

[For a better viewing experience, click here to view this email in your browser.](#)



[Volunteer](#) | [Join](#) | [Renew](#) | [Donate](#) | [Website](#)

WDC Newsletter – March 15, 2023

From the President

Diana Conway



Dear fellow Democrats and activists,

There are two weeks left in Women's History Month, and three weeks left in the state legislative session. **Women, history, legislation, and legislators...** Here's where our county and state stand today:

Our elected women at the county level comprise:

- 6 of the 11 Montgomery County Council members
- 18 of our 34-member delegation to the state legislature
 - 14 of 26 state delegates
 - 4 of 8 state senators

Women at the state level:

- 79 of 187 Maryland state legislators
 - 63 of the 140 state delegates
 - 16 of the 47 state senators

In Maryland history, elected women have comprised:

- 1 of 34 comptrollers: **Newly installed: Brooke Lierman!**
- 0 of 7 Montgomery County executives (see below: Stella Werner led the county before the creation of the CE position)

Bigger picture:

- 100% of our federal delegation is male: Eight congressmen and 2 senators.
- 51.3% of the 6.16 million people living in Maryland are listed by the Census Bureau as "Persons, female." Even when you're the longstanding majority, your classification isn't the default.

Looking forward: Solutions are at hand to address these imbalances—in gender and many other categories—including tools like [rank-choice voting](#) (see a full explanation [here](#)), campaign finance reform, and innovative and empowering programs such as [Emerge Maryland](#). We just have to demand them.

Looking back: Take a look at this appreciation of [Stella Werner](#) who shaped county governance and became the first woman to lead the county as the council president, before the creation of the County Executive position. For more information about Ms. Werner, [click here](#).

Up next: Join us to hear from **Comptroller Brooke Lierman** with special guest **Rep. Jamie Raskin**. Please [sign up below](#) and share the link with friends to this free Zoom event. Also [below](#) is **Rep. Raskin's generous letter to** our members, after scores of you wrote cards at our in-person luncheon with Chuck Rosenberg wishing the congressman a speedy recovery from his cancer treatment.

For Democrats, for democracy,

Diana



"You must make women count as much as men; you must have an equal standard of morals; and the only way to enforce that is through giving women political power so that you can get that equal moral standard registered in the laws of the country. It is the only way."

--Emmeline Pankhurst

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858 – 1928) was a British political activist who organized the UK suffragette movement and helped women win the right to vote. In 1999, *Time* magazine named her as one of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th Century,

WDC Upcoming Event



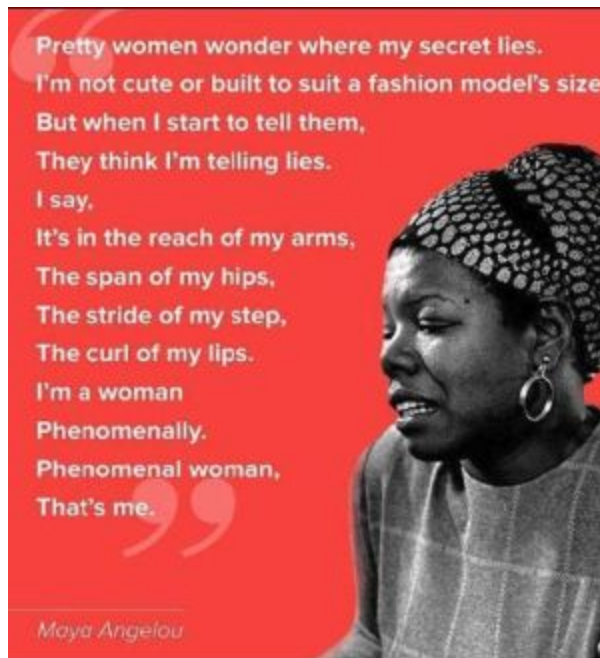
Comptroller Brooke Lierman Speaks with WDC

With Special Guest
Congressman **Jamie Raskin**

Join WDC's conversation with our
newly elected
Comptroller, **Brooke Lierman**
March 29, 7:00 - 8:00 pm
RSVP

bit.ly/lierman-mar29

WDC is honored to welcome **Maryland Comptroller Brooke Lierman** as our guest speaker on the evening of Wednesday, March 29, to celebrate Women's History Month. She is the 34th Comptroller of the State of Maryland, the first woman elected to the position, and the first woman to be independently elected to one of only three state constitutional offices. After running a strong, policy-focused and grassroots-led two-year campaign, she was elected with more than 60 percent of the vote. She is an attorney by training, practicing as a civil rights and disability rights lawyer for many years. Prior to her



Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014) was an American memoirist, popular poet, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and is credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years. 1993, Ms Angelou recited her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" at the presidential inauguration of Bill Clinton, becoming the first poet to make an inaugural recitation since Robert Frost at John F. Kennedy's inauguration in 1961.

