

LOCAL LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS 2023

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*1. Contact Person Name
Ms Alicia C. Dorr

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Feral Cat Rescue

***6. Code References**

Laws need changing to non catching feral cats that have been TNRed. If not, then TNR done and returned to site in which they were caught. No killing of feral cats, ever!
No keeping feral cats at shelters after TNR.

***7. Problem**

Feral cats that have been caught are not TNR and returned to original catch site. Also, ear tipped TNR cats are trapped. This is wrong. Neighbors cannot keep critters from their property ~ raccoons, possums, deer, fox, mice, birds, turtles, frogs, etc. AND feral cats.

***8. Solution**

Do not trap and keep TNTed feral cats that have been ear tipped. Do not respond to neighbors who like no critters. Critters are entitled to life!

***9. Cost**

No cost however - Money saved in salaries for Animal Control officers.

***10. Organizational Support**

Feral Cat Rescue

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Zero

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

No trapping of feral cats that have been ear tipped. Return to original site of catch.

13. Other Information to Note

SKIPPED

14. Attachment

SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
Robert S. Sherouse

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone

[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Any Maryland Resident may submit photo or video proof of violation of this criminal code to the Maryland Department of Transportation or the State Police. Photo or video proof must clearly depict the act of littering, along with the offenders' license plate, location of the littering event, date, and time. Fines assessed for these violations of criminal code shall be shared with the Maryland resident submitting the claim, with the resident receiving a reward of 50% of the total fine.

***6. Code References**

Md. Code, Crim. Law § 10-110, Litter Control Law

***7. Problem**

The State of Maryland and Charles County have a significant litter problem that not only impacts that health and well-being of its residents, but also tourism. Adding to the problem, Charles County does not provide (or require) residential garbage collection. So, in addition to "casual litterbugs" there are residents that simply deposit their household trash and garbage on the sides of our roads. For me personally, this problem results in my family having to clean up trash in front of my home and along my fields on Marshal Corner Road every day - sometimes more than once a day. The State Department of Transportation, State Police and County Sheriff's office offer no assistance in getting this under control even though I offer to provide videos and even the names and addresses of those responsible for littering on Marshal Corner Road.

***8. Solution**

With the availability of vehicle dash cams, smart phones, security cameras and even deer cameras, incentivize Maryland Residents to help the State of Maryland address the criminal violations of the Litter Control Law. Maryland could offer on-line training and certification for Maryland Residents to become deputized as litter control agents. A website could be developed to enable Maryland Residents to report violations of the Litter Control Law, along with photo or video proof, sufficient to enable the State of Maryland to issue a fine to the offender. The offender could be issued a fine or summons, much in the same way speed cameras are used to issue fines to vehicle owners. Vehicle owners would be held accountable for litter associated with the vehicle(s) they own.

***9. Cost**

Once set up, this should add to the Maryland State Treasury and result in reducing the current annual cost for roadside clean up. Essentially, this would be funded/reimbursed by those violating Maryland's Litter Control Law.

***10. Organizational Support**

Maryland Residents, Maryland Department of Transportation, State Police, County Sheriff's Office, and of course, tourists.

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Litterbugs violating Maryland's criminal code.

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

Any Maryland Resident may submit photo or video proof of violation of this criminal code to the Maryland Department of Transportation or the State Police. Photo or video proof must clearly depict the act of littering, along with the offenders' license plate, location of the littering event, date, and time. Fines assessed for these violations of criminal code shall be shared with the Maryland resident submitting the claim, with the resident receiving a reward of 50% of the total fine.

13. Other Information to Note

Consider patterning this law on a New York law aimed at incentivizing residents of NYC to report idling buses and trucks (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dep/environment/idling-citizens-air-complaint-program.page>). Or leverage from a program in Australia that enables citizens to report litter violations that result in fines against the offenders (<https://www.kabc.wa.gov.au/report-littering>). Or even explore Artificial Intelligence solutions from <https://www.littercam.ai/home>.

14. Attachment

SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
Michael R. Kepferle

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone

[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Allocation of state matching or earmark funds for county nonprofits

***6. Code References**

Unknown

***7. Problem**

The county established the Charitable Trust to help county nonprofits with support through a nonpartisan and rigorous evaluation process. Recently there have been cases where certain nonprofits have received large amounts of funding through our state representatives and others. This has created an appearance of favoritism by government officials toward a few organizations and appears to undermine the purpose of the Charles County Charitable Trust.

***8. Solution**

Enact legislation that directs nonprofit earmarks and additional funding to the Charles County Charitable Trust. This will ensure equanimity in support for the large number of nonprofits with growing needs in our community.

***9. Cost**

No additional cost since the Charitable Trust already has an operating budget. Estimate no more than 5-10% of any funds if significant manpower increase is needed, but community volunteer board conducts indepth analysis of deserving organizations.

***10. Organizational Support**

Unknown.

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Unknown

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

TBD

13. Other Information to Note

The Charles County Charitable Trust has efficiently managed both County grants and Federal COVID relief funds at no increase in operating costs over the past several years. Their diverse volunteer board and latest management team have revitalized the organization which has noted recently that they have received nonprofit requests for over \$3,000,000. Whatever the best mechanism is legislatively to meet the needs of our most needy citizens without overburdening our government is needed.

14. Attachment

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*1. Contact Person Name
Dr. Karla M. Kornegay

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

***3. Contact Person Phone**

[REDACTED]

***4. Contact Person Address**

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Properly and Strictly Enforce/Deter the illegal use of ATV and Dirtbikes on the County's Highways and Roadways. It is a quality of life issue, illegal, very deadly and more than dangerous. The adults operating these pieces of equipment, illegally, must be held accountable properly. There should be no more "catch and release". Such equipment should be impounded and not given back to the owner and individuals violating this law must be properly punished to deter the continued bad behavior.

