries of origin, and combine the race and ethnicity categories so "Hispanic" can become a stand-alone option. Is this a good idea? For instance, do darker-skin Latinos not want to identify by race and ethnicity? And what about whiter-skin Latinos? At least for some people, several "identities" is a positive. Surely some Euro-Americans of Irish heritage would like to think of themselves as American and White (or Euro) and Irish. So look in the mirror; who are you? To voice your opinion, the Census telephone number is 800-923-8282.



DREAM BENEFITS

If illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children were given legal status, their improved access to college and better jobs would add \$329 billion and 1.4 million jobs to the nation's economy over two decades, according to a report just releases. The report found that up to 223,000 of the 2.1 million young undocumented immigrants eligible for the DREAM Act would have an easier time enrolling, paying for, and finishing college—which would lead to the increased economic gains. (The study was released by the Center for American Progress.)

WILL LATINO/AS GIVE ROMNEY VICTORY?



What, the reader might say, are you headlining? After all, most Latino/as favor President Obama. Yes, but the sad truths are (a) about half the Latino/a residents are not eligible to vote, and (b) less than half of those eligible have actually voted. So Latino/a political strength has been minimized. We'll see if that changes in 2012.

COULD THIS BE TRUE IN THE U.S.A.? (Hope Not!)

"Angel has been detained at Broward Transitional Center for over 3 months because he called 911 for help. On May 1st, after group of men pulled a knife on Angel, he called 911 because he was scared they were going to hurt him. When the cops came, the men who threatened Angel had left already so Angel kept walking home. The group of men appeared again and followed him to his house. Angel called 911 again but the officers didn't believe him and, instead of helping, they arrested Angel.

"To make matters worse, Angel developed a hernia while in detention and needs surgery, but BTC is denying him treatment. Outside specialists said Angel needs surgery, but ICE has refused the doctor's orders. ICE plans on deporting Angel for calling 911." (Source: dreamactivistpa.org)

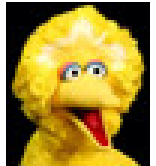
ROMNEY'S SOFT SIDE?

What can one count on when a man changes his statements many times? In the October 3rd debate, Mr. Romney denied he stood for the \$5 trillion cut that he has been proposing for the past year. So the staff of this newsletter doesn't know if any validity should be accorded some of his recent statements about immigration matters. Well, here they are:

"The people who have received the special visa that the president has put in place, which is a two-year visa, should expect that the visa would continue to be valid. I'm not going to take something that they've purchased." So said candidate Romney. Another turn in the road or just another verbal toss? Mr. Romney's new stance does not, of course, mean he would continue to issue new grants of deferred action once in office.

"The answer itself is carefully worded so that he leaves himself the option of closing down the initiative for those who haven't applied yet," said Frank Sharry of America's Voice. And he added: "There's a big difference between keeping in place work permits for 100,000 who have already received them and keeping an initiative going that promises to protect 1.4 million people." An Obama staffer comments: "Would he deport those who have received a deferment when the program expires after two years? We know he called the DREAM Act a 'handout' and that he promised to veto it—nothing he has said since contradicts this and we should continue to take him at his word."

Of course, the big news is that Mr. Romney, if elected president, plans to cut funding for PBS—that's the company that among many other programs offers Sesame Street entertainment and instruction to millions of children in the USA. Cut Big Bird???



REVERSE BRAIN DRAIN?

A new Kauffman Foundation study finds that high-tech, immigrant-founded startups—a critical source of fuel for the U.S. economy—has stagnated and is on the verge of decline. *America's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Then and Now** shows that the proportion of immigrant-founded companies nationwide has slipped from 25.3% to 24.3% since 2005, not a big drop but clearly in the wrong direction. The drop is more pronounced in Silicon Valley: from 52.4% to 43.9%. Nationwide, these companies employed roughly 560,000 workers and generated \$63 billion in sales in 2012. The anti-immigrant mood in some USA sectors is surely part of the explanation, and the slowed economy is another. But immigrant-founded startups are important to the economy's future, and so it is clear that foreign STEM graduates and advance degree immigrants must have an easier road to permanent residence in the USA ... if we care about our future.

