

Good Evening:

I am Dr. Lillian Norris-Holmes. Congratulations to each of you on your recent elections to serve the citizens of Howard County. I have lived in the county since 1990. Currently living in District 2, represented by Councilman Opel Jones, early representation was with our newly elected County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball. Again, congratulations to each of you and the districts you serve.

I am extremely honored to have my name submitted for appointment confirmation as a member of the Howard County Citizens' Election Fund Commission. I became attached to "reducing the influence of big money in politics" under the leadership of Congressman John Sarbanes' "Government for the People Act". In 2013, I sponsored an event at my home giving the Congressman a platform to speak directly with citizens of Howard County.

In 2015, I became an ambassador for Common Cause Maryland and in 2015-2016 worked to get Question A on the ballot. I hosted three events at my home to promote and express the importance of the citizens' vote for Question A. The first was with Ben Cohen of Ben & Jerry Ice Cream and "two" additional events were with "Ben Jealous," former Maryland candidate for Governor. Also, I hosted strategy meetings and made phone calls in support of Question A.

I supported efforts to pass CB-30 and worked the election polls which established the Citizens' Election Fund program. I am a Common Cause Maryland board member, the organization with over 50 years of experience toward the cause. Granting me opportunities to follow efforts state-wide.

Montgomery County was the first Maryland County to establish the program and was used in 2018. Their Council fully funded the program and qualified candidates using the program ran successful races. Montgomery County's "**current**" County Executive; 4 At-Large Councilmembers; and two district Councilmembers used the program. Qualified candidates received 92 percent more contributions from individuals than non-participating candidates. Small donations accounted for 94 percent of total fundraising dollars for qualified candidates versus only 8 percent for non-qualified candidates.

I hope Howard County Council will fully fund the program for the use of future candidates in 2022. Attracting a diverse poll of candidates to run being diverse in age, race, sex, ethnicity, etc. I look forward to the honor of serving on the commission and continuing my commitment to the Citizens' Election Fund.
Thank you.