***6. Code References**

MA Code-2021; subtitles 13-402; sections 13-403; section 21-902; Maryland Motorcycle Safety Guide; section 22-204; Maryland Transportation Code 22-403;section 22-401;sections 22-405.1;Strategic Highway Safety Plan;

***7. Problem**

According to the Maryland Department of Transportation (DOT), more than 70 motorbike riders die in crashes yearly. And about 50% of crashes happen to riders aged 21-35 due to safety irregularities. Dirt bike riders must be responsible for these rules and regulations to save lives and properties on roads. At the same time, the violation of the required traffic rules is punishable under the transportation code. The violation of starting, stopping, and parking dirt bikes is punishable under the Maryland Transportation Code. You cannot turn left or right with your dirt bike whimsically without surveilling vehicles. There are riding rules for laned roadways that are not adhered to. For example, you cannot bother other dirt bike riders in the same lane. Let them move with their full freedom. No person can operate between adjacent lines of bikes, which constantly occurs. The operators cannot carry any other person on their dirt bikes unless they have a regular seat for carrying one more person. However, you cannot carry a person in such a position that can hamper your riding view and this happens and should not. People are getting killed because of this dangerous activity and the solutions, which are limited, must be enhanced to stop this illegal activity. The Maryland Administration doesn't allow dirt bikes in neighborhoods to ensure public safety and that occurs often. The state administration strictly protects public properties, lives, and wildlife ecosystems under the Maryland Vehicle Laws, but many of those violating the law do not care about the law. We no longer want to be taunted by these guys and gals who are illegally on these bikes and ATVs.

***8. Solution**

Stop the serious, deadly issues that we are having in the County and in our neighborhoods relating to the dangerous ATV and dirt bike riding, which has been occurring for quite awhile. The law needs to be seriously amended in the County asap to add stricter deterrents to stop this illegal activity altogether and destroy the equipment, especially for repeat offenders. It is disheartening to know that the CCSO must continually address this issue when there's numerous other important issues to address. We must help our Officers by stopping this issue no matter what it takes. Stricter deterrents are the only way to bring this dangerous activity to a halt! Adopt ordinances consistently restricting ATV and dirt bike use on private property, public property, highways, and county roads, hence the referenced legislation proposal. We MUST: Prohibit and abate nuisances, including activities harmful to the inhabitants' health, morals, safety, convenience, and welfare; Keep streets, highways, roads, and other public places safe and free from undue noise and nuisances; and prevent individuals from trespassing on public or private lands; Riders will be treated like regular motorists, and they must respond to all Police Officers just like motorists. However, given such equipment is illegal to be operated in neighborhoods, on highways, on roads, on streets, on public or private property in the County, riders will be charged with as much as six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine and a 1 year suspension of their driver's permit/ license after they're caught riding on any street for a third time. The penalty for a first time offense will be a fine of \$250 and 30 days community service. The penalty for a second time offense will command a \$500 fine and 1 day in jail, 30 days of community service and 2 months driver's license suspension. Safety is first and they should not be riding in packs, intimidating pedestrians and intimidating other drivers. Enhance the penalties.

***9. Cost**

No cost known, to my knowledge, in order to implement deterrents and rules to protect lives and the community.

***10. Organizational Support**

Supported by most citizens in Charles County, MD Dept. of Transportation, many lawmakers in Annapolis and the Charles County Sheriff's Office.

***11. Organizational Opposition**

State Senator Arthur Ellis, for reasons that didn't implement the law, communicated that he didn't want (not verbatim) black males targeted or placed in jail because of violating the law regarding riding dirtbikes and ATV riders, even though said riders harass citizens and continue to break the law. Those that break the law must be properly held accountable. These individuals create dangerous situations unnecessarily. Everyone needs to be held accountable and follow the rules put in place.

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

Operating unregistered off-road vehicles including ATVs and dirt bikes on roads is prohibited by state law. The maximum penalties for violating this law include imprisonment not exceeding 90 days and a fine not exceeding \$500. Additional secondary law violations that could potentially occur are as follows: driving without a license; operating an uninsured motor vehicle; operating an unregistered motor vehicle; and if you fail to stop for a police officer that activates emergency equipment, fleeing and eluding. Off road vehicles may not be operated on private property without the property owner's written consent in their possession at the time they are operating the off-road vehicle. The maximum penalties for this violation are also imprisonment not exceeding 90 days and a fine not exceeding \$500. HOAs will not grant permission to operate off road vehicles on common HOA owned property. Both offenses are not simple traffic violations. Individual riders are subject to arrest and their off-road vehicle should be impounded permanently. Juveniles and their parents will not exempt from these laws. These acts are generating a large volume of calls to the CCSO, wasting resources. Prohibit and abate nuisances, including activities harmful to the inhabitants' health, morals, safety, convenience, and welfare; Keep streets, highways, roads, and other public places safe and free from undue noise and nuisances. Riders will be charged with as much as 30 days in jail, a \$1,000 fine and a 30 day suspension of their driver's permit/ license after they're caught riding on any road for a third time. The penalty for a first time offense will be a fine of \$250 and 30

days community service. The penalty for a second time offense will command a \$500 fine, 30 days of community service and a 15 day driver's license suspension. Safety is first and they should not be riding in packs, intimidating pedestrians and motorists.

13. Other Information to Note

Complaints have been submitted to the CCSO and others in leadership since 2018 or prior regarding issues with adults (sometimes those younger than 18) riding, dangerously, in neighborhoods and on the highways. These individuals harass drivers, drive at high rates of speed or cut off drivers on the roads and highways. Dirt bike riders are equally responsible for following the state road rules and regulations. I have numerous pictures that I have sent to the CCSO of many riders violating the law.

14. Attachment

****SKIPPED****

*1. Contact Person Name
Mrs Rosanna AR. Swann

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

To hold Charles County Government, Board of Education, Charles County and State Legislators Accountable for all monies distributed to For Profit and Nonprofit Entities

***6. Code References**

I don't know

***7. Problem**

Charles County Employee, BOE, and/or County Commissioners and State Legislators have been awarding person/s, entities both for-profit and non-profit awards when those entities are not legal entities-1) are not licensed in Charles County and/or The State of Maryland and/or, 2) Are not a legal in Good Standing 501(c)3 entity and/or, 3) Are not in good standing with SDAT and/or the Comptroller of MD and/or, 4) Are not registered as a Maryland Charitable Organization and/or haven't paid other business related taxes and/or 5)Are in child support arrears.