*http://www.kauffman.org/uploadedFiles/Then_and_now_americas_new_immigrant_entrepreneurs.pdf

THE ONLY COUNTRY SHE'S KNOWN

Our title is the title of a report on Lundy Khoy, a Cambodian brought to the USA as a child and in possession of a green card. But as some people painfully know, having a green card is not a guarantee that the person will not be deported. From the report: "The George Mason University freshman, a green card holder, had a boyfriend who was dabbling in Ecstasy. He gave her some pills, and during a night of partying she was arrested and charged

with possession with intent to distribute the drug. She pleaded guilty, served three months and was on probation for four years. End of story—for most people. But for Khoy, now 31, it was the beginning of a 12-year saga of incarcerations, deportation proceedings, and the specter of being sent to live in a country she has never even visited." It's a nice feature story—and in substance a painful one because it is about yet another victim of the current immigration system.

One person's comment: "She served her time and was released. By the account of the article, she has not been in trouble since. Given that roughly half of teenagers will try drugs, I don't think one youthful indiscretion should cost her the home she knows." And the U.S. is her home. She has never known anywhere else.

The full story is at http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/after-run-in-with-law-cambodian-immigrants-permanent-residency-is-at-risk/2012/10/03/3ecf7ad2-0cd7-11e2-bb5e-492c0d30bff6_story.html.

DELAYED DEPORTATION FILING

As noted in a BLP issue some weeks ago, there are two big challenges facing young undocumented immigrants who want at least two years' grace. One is getting all the necessary papers in order. The question now often spoken is: How do you document an undocumented life? The other is coming into the open when a different president might use the information gathered to find and deport people.

From the *Washington Examiner*: "Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney would end an Obama administration policy allowing some young illegal immigrants to stay in the country and work, though anyone already granted a reprieve from possible deportation wouldn't see that permission revoked." Not applied, but granted—and the granting takes many weeks. Presidential inauguration takes place in January: in about three months. It is terrible for these young men and women to be in partial limbo because they were brought here as children without papers, and it is terrible for them to have to face the political uncertainties of the moment—uncertainties with lurking danger.

2. AND MORE

UNEMPLOYMENT

The percentage of those who are active in the job market but unemployed fell slightly from August to September 2012. It's at the lowest level in four years. So it is cautiously positive news.

Breaking the figures down, Latinos and Latinas appear to have made the greatest progress nationally: males, females, and teens all were at a lower unemployment rate.

Military veterans are struggling; their unemployment rate is 29% for the 18-24 age group, compared with 18% for non-vets in that age group. That's after many of the vets endangered their lives on behalf of problematic-entry wars. Tragic.

Another great concern stems from the high unemploy-

UNEMPLOYMENT	Sept 12	Aug12
All	7.80%	8.10%
Euro males 20+	6.60%	6.30%
Euro females 20+	6.30%	6.90%
Euros 16-19	21.20%	22.00%
Afro males 20+	14.20%	13.80%
Afro females 20+	10.90%	13%
Afros 16-19	36.70%	38.80%
Latinos 20+*	7.60%	8.10%
Latinas 20+*	9.80%	10.30%
Latino/as 16-19*	27.80%	29%

*Not seasonally adjusted

ment rates of teenagers. What will be the later impact of being an experienced unemployed person?

The figures for Maryland and its counties are not yet available. And we will probably never know the unemployment rate in Langley Park; a good guess might be 50% thanks to e-verify, the slow construction sector, and the increased number of families not hiring domestic help. But maybe the figure is lower. At least in D.C., there is a construction boom; let's hope that the boom spreads into the Maryland suburbs.

GERRYMANDERING

Maryland is still the champ (no hurrahs, please) in creating gerrymandered congressional districts. A study by the Azavea company in Philadelphia asserts that Maryland has the least compact congressional districts in the nation, based on four mathematical tools for compactness. It's hard not to agree when we look close to home at District 4 (the green area in the map). And it's just one of many insults to the norm of "compactness." The quest for power appears to have gone too far.



Here's a paragraph from the company's web site: "Democracy is not inevitable or a given; it must be sustained and strengthened by each generation. Today, American democracy is challenged by unlimited political contributions, polarized legislatures, gerrymandered districts, and opaque processes." Not far off the mark, alas.

But there may be good news for the anti-gerrymandering folks: Comptroller Peter V.R. Franchot, Senator Paul Pinsky, and some other Democratic officeholders are calling for voters to reject the newly drawn congressional district map. Redrawing what Governor O'Malley proposed! Fireworks coming?

PARENTING

Spanking: Results from a recent study indicate that mothers who experienced economic or psychological abuse in year one all reported less engagement in daily parent-child activities than women who did not experience abuse and were 1.5 times more likely to spank the child in year five.

