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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Friends,

April 12, 2022

Last night the 444th legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly came to an end. As the House passed its final bills in the waning hours of the night, I considered how challenging and unpredictable the last four years have been for our state, and how those challenges have shaped the work my colleagues and I have done during this legislative term. Responding to multiple crises while trying to achieve our legislative agenda was complex. And in reflection, I can confidently say we acted on major legislation while proactively following my personal mission of protecting vulnerable communities, children, and families.

As a result of responsible fiscal management and generous federal partners, the state amassed a significant budget surplus, part of which was used to bring relief to families suffering from lingering economic and health impacts. This help includes tax cuts on a variety of products essential to young families including baby products and dental hygiene materials. Additional tax cuts were made for retirees and still more on vital health needs like diabetic care products and blood pressure monitors. These policies allow us to cut taxes in a sustainable way and not create future structural deficit.

In February, the world watched in horror when Russia, and its vicious dictator, began its unprovoked attack against the sovereign nation of Ukraine. The Maryland General Assembly spoke out immediately against this heedless war and passed a unanimous resolution condemning the attacks. Furthermore, as the United States and the rest of the world levied sanctions against Russia, the legislature acted in its own capacity to divest the Maryland Pension System from any Russian assets.

In addition to the moral outrage sparked by the atrocities continuing in Ukraine, unexpected consequences came to our state. Gas prices have soared to new highs and inflation further ballooned. That is why I sponsored the measure to implement a gas tax holiday. This 30 day period in which the Maryland gas tax was cut was enacted on March 17th, and saved drivers \$0.37 per gallon. While temporary, these efforts have had significant impacts on families and brought a bit of economic relief.

Sustaining the environment is what compelled me to run for delegate 20 years ago, and recent studies have made it clear that we have a limited time frame to reverse the disastrous effects of climate change. This session saw our most ambitious climate change package in the Climate Solutions Now Act. This bill, already enacted into law, requires statewide emissions to be reduced by 60% of 2006 levels by 2031, establishes a goal of net-zero emissions by 2045, and requires certain buildings to meet energy efficiency and emissions standards. With this legislation, Maryland has become a leader in promoting sustainable energy, and I am proud of my colleagues for joining this effort.

After years of hard work, the Judiciary Committee and I were able to craft legislation that closed a dangerous loophole in background check laws by banning ghost guns in the state. Another bill for which I have been a staunch advocate puts into place protections for children from deceptive police interrogation. Finally, we took bold steps to help people facing evictions while ensuring that landlords still maintain their property rights to the best of our abilities.

In the 11th District, my colleagues and I worked together to secure over \$2 million in the capital budget for community projects. These projects include renovation of Irvine Nature Center, construction of a comfort station at Pikesville High School stadium as well as Owings Mills High School Stadium, and construction for the county's first ever inclusion pool for children with disabilities at the JCC in Owings Mills. I want to thank Delegate Belcastro, Delegate Stein, and Senator Hettleman for the teamwork in advocacy for these funds, and I look forward to Yeshiva Torah Simchas and these other projects break ground soon.

Changes to the state maps based on the 2020 census that were passed earlier in the legislative session include plans to separate the 11th District into two. While there will remain one senator elected to represent both sub-districts, the new map calls for one delegate to represent District 11A and two delegates for District 11B. While I am disappointed to see the district split this way, as I have always seen the 11th as a community with shared bonds, these changes were made in an effort to ensure minority representation. I am looking forward to the positive changes that increasingly diverse representation in the area will bring about.

Finally, I want to thank all of you that have reached out to me and my office this year. Your advocacy on legislation has helped guide my decisions and be a better representative of the community. While the final legislative session of the term is over, our work is not done. I will continue to work on behalf of District 11 to advocate for its people and push for more equitable and practical policies in the state. Please keep in touch with any issues or questions you have. I look forward to continuing the conversation in the coming months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon S. Cardin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jon" and last name "Cardin" clearly distinguishable.

Jon S. Cardin