



March 2021

My Wonderful Spokes in the Wheel:

This COVID-19 pandemic has taken many lives and has changed all of us, in some way. I offer my deep condolences for all who are suffering from a loss of loved one, loss of income, and the inability to socialize. Remember this. We are over-comers by the grace of God and will be the champions He has created us to be. As such, we can and we will adjust to this “new” normal that this pandemic has forced on us – along with following all the CDC recommendations, and have taken or will take the COVID vaccination when your opportunity comes.

Just for you to know, I have taken both COVID shots and encourage you to follow my lead to protect yourself, family, friends, and community! It is extremely important for all of us to do our part to stop the COVID spread. The good news is that the number of COVID-19 victims in Prince George’s County is declining and we now have more vaccination clinics and three new mobile vaccination units. I have enclosed the latest information from the Prince George’s County Executive on COVID news and vaccination facilities.

I am continuing to work for many issues to improve the quality of life for all. A significant focus is on pushing the cause forward to support our Black State Troopers. Delegate Darryl Barnes and I are primarily focused on holding the leadership accountable for the actions of discriminatory practices within the ranks of the Maryland State Troopers as well as seeking equity among every position of the State Troopers.

Other concerns and proposed legislative initiatives are:

- Health Coverage; COVID-19; Housing; Food Desert; Controlled Drug Prices.
- Educational Blueprint Override; Property Tax Incentive; Elder Abuse Registry.
- Broadband Access; Sports Betting (minority participation); Clean Energy.
- Police Reform; Economic Development; Unemployment; Litter Control.
- Purple Line; Highways, Suitland High, & Fairwood Elementary construction.

Please see my Special Announcements and other attachments. Also, please visit *Resources* on my website: www.joannecbenson.com. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office on **301-858-3148** or email me at Joanne.Benson@senate.state.md.us.

Gripped with Love and Hugs,

Joanne C. Benson

Senator Joanne C. Benson
24th Legislative District
Prince George’s County, Maryland

Special Announcements

COVID-19 Vaccine Bulletin

The County Executive's weekly COVID-19 Vaccine Bulletin is available online, providing the latest updates on COVID-19 vaccinations in Prince George's County.

#ProudtobeProtected <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MDPGC/bulletins/2c82277>



News from Maryland Office of People's Counsel
Consumer Assistance
6 St. Paul Street, Suite 2102; Baltimore, MD 21202

Utility Moratorium: The [Public Service Commission](#) has ordered a hold on all gas/electric service terminations until June 30, 2021 **for the following two groups ONLY:**

- 1) Any customer with a signed medical certification on file with the utility.
- 2) Any customer who has received or been qualified to receive Office of Home Energy assistance since February 15, 2017. For more details: <https://www.psc.state.md.us>

Pepco Customers: Pepco has proposed a three-year multi-year rate plan from April 2021 through March 2024. According to Pepco, the total bill impact for the average residential customer would be just over \$5.80 in 2023. See the attached *Press Release* from the [Public Service Commission](#) for more details about the plan and how to participate in the hearing.

OHEP Applications: The [Office of Home Energy Programs \(OHEP\)](#) has made a policy change as it relates to incomplete documentation for an energy assistance application. If the reason for application denial is due to incomplete information, the applicant has 90 days from the Notice of Denial to submit the missing eligibility documentation for the original application to be processed.

All utilities are offering 12 month payment plans with no down payment required. Contact your utility for more information.- The [Office of People's Counsel](#) has created an [energy assistance toolkit](#) to help Maryland households facing utility turn-off notices. This toolkit includes videos on how to fill out the Office of Home Energy Programs application, forms, and resource guides. Visit: www.opc.maryland.gov