One Parent: In 2009 in the USA, 41% of babies were born out of wedlock. That includes 30% Euro children, 50% of Latino/a children, and 70% of African-American children. Of course, some of the mothers have resident sperm-providers. Still, it's clear that there is less and less time for a parent to engage in parenting. Danger!

CASINO IN P.G.?

Some plusses: The *Washington Post* (24 September 2012) weighed in on the gambling debate, offering their answer "maybe." A few passages:

"While a glitzy mega-casino strikes us as a poor branding strategy, particularly for a jurisdiction whose image has been badly stained by corruption, it may have a local economic upside.

"News" continued from Page 3

"Officials in Prince George's ... argue that the county has for years been starved of revenue by one of the nation's tightest voter-imposed ceilings on property taxes. The tax cap, known by the acronym TRIM (Tax Reform Initiative by Marylanders), has been in place since 1978 and was reaffirmed by county voters in 1996. While county budgeters have lived within its strictures, it has severely limited initiatives. ... Prince George's, by hosting a casino, would be more assured of the shot in the arm that new revenue provides. That would help the county, a perpetual beggar, to pay its bills and fund new ideas. Just as promisingly, it would advance the prospects of a desperately needed new regional hospital in Prince George's, whose financing ... could be assured only by new gambling revenue." See <http://www.aclu.org/voting-rights/know-your-voting-rights-maryland>

Do the math: Estimated numbers for the gambling question 7 on the November ballot: \$39.5 million in new Education Trust Fund revenue, while the casino operators get \$434.7 million in new revenue. Meanwhile, gamblers lose \$711.8 million. So if these numbers are correct, we should not build more gambling casinos but simply ask gambling-prone people to give us 10% of what they would have lost—yielding \$71 million for the ETF! (Thanks to Delegate Niemann for sharing numbers.)

-\$711,800,000?

Addiction: The *Washington Post* (16 October 2012) reports that the state is gearing up for gambling addiction cases. "Based on statistics that show the percentage of adults addicted to gambling and the clinical evidence that shows those numbers are two to three times as high in places within 50 miles of a casino, the experts expect that they will soon have about 60,000 people with severe gambling problems in Maryland." Some grim anecdotes are available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/addiction-a-sure-fire-winner-if-md-expands-gambling/2012/10/15/502b14ae-16bd-11e2-a55c-39408f6e6a4b_story.html.

PURPLE LINE FUNDING

Will the Purple Line construction start during the targeted year, 2015? And be completed by the planned 2020? The answers by almost all concerned are "don't know" and "don't know." It's the money, which of course is linked to the shaky local,



state, and federal economies. The Purple Line would provide convenient cross-county transportation, and it might energize development in several areas along the way. But the benefits must await up to one billion dollars from the Feds and another one billion from state and local.

From the *Washington Examiner*: "The long-planned Purple Line may never be built for lack of state funding, Montgomery County lawmakers have warned. The 16-mile light rail system projected to run from Bethesda to New Carrollton is estimated to cost \$1.9 billion—money lawmakers say will be hard to raise. Another state transportation project, a bus rapid transit system planned for the I-270 corridor from Shady Grove to Clarksburg, known as the Corridor Cities Transitway, or CCT, is also in jeopardy. The CCT is expected to cost \$828 million. Though state officials hope to get as much as 50 percent of the costs of these projects from the federal government, the state is on the hook for the rest. And with the state's transportation trust fund lacking funds and state

lawmakers having rejected proposals to replenish it this year, several Montgomery County lawmakers are nervous that the money will run out in 2015 and the projects will die." PG wonders too.

In an email from PG County's Arthur Turner comes information that is a surprise to the BLP staff: "It is no secret that the State currently lacks funding for any major transportation projects, especially since the major investment in the ICC. That project so far has failed to realize its potential as advertised and may not do so anytime soon unless they lower the toll cost. However, some of us have been around long enough to remember that the original discussions for the Purple Line was not the route discussed below, but the route that would connect Alexandria, VA across the Wilson Bridge past National Harbor, and along the Beltway Corridor toward the Branch Ave Metro Station. Perhaps our Prince Georges leaders and planners should revisit this plan to determine its viability, especially since we need to improve our transportation connections if or when we begin to build any major commercial/residential developments in under developed areas along the southern Prince George's Beltway and Metro Corridors."

State funds are needed for many transportation-related projects and maintenance. Here's some competition for the Purple Line from the *Gazette* (8 October 2012): "Cities and towns across Maryland are repeating calls for the state government to restore transportation funding to municipal coffers after three years of the money going toward balancing the state budget." Too bad money doesn't grow on trees. Or should we note that the leaves of trees are falling now.



