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## **CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Cecil County Citizens:

2017 – WOW – What a Year!

As this year comes to a close and I take time to reflect, I think how very far we've come – and yet how very far we have to go.

First, Cecil County is blessed with fine people. As I work with citizens and partners, both within local government and the public and private sectors at large, I am amazed with the talent that we enjoy within our borders. The common thread that ties us together is the genuine will to make Cecil County a better place for everyone.

Second, we are moving Cecil County's economy forward – 2017 saw many new business commitments to the County, which will bring over 2,000 jobs in the next few years. Existing businesses have a new sense of optimism as county regulations have been streamlined with unnecessary redundancies removed. New infrastructure in the growth corridor is highly visible with more to come!

Third, we are blessed with dedicated law enforcement officers from the State Police, County Sheriff's Office and municipalities along with the men and women working in our County Emergency Services Department or volunteering in municipal fire companies. They literally put themselves in harm's way to ensure our safety every day.

In spite of our successes, 2018 brings with it many challenges. We must create a workforce pool with Cecil County men and women fully prepared to fill local employer needs. The technical demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century work place are emerging from existing businesses and arriving with new companies as they expand into Cecil County. A strong and nimble education system must demonstrate the capacity to address this challenge as it changes shape, as result of new information and an ever-changing global market place. Creating partnerships with other agencies and entities from the private sector is essential.

The greatest challenge that confronts us, the State of Maryland and the United States of America, remains the opioid/heroin crisis. We must fight this war on drugs from many perspectives and with a level of perseverance and tenacity never before realized. We have to rid our society of this menace now and forever.

As we celebrate this holiday and look forward to next year, please remember, and help in any way possible, those who are less fortunate than us and in need of our assistance. The joy one receives from giving far exceeds that of receiving.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you in 2017.

On behalf on Cecil County Government, I would like to extend my warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season full of family, peace and love, and a prosperous 2018!



Alan J. McCarthy  
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