***8. Solution**

EVERY Charles County Government Employee, Contractor for Charles County Government, Board of Education, Charles County and State Legislators and any category not mentioned who are distributing County, State and Federal funds to person/s and/or entities for-profit or non-profit need to confirm that person/s and/or entities are compliant with taxes, licenses, not in child support arrears, etc before distributing any funds to said person/s and/or entities. If one does not perform search and validate person/s and/or entities to be in compliance, said employee can be fined \$5,000 per offense and face jail time (similar to that of a Maryland Real Estate agent for recommending a contractor or a mortgage broker without confirming they are licensed).

***9. Cost**

Minimal in comparison to complicit in fraud

***10. Organizational Support**

Through Piscataway Eyes

***11. Organizational Opposition**

None known

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

Any Charles County Government Official, Employee, Contractor and/or Board of Education employee or contractor, County Commissioner and/or Maryland State Legislator must investigate and validate the status of person/s and/or entities both for profit and non-profit that will be awarded money/ies from County, State and or Federal Funds to be in good standing with the State of Maryland, County in which money will be paid, as well as with the Federal Government-all taxes paid-locally, state and federally including all nonprofit and charitable organization taxes, has licenses to do business in that location or that field or registered as a Maryland Charity.

13. Other Information to Note

See above, but please assist.

14. Attachment

[Md. regulation discourages referrals by real estate agents - The Washington Post.pdf](#)

If you live in Maryland and your real estate agent refuses to refer you to a mortgage lender, he isn't being rude. Real estate agents making referrals to service providers in Maryland can now be fined up to \$5,000 if they violate a new state Real Estate Commission regulation.

That regulation requires agents to make a referral in writing, to verify that the service provider has a current state license, to provide the date on which the agent last checked the state-licensing database and to provide an electronic link to the licensing record.

Making real estate agents the de facto "license police" under this unduly burdensome regulation will more than likely prevent licensed real estate agents from making any referrals when providing routine brokerage services.

Previously, experienced real estate agents, familiar with the good and bad service providers, were able to pass along, on an informal basis, the names of service providers they found to perform good work at reasonable prices. The public will no longer be able to readily take advantage of the valuable experience that licensed agents brought to the real estate buying process.

It is safe to assume that when faced with the risk of being fined and reprimanded or even losing their licenses, real estate agents will demur when a client asks for a referral.

"This regulation interferes with the professional relationship between the agent and his client, censors the agent's ability to give meaningful information to their clients, and turns the agent into an agent for the state," said Dennis Melby, former president of the Greater Capital Area Association of Realtors, district vice president of the Maryland Association of Realtors and a real estate agent in Bethesda.

This regulation's broad scope includes, but is not limited to, referrals to mortgage lenders, mortgage brokers, real estate appraisers, home inspectors, home improvement contractors, plumbers, electricians, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning contractors, and all others who are required to be licensed. The regulation covers referrals provided in connection with "the provision of real estate brokerage services."

"The new regulation is intended to protect the public," said Kathie Connelly, executive director of the Real Estate Commission.

"If the public uses a non-licensed contractor and is harmed, the consumer will not have access to the Maryland Home Improvement Commission's Guaranty Fund," Connelly added. That fund can reimburse the aggrieved consumer up to \$20,000 per claim. A consumer harmed by the unlicensed contractor can still resort to the courts for a remedy.

Insurance companies that provide errors and omissions insurance for Maryland real estate agents certainly see the potential for increased claims against agents. This regulation will add to the huge number of frivolous claims being filed against agents. As a result, insurance premiums may have to be reevaluated.

The District and Virginia maintain similar real estate transaction-guaranty and education funds to assist consumers who have been harmed by their licensees. Neither has or contemplates a similar regulation governing referrals. Nor are any other licensees in the region required to “vouch” for other licensees’ bona fides.

For example, a Maryland licensed plumber may freely refer a consumer to an electrician without having to check on that electrician’s license and without fear of jeopardizing his plumbing license.

It is a simple matter to verify licensing in Virginia by visiting the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Licensing site, www.dpor.virginia.gov/LicenseLookup. In the District, go to www.pearsonvue.com/dc/realestate for licensing data.

“It took me three hours to locate a licensed inspector with the necessary credentials,” said Anne Brown, a real estate agent with Prudential PenFed Realty in Olney, Md. She added, “I am almost to the point of not making any more referrals.”

The Maryland Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing is responsible for licensing and regulating the activities of more than 210,000 individuals, corporations and partnerships. There are 23 licensing boards, commissions and programs appointed by the governor regulating 24 different licensed occupations.

Most but not all of these licenses can be verified at www.dllr.state.md.us/pq . Mortgage lender, broker and originator licenses can be verified at www.dllr.state.md.us/finance/industry/licsearch.shtml .

Harvey S. Jacobs is a real estate lawyer with Jacobs & Associates Attorneys at Law in Rockville. He is an active real estate investor, developer, landlord, settlement attorney, lender and Realtor. This column is not legal advice and should not be acted upon without obtaining your own legal counsel. Contact Jacobs at 301-300-6252, jacobs@jacobs-associates.com or ask@thelawyer.com.

 **Comments**

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Ms Tina Wilson

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[REDACTED]

***4. Contact Person Address**
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**
To hold Charles County Government, Board of Education, Charles County and State Legislators Accountable for all monies distributed to For profit and Nonprofit Entities

***6. Code References**
TBD

***7. Problem**
Charles County employee, BOE, and/or County Commissioners and State Legislators have been awarding person/s entities both for profit awards when those entities are not legal or titled 1) are not licensed in CC and/or the state and/or 2) are not a legal in good standing 501(c)3 entity and/or 3) Are not in good standing with SDAT and/or the Comptroller of MD and/or, 4) Are not registered as a Maryland Charitable Organization and/or haven't paid other business related taxes and/or 5) are in child support arrears.

***8. Solution**
Legislation should include that every CC government employee, contractor for CC government, BOE, and all applicable agencies who are distributing Fed, State, local funds to person/s and/or entities for-profit or non-profit need to confirm that person/s and/or entities are compliant with taxes, license, not in child support arrears, etc before distributing any funds to said person/s and/or entities if one does not perform search and validate person/s and/or or entities to be in compliance, said employee can be fined at a minimum \$5000 per offense and face jail time.

