

“Don’t tell me your vote doesn’t matter! If you thought elections don’t matter, I hope the last three years have corrected that impression.” Barack Obama



September 21, 2020

My Wonderful Spokes in the Wheel:

Words cannot express how much I miss seeing you. As you know, the coming together of dedicated servants and leaders is extremely important as we work for the good of our community and county. I’m sure you will agree; we have never experienced such a troubling time in our history. We wonder about what will happen next!

I want you to be and stay encouraged! Everything happens for a reason and I know *“We will understand it better by and bye!”* Whatever you do, take your Vitamin D3 5000 IU and Vitamin C, wear your mask, wash your hands often, and practice social distancing. Practice love, kindness, peace and patience. God will not leave us or forsake us. Remember: We are His children! He does all things for a purpose.

As you are aware, because of this terrible pandemic, we are unable to determine when our next coalition meeting will be held. In the meantime, I want to bring to your attention several important items. Let’s begin with the **2020 Presidential General Election**. By now you should have received an application for a mail-in ballot. Be sure to complete it and return it as soon as possible by mail. Remember, you still have the option to either: **(a)** participate in early voting if you do not mail your ballot or **(b)** you can vote on Election Day at your designated Polling Place on **November 3, 2020**. If you do the mail-in ballot, you **cannot** go to the polls. Early voting is Monday, October 26th until Monday November 2nd. If you are not sure of what you should do, please call our office at **301-858-3148** or the Election Board at **301-341-7300**.

***** Very Important*** If you did not receive the mail-in ballot application, or have moved, please CONFIRM with the Election Board that you are registered.**

Do you know? If you do not fill out your **Census Card**, we will lose \$18, 250 per person over 10 years! Every one of us needs to be counted so we can have the money needed for our children’s education, nutrition programs for women, infants and children, money for economic development, school construction, public safety and emergency planning. Time is running out! The deadline to be counted is **September 30, 2020**.

After 16 years, my friend and one of my “right arms,” Dr. Jean Terry, has retired. I love her and deeply appreciate her kind, unselfish and wonderful heart. She will be truly missed. A new “rising star” has joined our family. We are overwhelmed with joy to welcome Ms. Doris Witcher on board. She will be a tremendous asset because of her wonderful spirit and desire to get the job done for the good of all people. If there is anything that should be brought to our attention, please do not hesitate to call Doris at 301-858-3148.

***** Other Announcements *****

- The Maryland Office of People’s Counsel (OPC) issued a moratorium on Utility Shut-Offs, Bill Assistance and Deferred Payment Plans. Take action to protect yourself. Contact your utility NOW for a payment plan. You may be eligible for energy assistance. For questions, you may contact OPC at 410-767-8150 or DLinfo OPC@ maryland.gov.
- The new hospital, University of Maryland Capital Region in Largo, MD is on schedule for opening in the Spring of 2021.
- Amazon has opened one of four buildings in our county and 33,000 jobs are being offered to our citizens. The first location is on Martin Luther King Highway in Lanham.
- The construction at the Sanctuary of Kingdom Square has run into a few hiccups. But we are actively working on and pressing for a grocery store.

Please see additional announcements attached and as time permits, visit “Resources” on my website: www.joannebenson.com. If you have any questions or concerns, please email our office at Joanne.Benson@senate.state.md.us.

Gripped with Gratitude,

Joanne C. Benson

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

***** Remember *****

“If you don’t VOTE you don’t matter!”

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