BLOCKING THE SOCCER FIELD: UPDATE

Some time ago, a thoughtless person arranged to place play equipment in front of one of the soccer (futbol) goals behind Langley Park McCormick ES. So neighborhood recreational play was severely impaired. Now we've ascertained that school officials had arranged the blockage. A few weeks ago, after ALP staff members asked questions, the field was rotated so that some soccer can be played. Don't school officials think about the school's neighborhood? Its neighbors? Maybe PGCPSS should have a policy of encouraging neighborhood residents to use school property when it's not being used for school purposes. That's in the spirit of the community-in-schools movement that contributes to children and adults.

DREAM and SAME-SEX

The CASA de Maryland organization decided in late August that cooperative campaigning linking the Maryland Dream Act advocates with Marriage Equality advocates would enhance the strength of both efforts. The word is getting out, and some leaders of Latino/a churches are publicly opposed to marriage equality. These defenders of marriage inequality may perhaps hurt the Dream cause, but their reading of religious doctrine is fueling their opposition. The opportunities to afford higher education and for two people in love to marry: some people think one opportunity is enough.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Northwestern HS choir has received a \$5,000 grant from the Jane Henson Foundation in support of travelling expenses to perform in the international Ihlombe South Africa Choral Festival next July. Terrific! Congratulations! Others: Send us *your* good news.

NEEDED: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness has recently issued a report that should make all of us work hard to develop affordable—really affordable—housing in the Langley Park area, throughout Prince George’s County, and in the USA. Affordable doesn’t mean that just a police officer’s or fire fighter’s family can afford it. At least in ALP, it means that a family with a per capita income of just over \$10,000 (which characterizes too many families in the Langley Park area) can afford a decent apartment with no infestations, no broken plumbing, no mold on the walls, and more. From the ICPH report, *A Home by Any Other Name* (<http://www.icphusa.org>), we reproduce a few of the paragraphs and charts.

"By the beginning of 2010, the economy had begun to improve, the housing market was rebounding, and the nation was starting to recover from the Great Recession. However, hidden among this rise in fortunes was a devastating countertrend. More than 1.6 million persons lived in homeless shelters at some point in 2010.

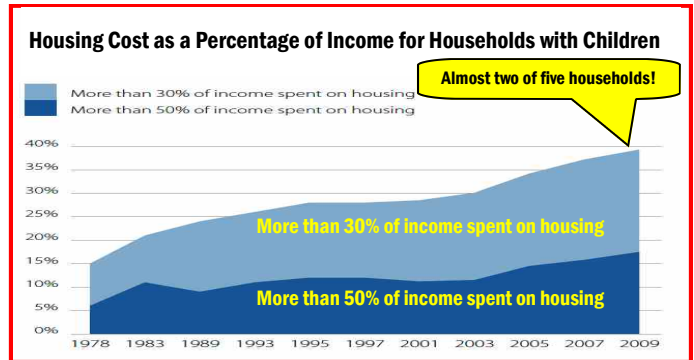
"The number of homeless families with children has seen a generally steady rise despite fluctuating economic circumstances. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports a 20% increase in homeless families from 2007 to 2010.

"While this change is sobering, it is hardly surprising, as family homelessness has risen for the last three decades. Families constitute an ever-growing proportion of homeless households. By 2010, more than 37% of homeless individuals across the country were in families—a number that had increased by 30% since 1985.

"Reducing the number of homeless households requires a series of policy interventions to support poor families in a variety of ways, including reducing unemployment and increasing educational attainment. However, a continually growing shortage of affordable rental housing makes it particularly challenging for homeless families to find places to live and remain out of shelter.

"In 2009, 7.1 million households had worst-case housing needs, earning less than 50% of the local median income and either paying over half their income in rent, living in severely substandard housing, or both.⁴ The decrease in the number of low-cost apartments surely contributes to the rise in homelessness, and the shelter system is increasingly becoming home for many of the nation’s poor."