***9. Cost**
TBD

***10. Organizational Support**
Citizens in County

***11. Organizational Opposition**
N/a

***12. Proposed Draft Language**
Any Charles County government official, employee, Contractor and/or Board of Education employee or contractor, County Commissioner and/or Maryland State Legislator must investigate and validate the status of person/s and/or entities both for profit and non-profit that will be awarded money from County, State and or Federal funds to be in good standing with the State of MD, County in which money will be paid, as well as with the Federal Government- all taxes paid-locally, state and federally including all nonprofit and charitable organization taxes, has licenses to do business in that location or that field or registered as a Maryland charity.

13. Other Information to Note
N/a

14. Attachment
SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
Mrs Margaret Larrick

*2. Contact Person Email
[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone
[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

A County Commissioner should be removed from office for violation of the Workplace Standards of Conduct set for in the Charles County Employee Handbook

***6. Code References**

Charles County Employee Handbook Chapter 2, specifically pages 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 12-1 Charles County Employee Handbook Chapter 10 specifically page 10-4

***7. Problem**

There is no mechanism to remove a County Commissioner from office unless they are convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude. County Commissioners should be held to the same "Workplace Standards of Conduct" as any County Employee.

***8. Solution**

Per the Charles County Employee Handbook "No employee or official of Charles County Government will discriminate in hiring, firing, promotion, training, discipline, terms and conditions of employment, or any personnel transaction for or against any person on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religious or political affiliation or opinion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, any other non - merit factor or any other legally protected status under federal, state or local laws. Discrimination in any form or harassment will not be tolerated in the workplace...Respectful Workplace Culture (Preventing and Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Hostile Work Environment, Bullying, Retaliation and Violence) Charles County is committed to maintaining a respectful work environment where all employees work free from discrimination and harassment in any form...Discrimination and harassment is misconduct which is subject to appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination of employment." Should a County Employee feel that a Commissioner has violated the Workplace Standards of Conduct as set forth in the Charles County Employee Handbook, a complaint should be filed with the Ethics Commission for investigation. Should the Ethics Committee find evidence that the Commissioner did indeed violate the Standards, a meeting of the County Commissioner President, the Human Resources Director and the offending Commissioner shall take place to discuss the findings. Findings of the Ethics Committee and a report of the meeting with the Human Resources Manager will be discussed with the remaining Commissioners. The Commissioners will then vote for removal of the Commissioner. A majority vote is required to remove the Commissioner from office.

***9. Cost**

Unknown

***10. Organizational Support**

None at this time

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Not at this time

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

See "Solution" above

13. Other Information to Note

Chapter 10 states Termination "8. Where the employee commits a series of acts which have clearly caused a continuing, disruptive effect on the efficient and/or safe operations of the employee's department, agency, office or government. 9. Where the employee commits an act or a series of acts which call into serious question the employee's trustworthiness and/or integrity in the continued performance of their duties.10. Other acts, activities, omissions, conduct or performance which..."

14. Attachment

SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
Nancy Schertler

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone

[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

To ensure that any individual who will be affected by a Planning Commission decision be given proper notice, full disclosure of the issue and an opportunity to be heard.

***6. Code References**

The Zoning Ordinance, and/or the Subdivision Regulations

***7. Problem**

Residents 5th amendment right to procedural due process is not adequately protected in Charles County. There is no required notification to the public that the Planning Commission is going to consider a revision to an approved subdivision plan. With adequate notification, full disclosure or knowing that there is an opportunity to be heard, residents can not know there will be substantial changes to their neighborhood until well after the requested revision has been approved, and the bulldozers start working

***8. Solution**

Amend the County Code or subdivision regulations to ensure that homeowners have the opportunity to consider the fiscal impact of the proposed changes to the approved subdivision plan for their community (the potential effect on their property values, road safety, traffic) and to ensure those homeowners know when and where they will have the opportunity present feedback to the Planning Commission prior to their deliberations.

***9. Cost**

Cost to the County and Developers would be to pay for increased notification.

***10. Organizational Support**

Homeowners associations that are not controlled by the developer.

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Perhaps the Building Industry Association. There was a PGM roundtable where this issue was discussed, and members of the Building association were given 30 days to provide comments.

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

A developer/applicant who wishes to amend or revise an approved preliminary subdivision plan where that project has recorded at least 10% of the lots associated with the subdivision, and completed at least 10% of the physical improvements shall provide Notice to the Public, that the Applicant's revision request will be presented to the Planning Commission for their consideration and to provide the public an opportunity to comment. Notice to the Public: A. The notice shall inform the public of their right to provide testimony before the Planning Commission and encourage their participation. B. Not less than 14 days prior to the Planning Commission meeting, The Applicant, or the Applicant's agent shall mail via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, a notice of the time, date, place and nature of the Planning Commission public meeting to the owners of each property that is within a 200-foot radius of the property line, and within the subdivision that is the subject of the revision request. The Applicant shall file with the Zoning Officer an affidavit of mailing of such notice as an exhibit in the Planning Commission meeting prior to 4:30 PM of the day of that meeting. C. Sign Posting. At least 14 days prior to the meeting, the Applicant shall erect signs provided by the Zoning Officer on the subject property. Such signs will be erected within ten (10) feet of the boundary line of such land that abuts every public road. If the property does not abut a public road, the sign must be posted at the nearest public road that provides access to the property. The signs shall be affixed to a rigid board and be maintained by the Applicant until the Planning Commission's action on the revision request. The Applicant shall file with the Zoning Officer an affidavit certifying the posting of said signs as an exhibit in the Planning Commission meeting prior to 4:30 PM of the day of that meeting. D. Notification Compliance. The responsibility of assuring compliance with the pos

13. Other Information to Note

This is a resubmitted proposal. The County Commissioners discussed the proposal in June of last year, and requested PGM staff to bring the proposal back to the Commissioners with additional information. That staff presentation was on November of 2022, and included conclusions that provide guidance on how the legislative proposal could be improved. There is no doubt that County legal and PGM staff is much better equipped to craft the final language and identify the correct ordinance so that inte

14. Attachment

[2023 Legislative Proposal Nancy Schertler.docx](#)

April 21,2023

2023 Spring Local Legislative Request

In April of last year, I submitted a legislative proposal that would require a developer/applicant who was seeking Planning Commission approval to amend or revise an approved preliminary subdivision plan to notify the public of the proposed change to their neighborhood. This notification would include the proposed changes to the subdivision, and how and where the public could provide testimony.

