

Alan J. McCarthy
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CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Cecil County Citizens:

Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018, was certainly no April Fools' joke for the residents of the 18-unit building at Owens Landing, a condominium community in Perryville. Twenty-four individuals were displaced as their living quarters burned to the ground. I visited the site and watched with horror as the structure and belongings inside were a total loss. Although four of the residents were injured, it was fortunate that everyone escaped the burning building and sustained no long-term injuries. I cannot recognize and express my appreciation enough for the tremendous work of our volunteer fire department members, first responders from Cecil County Emergency Services, and members of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office and other local law enforcement agencies. Additionally, I would like to commend the crew from Perry Point Fire Department for being first on the scene and for their heroic efforts in rescuing an elderly resident from the blaze.

Although damage was sustained in the two adjacent buildings, it did not require the evacuation of the residents after the fire was extinguished. The damage to property is estimated at \$7.5 million and the cost of the loss of personal property even greater. Personal memorabilia was lost forever. How do you begin to put a cost on that? At the time of this release, the investigation of the cause of the fire and subsequent damage suffered are still under investigation. Special thanks to all of the public agencies and citizens who assisted at the fire and who continue to work with those misplaced.

The Maryland General Assembly just wrapped up Session 2018 in Annapolis. A total of 3,127 bills were filed covering every topic imaginable. Eight hundred ninety (890), or 28%, were passed and 142 are now law in Maryland. While we will continue to assess the impact of legislation passed, the early indicators are that Cecil County made out okay. Several attempts to pass state expenses to the responsibility of local government were defeated and the reinstatement of funds formally provided and cut by the State. In the past, over six million dollars in funding were provided from gas tax revenues to assist the County in the upkeep of County maintained roads. During the 2008 recession, that funding was drastically reduced, but now will gradually be restored.

Five local topics were submitted for consideration by the General Assembly. Technical adjustments to the regulations associated with collectively bargaining with the Sheriff's Department were passed. Legislation to require that more employees working in bars be educated on alcohol awareness was also successful. Legislation that passed at the eleventh hour, that may be of importance to Cecil County's small business owners, was a tax credit provision for those who offer health care benefits to their employees.

I submitted my proposed budget to the County Council on March 30, 2018. The Council will now deliberate and hold hearings on my proposed budget for next two months. The hearing schedule is provided online at

<http://www.ccgov.org/home/showdocument?id=27455>. I encourage you attend these hearings and let the members of the Council and me know how you feel about the proposed budget. As the Council moves forward, I, and members of my staff, will be available to provide information, explanation and listen to suggestions put forward by Council members.

The members of my staff and I are doing our best to continue the forward progress in *moving Cecil County forward!* I appreciate the continued trust you have in me as County Executive. You deserve nothing but our best effort.

Thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alan J. McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Dr. Alan J. McCarthy
County Executive