Often, affordability is linked to income percentages; it is best to keep housing costs (rent, mortgage, etc.) to no more than 30% of income, and it is dangerous to exceed 50% of income. Yet both of these barriers are being smashed, and that raises the question: What is being sacrificed? Perhaps health care? Nourishing food? The ICPH offers a graphic to make the earnings/housing costs relationship vivid. (Below)

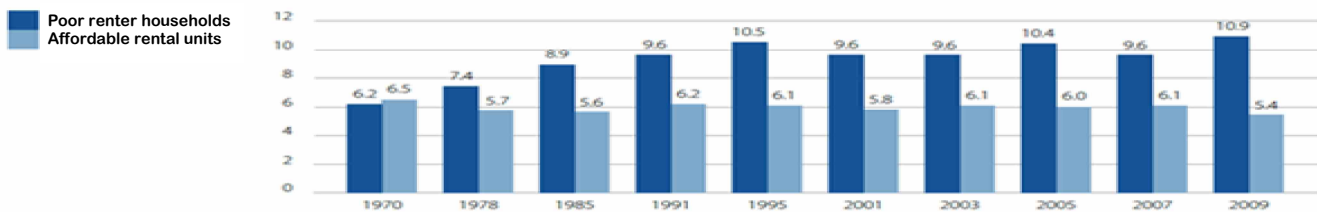


ICPH: "Obviously, a massive investment in low-income housing is necessary, but it is not the silver bullet. As the supply of affordable housing has declined, the homeless-shelter system has grown. Today, there is a vast shelter infrastructure across America. Some are emergency, congregate settings, others are well-staffed private apartments or rooms, but each is in some way a "home" to one or more of America's hundreds of thousands of struggling families. It is here that the futures of low-income housing and family homelessness collide. Low-income housing is not being built, and in many cases, older units are being destroyed. Meanwhile, intentionally or not, the void is being filled by the thousands of shelters that have been constructed."

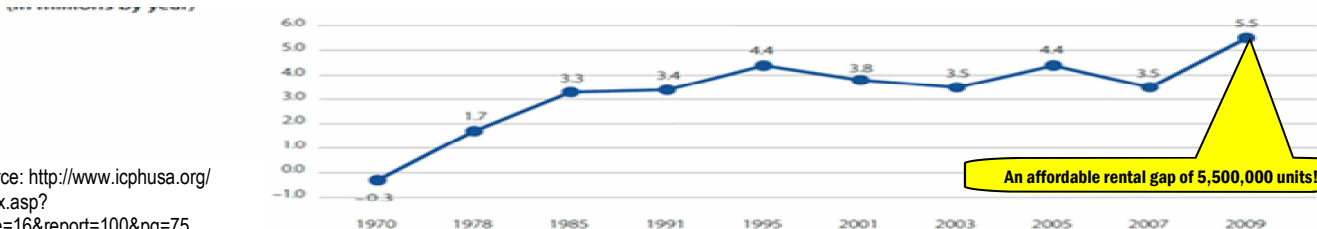
Langley Park? Many families cannot afford the lowest apartment rental in the neighborhood, and so they double up or triple up or more. One family of a mother and two children live in half of the living room of a one bedroom apartment, and that is not a rare situation.

So here’s the sick joke: The county adopted a Sector Plan for the Langley Park area that enables developers to tear down the somewhat affordable apartments and replace them with upscale apartments, condos, and more. And there’s no provision for alternative community-sustaining alternatives. Sick! Outrageous!

Number of Poor Rental Households and Available Affordable Units (in millions by year)



Gap Between Need and Availability of Affordable Units for Poor Renters (in millions by year)



Source: <http://www.icphusa.org/index.asp?page=16&report=100&pg=75>

SENATOR VICTOR RAMIREZ ON NEW LAWS AND BALLOT QUESTIONS



The information below was received by email from Senator Ramirez; these are his views, however, the BLP editorial team is in full agreement

"I want to share two things. First, there are two pieces of legislation concerning Domestic Violence that [have taken effect] in the State of Maryland. Second, I want to share the 2012 Election Ballot Questions which you will see on your November 6th ballot."

Domestic Violence Laws Take Effect

Domestic Violence – Unemployment Insurance: If a person, close relative or spouse is a domestic violence victim, this law establishes as a "good cause" the voluntary leaving of their place of employment, if it poses a risk to their safety, in order to qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. The unemployment claimant benefits may not be charged against the employer's rating record.

Reporting Domestically Related Crimes: The State's Attorney Office can now flag an offender's criminal record for domestic violence after a conviction should the offender be in a domestically-related relationship and the court finds evidence of a domestically-related crime. This is a bill I sponsored to ensure that we can track the number of domestic violence incidents through a person's criminal record.

2012 Election Ballot Questions

Question 1 - Qualifications for Prince George's County Orphans' Court Judges: Requires judges of the Orphans' Court for Prince George's County to be admitted to practice law in this State and to be a member in good standing of the Maryland Bar.