The County Commissioners discussed the proposal in June of last year, and requested PGM staff to bring the proposal back to the Commissioners with additional information. That staff presentation was on November of 2022, and included conclusions that provide guidance on how the legislative proposal could be improved. There is no doubt that County legal and PGM staff is much better equipped to craft the final language and identify the correct ordinance so that intent of my proposal can be codified by the County Commissioners.

Staff further gave recommendations *to consider the fiscal impact of the proposed changes to applicants and the County, and to review the proposal with stakeholders at a PGM Roundtable.* Members of the Building Industry Association were given thirty days to provide comments on this proposal, with staff scheduled to present that feedback to the Commissioners a date to be determined.

The intent of this legislative proposal is to ensure that homeowners have the opportunity to consider the fiscal impact of the proposed changes to the approved subdivision plan for their community (the potential effect on their property values, road safety,traffic) and to ensure those homeowners know when and where they will have the opportunity present feedback to the Planning Commission prior to their deliberations.

Below is the proposal that was submitted last year that I would like to resubmit today.

In an effort to better include the community provide equity in planning policies, and to safeguard the public's 5th Amendment rights to procedural due process, I would like to recommend a Zoning Text Amendment to modify the Charles County Zoning Ordinance such that:

A developer/applicant who wishes to amend or revise an approved preliminary subdivision plan where that project has recorded at least 10% of the lots associated with the subdivision, and completed at least 10% of the physical improvements shall provide Notice to the Public, that the Applicant's revision request will be presented to the Planning Commission for their consideration and to provide the public an opportunity to comment.

Notice to the Public:

- A. The notice shall inform the public of their right to provide testimony before the Planning Commission and encourage their participation.

- B. Not less than 14 days prior to the Planning Commission meeting, The Applicant, or the Applicant's agent shall mail via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, a notice of the time, date, place and nature of the Planning Commission public meeting to the owners of each property that is within a 200-foot radius of the property line, and within the subdivision that is the subject of the revision request. The Applicant shall file with the Zoning Officer an affidavit of mailing of such notice as an exhibit in the Planning Commission meeting prior to 4:30 PM of the day of that meeting.
- C. Sign Posting. At least 14 days prior to the meeting, the Applicant shall erect signs provided by the Zoning Officer on the subject property. Such signs will be erected within ten (10) feet of the boundary line of such land that abuts every public road. If the property does not abut a public road, the sign must be posted at the nearest public road that provides access to the property. The signs shall be affixed to a rigid board and be maintained by the Applicant until the Planning Commission's action on the revision request. The Applicant shall file with the Zoning Officer an affidavit certifying the posting of said signs as an exhibit in the Planning Commission meeting prior to 4:30 PM of the day of that meeting.
- D. Notification Compliance. The responsibility of assuring compliance with the posting, and mailing requirements of this section shall be on the Applicant. Should a dispute arise as to whether there has been compliance with the posting, or mailing requirements of this section, it shall be the Applicant's burden to establish compliance was met. If the Planning Commission determines that the Applicant has made a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of this section, the Applicant shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to correct the non-compliance. If the Planning Commission determines that the Applicant has not made a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of this section, the Commission may dismiss the Petition.

The Completed 10% of the physical improvements beyond excavation, grading and filling may include:

- I. Construction of roads, or a portion of roads for the entire project (at least 10%) or for an entire phase of the project as previously defined on a preliminary plan; or
- II. Construction and installation of stormwater management facilities for the project (at least 10%) or for an entire phase of the project; or
- III. For those projects on shared or public sewer and water systems, construction of a portion of the sewer and water facilities (at least 10%) for the project or for an entire phase of the project as previously defined.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Schertler

*1. Contact Person Name
Ann M. Waters

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone

[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Add legislation that would allow for the recall or impeachment of a county commissioner.

***6. Code References**

N/A

***7. Problem**

There is currently no legal method available to take steps to remove a sitting county commissioner from office if he/she is found to be involved in adverse activities, behaviors, etc.

***8. Solution**

Enact a law that would allow for recall or impeachment of a county commissioner.

***9. Cost**

Unknown - not sure what the legal costs as regards research, etc. would be.

***10. Organizational Support**

I would imagine that many organizations would be in support of a means to take recall/impeachment actions if they felt that their interests were not being addressed.

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Conversely, I would imagine that many organizations would not be in support of this legislation if they felt that they would be adversely affected by the ability to recall/impeach.

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

I apologize but I'm not educated in the legal verbiage that would go into the draft. I just know that I would like to see our county move forward with the legislation that would allow for a recall or impeachment of a county commissioner.

13. Other Information to Note

SKIPPED

14. Attachment

SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
Douglas Paul

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

***3. Contact Person Phone**

[REDACTED]

***4. Contact Person Address**

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Removal of sitting Board Of Commissioners member

***6. Code References**

Senate Bill 863 2021 Maryland Statutes Election Law Title 2 - Powers and Duties of the State and Local Boards Subtitle 2 - Local Boards Section 2-207 - Local Board Employees 2021 Maryland Statutes Local Government Division III - Counties Title 9 - General and Administrative Provisions Subtitle 3 - Code Counties Section 9-308 - Power to Enact Public Local Laws 2021 Maryland Statutes Local Government Division III - Counties Title 9 - General and Administrative Provisions Subtitle 4 - Code Counties and Commission Counties Section 9-405 - Ethics 2021 Maryland Statutes Local Government Division III - Counties Title 12 - Other Powers of Counties -- Generally Subtitle 1 - County Officers and Employees Section 12-101 - Appointment and Removal

***7. Problem**

Currently, the County Board of Commissioners has no way to consider the potential for the recall of a sitting member, even though state and federal law, guidance, policy and precedent allow and even require, such actions in certain situations.