Question 2 - Qualifications for Baltimore County Orphans' Court Judges: Requires judges of the Orphans' Court for Baltimore County to be admitted to practice law in this State and to be a member in good standing of the Maryland Bar.

Question 3 - Suspension and Removal of Elected Officials: Changes the point at which an elected official charged with certain crimes is automatically suspended or removed from office. Under existing law, an elected official who is convicted or pleads no contest is suspended and is removed only when the conviction becomes final. Under the amended law, an elected official is suspended when found guilty and is removed when the conviction becomes final or when the elected official pleads guilty or no contest.

Question 4 - Public Institutions of Higher Education – Tuition Rates: Establishes that individuals, including undocumented immigrants, are eligible to pay in-state tuition rates at community colleges in Maryland, provided the student meets certain conditions relating to attendance and graduation from a Maryland high school, filing of income taxes, intent to apply for permanent residency, and registration with the selective service system (if required); makes such students eligible to pay in-state tuition rates at a four-year public college or university if the student has first completed 60 credit hours or graduated from a community college in Maryland; provides that students qualifying for in-state tuition rates by this method will not be counted as in-state students for purposes of counting undergraduate enrollment; and extends the

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time in which honorably discharged veterans may qualify for in-state tuition rates. [See Page 7, below.]

Question 5 - Congressional Districting Plan: Establishes the boundaries for the State's eight United States Congressional Districts based on recent census figures, as required by the United States Constitution.

Question 6 - Civil Marriage Protection Act: Establishes that Maryland's civil marriage laws allow gay and lesbian couples to obtain a civil marriage license, provided they are not otherwise prohibited from marrying; protects clergy from having to perform any particular marriage ceremony in violation of their religious beliefs; affirms that each religious faith has exclusive control over its own theological doctrine regarding who may marry within that faith; and provides that religious organizations and certain related entities are not required to provide goods, services, or benefits to an individual related to the celebration or promotion of marriage in violation of their religious beliefs.

Question 7 - Gaming Expansion Referendum - Gaming Expansion: Do you favor the expansion of commercial gaming in the State of Maryland for the primary purpose of raising revenue for education to authorize video lottery operation licensees to operate "table games" as defined by law; to increase from 15,000 to 16,500 the maximum number of video lottery terminals that may be operated in the State; and to increase from 5 to 6 the maximum number of video lottery operation licenses that may be awarded in the State and allow a video lottery facility to operate in Prince George's County?

SCARY

There are lessons in our area on how to conceal and manage a weapon. Should we be looking at a bulge in pants (no jokes, please) or purse and head in another direction? There are even some schools into which concealed weapons are brought. Agh!!*



The photo is from an advertisement placed by a concealed weapon training company.

*Should a university professor be scared?

THE LOS ANGELES WAY

Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck has announced that undocumented immigrants arrested by his officers for low-level crimes will no longer be turned over to federal authorities for deportation.

"The new rules, which are expected to affect about 400 people arrested each year, mark a dramatic attempt by the nation's second-largest police department to distance itself from federal immigration policies that Beck says unfairly treat undocumented immigrants suspected of committing petty offenses." (*Los Angeles Times*, 4 October 2012)

It's not the first immigrant-sensitive action that Chief Beck has taken. For instance, he instituted a plan limiting the situations when officers are to impound vehicles of drivers without a driving license. Such drivers are likely to be undocumented immigrants. He has also favored issuing licenses to those without papers. The latter position likely leads to safer driving and auto insurance.

Are there ideas here that might be useful for the counties of suburban Maryland?

THE MARYLAND DREAM ACT

On the November ballot in Maryland is Question 4 asking whether the legislative action enabling certain undocumented young people who live in Maryland to pay in-state rates for higher education should be sustained.

Money and values are at issue. Will the legislative bill result in more or less money for the state? Is it a positive value to enable people who entered the USA as children without papers—and without having been the decisionmaker in the decision to enter the USA—to make it more possible for them to learn in an institution of higher education?



The Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, has published a policy brief, “Private and Government Fiscal Costs and Benefits of the Maryland Dream Act.” (<http://www.umbc.edu/mipar/Documents/dreamactpolicybrief.pdf>) Below are some highlights of the report.

WHAT IS IT?

The Maryland Dream Act allows undocumented immigrants who graduate from Maryland high schools and meet certain additional conditions to pay in-county/in-state tuition at Maryland community colleges and public universities.

WHO QUALIFIES?