***8. Solution**

Existing law, statute, and legislation (approved and in draft) all allow and/or proposes the enactment of, the ability of a locally elected body to recall (not impeach) a sitting member. The Charles County Board of Commissioners should acknowledge several things: -- Maryland Ethics statutes applied to home and commission counties require Commissioners that violate such statutes to forfeit their office. This likely means that Charles County ALREADY HAS the ability to require a local official to forfeit their position in certain cases. -- Under the State Constitution, there is an already existing process for removing a State or local elected official. --Maryland statutes specify that an employee of a local board is a county employee and "shall be appointed and removed subject to the personnel regulations of the county in which the local board is located" and "the governing body of a county may provide for the removal of any county officer or employee". -- It is the policy of Charles County to provide equal employment opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religious or political affiliation or opinion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other status protected by law. This means that ANY violation of this policy by a local elected official is likely grounds for either recall and/or requiring said official to forfeit their county employment. Beyond locally, a violation of these provisions has potential federal implications. After these acknowledgments, the Board should confirm whether the ability to recall a local elected official already exists in our current form of government. If so, the Board should determine what exactly is required to document this ability in existing personnel regulations and/or documentation relative to the Board of Commissioners and make these findings public in an expedited manner.

***9. Cost**

There would be no foreseeable cost to the County other than the time spent examining this issue by sitting county employees. If anything, a proactive, carefully measured process for recalling an elected County Commissioner has the potential to save the County money when it is possible to avoid lawsuits brought against it by individuals suffering undue harm as a result of the behavior of a Commissioner.

***10. Organizational Support**

Anyone that believes elected officials should be transparent and ethical in the performance of their duties.

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Anyone that doesn't believe elected officials should be transparent and ethical in the performance of their duties.

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

I recognize that the draft language likely has to be formatted in a certain way reflective of all the legal and ethical elements that I've summarized here. As such, for now, I'd prefer to defer the drafting of the precise language to county legal and governmental employees. I'll go into more detail at a public forum in the future.

13. Other Information to Note

Sure, this is aimed at one specific instance by one specific Commissioner. This is also a watershed moment for this community. We can either -- as a people -- move to selectively condemn racist behavior and those that attempt to weaponize unfounded racial allegations, or we can send the message that this type of thing will not be condemned here. This is simple, in my opinion, and my submission is part of the record of who supports or opposes such a simple line in the sand.

14. Attachment

SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
COLLEEN THERESA. LONGHI

*2. Contact Person Email
[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone
[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

*5. **Proposal Summary**
Removal of Comm Thomasina Coates....

*6. **Code References**
I was just reading the Code of Ethics the County Commissioners had to sign on 7/2/22. In particular "H. AN OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE MAY NOT RETALIATE AGAINST AN INDIVIDUAL FOR REPORTING OR PARTICIPATING IN AN INVESTIGATION OF A POTENTIAL VIOLATION OF THE LOCAL ETHICS LAW OR ORDINANCE." Isn't that what Collins, Coates and Patterson did to Mark Belton?

*7. **Problem**
Retaliation, discrimination and bullying in the workplace is not acceptable and against the law.

*8. **Solution**
Remove/fire Coates and Collins. I am on the fence if Patterson actually retaliated because he was not involved in when Coates had been censured by her fellow board members for harassment and abusive, racially biased behavior toward County Administrator Mark Belton. But, Collins was aware of the slap on the hand for the racial bias emails and behavior and moved forward to remove Belton anyway.

*9. **Cost**
\$500,000 and counting

*10. **Organizational Support**
Code of Ethics the Commissioners signed on 7/2/22.

*11. **Organizational Opposition**
None

*12. **Proposed Draft Language**
Code of Ethics the County Commissioners had to sign on 7/2/22. In particular "H. AN OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE MAY NOT RETALIATE AGAINST AN INDIVIDUAL FOR REPORTING OR PARTICIPATING IN AN INVESTIGATION OF A POTENTIAL VIOLATION OF THE LOCAL ETHICS LAW OR ORDINANCE."

13. **Other Information to Note**
Right is Right Wrong is Wrong

14. Attachment
[Code of Ethics.docx](#)

<https://www.charlescountymd.gov/government/boards-commissions-committees-and-workgroups/ethics-commissions>

[Ethics Commission | Charles County, MD \(charlescountymd.gov\)](#)

"It is the mission of the Charles County Ethics Commission to ensure Charles County **officials and employees are knowledgeable about and **comply with the Code of Ethics**"**

Ethics Commission

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[Feedback](#) [Print](#)

The Charles County Ethics Commission is a Charles County agency which was established under the provisions of the County Ethics Law, Code of Charles County, Chapter 170. The County Ethics Law was passed by the County Commissioners in 1982 under a requirement of the State legislature of all Maryland counties, cities, towns and boards of education. If any local jurisdiction failed to pass a local law, it automatically would be covered by the State Ethics Law. The original State Ethics Law was passed in 1979.

The Commission is made up of five members. Of these members, one member shall be appointed by the Charles County Bar Association, who shall be a member of the Association. The County Commissioners of Charles County shall appoint the remaining four members. The Commission elects its own Chairman. This Board is staffed by an attorney from the County Attorney's Office, who also serves as the legal adviser, and a legal assistant, who acts as Clerk.

- [Charles County Code Chapter 170 \(Ethics Code\)](#)
- [Bill No. 2011-08](#)
- [Financial Disclosure Statement Form 1](#)
- [Financial Disclosure Statement Form 2](#)

- [Financial Disclosure Statement Form 3](#)
- [Ethics Commission Complaint Form](#)
- [Rules and Procedures](#)
- [Lobbying Registration Information & Forms](#)

Contact Name: County Attorney's Office

Phone: 301-645-0555

Email: ethicscommission@charlescounty.org

Mission Statement

"It is the mission of the Charles County Ethics Commission to ensure Charles County officials and employees are knowledgeable about and comply with the Code of Ethics. This is accomplished by:

- Providing Ethics Code education to county officials and employees;
- Providing advisory opinions regarding the applicability of the code; and
- Investigation of alleged violations of the Ethics Code".

Duties and Responsibilities

The basic duties and responsibilities of the Charles County Ethics Commission are:

1. To respond to inquiries, requests for exemptions and complaints of violations;
2. To make recommendations to the County Commissioners for amendments to the Ethics Ordinance;
3. To devise, receive and review annual financial statements and other forms generated by the Ordinance;

To conduct public information programs as to the purpose and application of the Ethics Code for the Charles County officials and employees and for the general public.

Commission Members

- Wes Adams, Attorney
- Natalie Cotton
- Cecelia Miller
- Christopher Nickerson
- Melody Weschler, Charles County Government Staff

SERVICES OUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

*1. Contact Person Name
Michael R. Kepferle

*2. Contact Person Email
[REDACTED]

*3. Contact Person Phone
[REDACTED]

*4. Contact Person Address
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Provide legislation that provides for impeachment or removal of elected officials who have been found to have violated any laws, civil rights, workplace rights or other similar malfeasance.

***6. Code References**

Unknown

***7. Problem**

Currently there is no mechanism for removal or recall of an elected official for any sort of malfeasance. This results in an undermining of accountability and inability for citizens to pursue corrective action without significant cost to the government in terms of effectivity and dollars. The recent issue with Commissioner Coates is a prime example of where public knowledge of her malfeasance should have resulted in a path to remove her for cause.

***8. Solution**

Incorporate in state law the ability for the public to effect removal of bad actor elected officials, especially if their malfeasance comes to light after an election. The same guidance for removal of a county employee should apply to an elected official. A multi-step process with due process should allow for public hearings and mechanisms to remove the official both immediately while awaiting disposition of the case, and ultimately once the case is resolved. Majority vote by the commissioners or legislature should be considered as well as a process for removal, appointment of a replacement, and a recall and/or special election if needed.

***9. Cost**

Less than current litigation costs, i.e. approximately \$500,000

***10. Organizational Support**

Citizens of Charles County

***11. Organizational Opposition**

Unknown

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

Recommend reviewing language from other jurisdictions or the state legislature that could be readily applies

13. Other Information to Note

Recently the governor of Oklahoma called for the resignation of a county commissioner and other county officials involved in racist and threatening comments. The officials resigned. Also, the perceived racist actions of the Tennessee Republican legislators against the "Tennessee Two" resulting in their expulsion from the legislature and almost immediate reinstatement highlighted mechanisms for appeal from an official who might feel they were erroneously fired.

14. Attachment

SKIPPED

*1. Contact Person Name
Ms Tina Wilson

***2. Contact Person Email**

[REDACTED]

***3. Contact Person Phone**

[REDACTED]

***4. Contact Person Address**

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

***5. Proposal Summary**

Impeachment and Removal from Office

***6. Code References**

TBD

***7. Problem**

There is currently no legal means to remove from office a Charles County Commissioner even if that Commissioner has been demonstrated to have lost public trust, to have assaulted or otherwise abused individual citizens or public employees or other commissioners, to have committed corrupt acts, to have practiced racial or other wrongful discrimination, harassment, bullying, or to have concealed from the public conflicts of interest or other information that rightfully belongs to the public.

***8. Solution**

Legislation that clearly outlines punishment and penalty for stated offense specifically removal of office offenses.

***9. Cost**

TBD

***10. Organizational Support**

Citizens of Charles County

***11. Organizational Opposition**

n/a

***12. Proposed Draft Language**

In summarizing the common law doctrine of "amotion" which was recognized in several old North Carolina cases as an inherent power of a board to remove one of its members. Since there have been no legislative or judicial sanction of board removal of an elected official, I (and other Charles County Citizens) are submitting legislation to remove a sitting County Commissioner/ Board Member/ County Executive (referred to in this legislative request as elected official) by the process of amotion, which is carried out in other states and upheld in courts. For example, Special Superior Court Judge James Gale issued an order in a case involving the removal of a New Hanover County, North Carolina Commissioner whose name was Brian Berger. In this case, reviewing the board's 3-2 decision to remove Mr. Berger, the judge ruled that "[a]n amotion procedure remains a lawful procedure that may be utilized for the purpose of removing an elected official so long as such procedure includes notice and hearing and is based upon sufficient competent evidence demonstrating reasonable and just cause for removal." (See case law: Brian Berger v. New Hanover County Board of Commissioners, 13 CVS 1942 (Sept. 5, 2013), slip op. at 30. In the referenced case, to bring context and understanding to this need for legislation, the request is being made in detail and the request is being made to include all context relayed. Firstly, per an amotion proceeding, the findings must not be based, in part, on personal experiences and impressions, but rather than on objective evidence presented at a hearing. The request is being made that the board be able to redo the amotion proceeding, but only with specific yet valid guidance in addition to a valid amotion process. Amotion is a Viable Power for Local Government Boards Please note that certain case law, other entities and state(s) may be mentioned in this legislative request to provide examples explanations and a clearer picture of the much needed

13. Other Information to Note

SKIPPED

14. Attachment

[Legislative Summary Removal of office.docx](#)

In summarizing the common law doctrine of “amotion” which was recognized in several old North Carolina cases as an inherent power of a board to remove one of its members. Since there have been no legislative or judicial sanction of board removal of an elected official, I (and other Charles County Citizens) are submitting legislation to remove a sitting County Commissioner/ Board Member/ County Executive (referred to in this legislative request as elected official) by the process of amotion, which is carried out in other states and upheld in courts.

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Amotion is a Viable Power for Local Government Boards

Please note that certain case law, other entities and state(s) may be mentioned in this legislative request to provide examples explanations and a clearer picture of the much needed legislation for the protection of Charles County Citizens moving forward.

Example:

1) the North Carolina Supreme Court has recognized the validity of amotion as a method of removing an elected official, such a proceeding is actually being used in other states and the request is being made for such use in Charles County, MD ; 2) the trial court is bound to follow the holdings in those cases; 3) the request is being made that state law provide that common law principles are in full force absent extraordinary circumstances; and 4) the power is equally available to cities/towns within Charles County, Maryland.

Requirements for a Valid Amotion Proceeding

Due Process

A valid amotion proceeding must include notice, a hearing, and fact finding by an impartial decision-maker based on evidence presented at the hearing. This may sound familiar as they are the basic requirements of a quasi-judicial hearing. (A quasi-judicial hearing, by definition:

- Quasi-judicial means “court like.” Some common usages of the term “quasi-judicial” in a legal sense include: Quasi-judicial refers to a proceeding conducted by an administrative or executive official or organization that is similar to a court proceeding, e.g. a hearing conducted by a human rights commission.