To qualify for the Dream Act, an undocumented immigrant must fulfill the following conditions:

- Attend a public or nonpublic secondary school in the state for at least three years (beginning no earlier than the 2005-2006 school year);
- Graduate from a secondary school, or received the equivalent of a high school diploma, in Maryland no earlier than the 2007-2008 school year;
- Provide documentation that the student or the student’s parent or legal guardian has filed a Maryland income tax return for at least three years while the student was in high school, and for any year during the period since high school graduation;
- Register at a community college within four years of high school graduation;
- Begin, or have begun, higher education at a Maryland public community college no earlier than the Fall 2010 semester. Comply with the registration requirements of the selective service system;
- File an application to become a permanent resident within 30 days of becoming eligible to do so.

“Educating the children of undocumented immigrants is a good economic deal for Maryland” (*Washington Post*, 11 October 2012)

Alas, these requirements will eliminate many deserving young people. For instance, what if a now-24-year-old who graduated in 2006 apparently can’t go to college as an in-state student. A de facto resident should be a de jure resident. Advocates of the Maryland Dream Act paid quite a price to get it passed. Well, something is better than nothing. –ed.

WHAT’S THE IMPACT?

The Dream Act is likely to have a variety of economic impacts upon those who take advantage of it, as well as on federal, state and local governments and society as a whole. Private costs of the Dream Act to students include the tuition and fees paid by those who would not have gone to school without the Dream Act, plus the earnings foregone because these students are in school and perhaps not working. Private benefits to students from the Dream Act include the higher post-tax earnings, fringe benefits, better job satisfaction and better health that results from more education. However, because of measurement difficulties, the only private benefit that we consider in this analysis is higher post-tax earnings. To the extent that there are other private benefits to students, this study underestimates the true private net benefits of the

Dream Act.

Costs to local, state and federal governments increase when students obtain more education at public institutions because these governments subsidize students in high schools, community colleges and universities. In this study, fiscal costs to the different types governments are measured as the per student subsidies going to the high schools, community colleges or 4-year universities.

The fiscal benefits of the Dream Act include the increased income tax revenue, increased sales tax revenue, and increased property tax revenue that occur because more-educated individuals earn higher incomes. In addition, because more educated individuals are less likely to commit crimes and be incarcerated, are less likely to receive income support (welfare), and are less likely to receive Medicare or other government health care subsidies, fiscal benefits should also include the reduction in public spending in these areas. However, because of the difficulties with measuring other fiscal benefits, the estimates presented in this study only include increased income tax revenue, increased sales tax revenue, and reduced spending on incarceration. To the extent that there are other fiscal cost savings from a more educated citizenry, this study underestimates the net fiscal benefits of the Dream Act. Even without including these additional likely fiscal benefits in our estimates, we still find that the net fiscal benefits of the Dream Act to the state, county and federal governments are positive.

For most categories of students who take advantage of the Dream Act, the estimated total net fiscal plus private benefits are not only positive but large. The estimated total net benefits to the economy of each annual cohort of students who take advantage of the Dream Act are approximately \$66 million in 2011 dollars.

For students who obtain more education because of the Dream Act, there are net fiscal benefits for all levels of government (state, local and federal) as well as private net benefits. For students who benefit from the Dream Act but do not obtain more education, costs shift among the student, and county, state and federal governments, leading to positive net private benefits as well as positive net total (fiscal plus private) benefits, but negative net fiscal impacts for the state and local governments combined. The total fiscal costs and benefits of the Dream Act will depend on the number of students who obtain more education because of the Dream Act relative to those who benefit but do not obtain more education because of the Dream Act.

For each annual cohort of students who benefit from the Dream Act, the estimated total fiscal costs to governments of additional schooling induced by the Dream Act are approximately \$3.6 million for the Maryland state government, \$3.6 million for county governments and \$200,000 for the federal government. However, as shown [in graphics in the report] 3, the initial costs of the investment in education will be more than offset by increased tax revenues and lower government spending on incarceration and other government programs that result from a more educated citizenry. Consequently, as shown in Row 3, the total net fiscal benefits of the Dream Act for each annual cohort of students are estimated to be close to \$24.6 million. Of this \$24.6 million, approximately \$6.2 million will accrue to the State government of Maryland and to Maryland county governments and \$18.4 million will accrue to the federal government. While these estimates are based on a number of parameters that are imprecisely estimated, the basic result is robust and remains qualitatively unchanged when underlying assumptions are varied.



EDUCATION & SCHOOLS

◆Three cheers for Councilman Derrick L. Davis (Mitchellville) who proposes that parents should be helped with their activities in support of their school children. The vehicle would be "parent academies." Currently, there are several such academies in the county not connected with the school system (PGCPS). The system should create such



academies for every school or area in the county. And that's a job that parent liaisons can do well—if they are (re)employed by PGCPS.

◆A former El Paso school superintendent has been sentenced to more than three years in jail for removing low-performing students from classrooms, thus improving schools' test scores. It's but one of many schemes to improve the scores by people scared of low-score consequences. Anyone in Maryland trying that manipulation?

◆This school year, the you-must-walk distance from home to school was extended from one mile to one-and-a-half. That seems to be far too distant for elementary school children. Indeed, it may be dangerous. Let's hope PGCPS returns to the old standard.

◆Email from "anonymous" (an angry parent?): "The Transfer Office turned down hundreds/thousands of applications ... without even reviewing them. Our high performing schools should not be under capacity and losing funding, nor should students be stuck at schools that are overcapacity when there are some schools in the County operating at 50% capacity. If parents are willing to provide the transportation for their children to change schools, why isn't the Transfer Office allowing transfers?" Is this a valid concern?

◆Prince George's Community College Foundation, Inc. and Prince George's Community College have raised \$18 million in the first quarter of the three-year strategic fundraising campaign. "Purpose, People, Possibilities," which originally had a \$15 million goal, supports three institutional priorities: academic and workforce development programs, state-of-the-art teaching facilities, and scholarships for diverse student populations. The college and foundation announced a new target of \$25 million at the Partners for Success Awards Dinner on October 9. Go PGCC!

WHAT & WHEN



Here we list upcoming ALP activities and other events that are called to our attention. Have an event to list? If so, send information well in advance to actionlangleyark@yahoo.com.

Oct 18-20—Songs of Migration, at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater. "They flowed from all parts of Africa, south, toward the promise of the golden city Johannesburg and a better life." As with many migrants, the new life for some was not golden. Tickets \$30. With Hugh Masekela. Contact 202 467-4600.

Oct 19—Immigrant Experience in PG County, County Administration Building lobby, noon to 5 p.m.

Oct 20—Native American Festival, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Patuxent River Park, 16000 Croom Airport Rd., Upper Marlboro. Games, dancing, etc.

Oct 20, et cetera—Free Community Dinner & Food Distribution at St. Michael and All Angels Church, 8501 New Hampshire Ave. in upper Langley Park. From 5 to 6:30 p.m. This is a regular event on the third Saturday of the month. For information, call 301 434-4646.

Oct 20, November 16, December 21—Capital Area Foodbank at Langley Park Community Center, 11 a.m. One share of food per household. Bring your own bags.

Oct 20 and 21—Maryland Renaissance Festival, 1821 Crownsville Rd., Annapolis. It's mostly on Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. The space includes performances, craft shops, food and drink, and more. It isn't cheap: most adults pay \$17 and kids \$8. But there is a complicated fee schedule. For fees and lots of other information, check <http://www.rennfest.com/>.

Oct 21—World of Montgomery Festival, noon to 5 p.m. at the Wheaton Triangle, one block from the Wheaton Metro station.

Oct 24 and 31—Crossroads Farmers' Market, this and every other Wednesday afternoon (last market day this year is October 31. Halloween?!), 2:30 to 6:30 p.m., in the parking lot at the south end of the 7676 New Hampshire Avenue building. Lots of fruits and vegetables and live music and more. Sometimes the Amerigroup bounce bus is there!!

Oct 27—Shredding (free), Northwestern HS, 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Nov 1—Action Langley Park Open Meeting at the Langley Park Community Center, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. One focus: Health Check 2012. Send your suggestions for the agenda.

Nov 6—Vote!!!! Check <http://www.aclu.org/voting-rights/known-your-voting-rights-maryland> for all the details.

Nov 11—Health Check in the LP Community Center noon to 3:30 p.m. There will be a wide range of health screenings plus information and counseling. Is your heart okay? Are you infected with HIV? How's your lung strength? Your oral health? Et cetera! Everything is free. Medical professionals welcome to add to the event's team of professionals

**Health Fair on
November 11!**

2013: Plan Ahead:



May 5—Langley Park Day, a festival of music, dance, food, information, and especially health (there's a big health fair). The whole world is invited!!! Everything is free except purchases of foods or crafts. Volunteer doctors, nurses, dancers, musicians, clowns, and guides are all welcome.