These protections typically accompany a government action that implicates a constitutionally protected property or liberty interest. It’s important to note that an elected official does not have a property right in his or her office. This has been the consistent rule in cases where removal occurs because the office itself is eliminated. (See case law, *Mial v. Ellington*, 134 N.C. 131 (1903). Elimination of an office is a legislative decision. The removal for cause while in office, however, is considered a quasi-judicial action, and courts have consistently required that the basic elements of due process must be afforded.

Notice and Hearing

Since **amotion** is not a statutory procedure, the few existing **amotion** cases, and the general case law about quasi-judicial hearings, provide the only guidance about what process is legally required. Per this legislation, the request is that the process consist of 1) adoption of a “Petition in **Amotion** to Remove the elected official, including any allegations in support of removal, as well as affidavits and exhibits relating to those allegations, 2) delivery of the Petition to the elected official along with a Notice of Hearing and Rules and Procedures for the hearing and 3) conduct of a hearing. Both the board and the elected official should have the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses (or their legal representatives can act on their behalf), which is a procedural structure that is legally sufficient.

Burden of Proof and Rules of Evidence

The order makes clear that the burden of proof rests with the board. The board lays out the basis for removal in the petition or motion for removal and provides evidence in support at the hearing. The elected official then has the opportunity to rebut the evidence and provide additional evidence, and the board must, in the end, make an unbiased decision about whether there is a sufficient case, supported by the evidence, for removal. The Board has the option to obtain or receive guidance from the County Attorney, County Administrator or other legal authority as necessary without a cost burden to Charles County Taxpayers.

Impartial Decision-Maker

First, the very same board that initiates removal by **amotion** is considered to be an impartial decision-maker, as long as its decision is unbiased and based on the objective evidence presented at the hearing, and not from personal feelings or the dislike of the elected official(s) in question. It may seem a tall order for board members who voted to initiate removal to maintain an open mind about the evidence presented at the hearing. The request is that a person is not considered to be biased merely because he or she has prior knowledge of the situation. Despite the challenge of remaining open to the possibility that the evidence does not support removal, the board is the only body that can make the final decision with the unbiased assistance from the

County Attorney, County Administrator or other legal authority as necessary without a cost burden to Charles County Taxpayers.

Second, the decision is invalid if any board member's vote is based on or affected by personal opinions or impressions that are not supported by evidence in the record. To say a person is biased, in the context of a quasi-judicial proceeding, means that he or she has a predisposition to a particular result and is unable or unwilling to apply the legal standard to the evidence presented. As a separate matter, decision-makers must also be careful to apply only the evidence, and not their personal impressions about the matter at hand.

Standard for Removal

What evidence or behavior must be presented to make the case for removing an elected official from office?

Removing an elected official will require more than simply poor performance. It may be appropriate to think of the standard as just cause "plus." The order articulates a good reason for a heightened standard: "[I]t seems clear that a court called upon to [review an **amotion** decision] will necessarily be faced with achieving the balance between the extraordinary concept of overturning the results of an election and a set of facts which can also be extraordinary in its presentation of how an elected official has acted or failed to act so as to hamper the functioning of the office to which he or she was elected or create safety, security, or liability concerns arising from his or her action or inaction in office."

The "sufficiency and competency" of the evidence presented must relate to the duties of the elected office. The order should state: "The standard must be flexible enough that the governmental body has a reservoir of power to respond to that extreme set of facts that challenges the integrity of the governmental process. Ultimately, a court may be unable to draw precise dividing lines that define when **amotion** may or may not be appropriate. As courts have concluded, a finding of cause to remove an elected official from office will depend upon conduct that is sufficiently tied to the duties of the elected office from which an elected official is being removed."

Evidence Suggestion:

- Evidence about one's personal life, viewed in isolation, may not seem relevant, but may provide context for issues that relate to the person's behavior in office.
- Evidence about criminal charges that do not result in convictions may or may not be particularly strong.
- The connection between the evidence and the duties of office should be explicit in the record. "The burden of showing sufficient competent evidence in most instances would impose on the fact finder an obligation to make clear how it has measured the underlying evidence as against the duties and abilities expected of the office."
- Boards have options, short of removal, to address the behavior of board members whose actions don't meet the appropriately high standard for removal. "In addition to removal, a governmental body may in appropriate instances be within its powers to implement extraordinary restrictions

on an elected official's access to government facilities, processes, computers, e-mail systems and etc... (citations omitted).

Conclusion

Elected officials such as board members sometimes perceive one of their members in a bad light. The prospect of being able to remove an uncooperative, annoying, absentee or even truly misbehaving member may seem appealing.

Proposals submitted by Carlos Childs

1. SOLAR PANELS

This legislative proposal would mandate by 2028 all government owned buildings to have solar panels installed on the building's roof. This proposal would exclude historic buildings and buildings that are unable to have solar panels installed. The proposal would also mandate the inclusion of solar panels for all newly built government owned buildings.

2. SHERIFF'S OFFICE VEHICLES

This legislative proposal would prohibit Charles County Sheriff officers, who reside outside the county, from taking sheriff department vehicles home with them.

3. RENT STABILIZATION

This legislative proposal would cap property owners from increasing rent payments five percent or above the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. If property owners are found to be raising rent above the cap they will be subject to fines and will be required to pay back monies owed to renter.

This bill is modeled after Prince George's, Montgomery, and Mount Rainier rent stabilization bills that have passed and/or are currently being considered.

Data from the most recent census indicates that around 20 percent of Charles County residents rent their homes.

4. NATURAL GAS BAN

This legislative proposal would ban natural gas as a source of heat in new buildings starting 2024.

5. A-C MANDATE

This legislative proposal would mandate all residential rental properties provide and maintain proper air conditioning with the ability to cool each room to at least 70 degrees.

Once the legislation goes into effect property owners will have (X) number of days to equip and/or upgrade the properties with air conditioning. If property is found to not be providing air

conditioning as listed above the renter will be able to withhold rent until the air conditioning is installed and/or in proper working order.