Advocacy Corner

JoAnne Koravos, Advocacy Committee Chair





One of WDC's signature bills passes House of Delegates

Sine Die for the 445th session of the Maryland General Assembly is **less than a month** away on April 10, 2023. Crossover day is March 20th (each chamber, House or Senate, sends to the other chamber those bills it intends to pass favorably). Votes are being taken and a new wave of hearings is being scheduled in the opposite chambers. The WDC Advocacy Committee along with our advocacy alert team (more than 540 members and allies) are working hard to move these bills through the legislative process. In the meantime, if you want to receive WDC advocacy action alerts, log in to your [WDC Account](#), click "Update my MyWDC Profile" in the drop-down menu, then select "Yes" under "Do you wish to receive WDC Advocacy Alerts?" If you aren't a WDC member yet or need to renew your membership, then join [HERE](#)!

WDC's Advocacy Committee has been actively advocating for **40 bills** this session. In addition, WDC's ad hoc committee, Advancing Democracy in Maryland, has supported 4 election-related bills. We also testified in front of the House and Senate Capital Budget Subcommittee for women's pre-release center funding. As of March 10th, 10 of these 44 legislative bills have passed out of the first chamber and 9 are waiting in the wings for a committee hearing date in the opposite chamber, including one of our signature bills, [HB0299 - Synthetic Turf - Chain of Custody](#), which passed the House with

Stay tuned for our next progress report.

[Click here](#) to view the bill status pages.

A Special Letter to WDC from Representative Jamie Raskin

Dear Diana and to the Women's Democratic Club:

My District Chief Kathleen Connor delivered to my door the Women's Democratic Club Get-Well Card and Warm-Wishes Extravaganza, and I just spent two hours reading them that I was going to spend working on a speech about how Donald Trump praised and defended Communist Party Secretary Xi's "brilliant" handling of Covid-19 on more than 20 different occasions—so if it was, in fact, a massive bio-weapon sent by an authoritarian power to destroy America, as Lauren Boebert and James Comer assert, we have no one to thank for our pathetically hapless national response to it other than Donald Trump!



But I digress.

I was so enchanted and moved by your lovely notes that I set everything aside.

In truth, my cup runneth over. I've received calls from our great President and Vice-President, notes from the Supreme Court, bandanas from Little Steven, a call from Eve Ensler (now "V") who wrote *The Vagina Monologues*, and even a song texted to me last night from Mary Chapin Carpenter.

But nothing has moved me like the more than 100 affecting and touching messages you sent to me from the Women's Democratic Club, the single organization more important to my lifetime political odyssey than any other I can think of. We have been through so, so much together—great highs and terrible lows, passionate political victories and incalculable personal losses—over the decades and years that I do not even want to recount them for fear of being plunged back into all the tears. (You know they do put a lot of "emo" in the chemo.)

Your beautiful statements of solidarity, encouragement, support, and love are a profound blessing to me as I head into my final two rounds of chemotherapy in March and April. I send you back all of the same love and appreciation tenfold.

I had been feeling pretty bad about how wonderful everyone has been to me because I was

therapy treatment at Sibley Hospital. But that, too, I owe completely to WDC, which organized us to help. WDC empowers us to give however we can and teaches us also how to receive. Enid, I'm so glad you're thriving today.

I want to thank the college kids who wrote me, like Veronica Palmer from UMBC Shady Grove, because they stir deep faith in our future, and I want to say thanks to the people who have just recently joined our amazing 8th District community like Jenny Caesar—from Florida, no less! Given the egregious Governor down there and his obscene war on education, freedom, and democracy, we grant you asylum, Jenny, and extend a profound warm welcome but still need you to tell us how we can best assist our embattled friends in the Sunshine State.

It is hard to sum up the spirit of all the notes I received but Cynthia Rubenstein sent me the message I most needed to hear. She wished me all best “through this health challenge because we need you to keep kicking a-- for us in Washington!”

I liked the way she didn't spell out the “a” word—very old school WDC!

My friends, I am going to make it through this. My doctors are optimistic and I am feeling strong. We have many great battles left to fight together and I have no better friends or allies in the world than you.

Thanks for the big boost.

With great admiration and affection,

Jamie

Opinion: Why Maryland's Sex-Trafficked Children Need a Safe Harbor Law

by Amanda Rodriguez, executive director of TurnAround, Inc.

The writer is executive director of TurnAround, Inc., Maryland's first provider of comprehensive services to adult and child survivors of human trafficking, and co-chair of the Legislative Subcommittee for the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force.

Maryland has been trying to address the needs of child sex-trafficking victims since at least 2007 when the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force was established. Laws have since passed that define trafficking as a form of child abuse and that impose harsher penalties on traffickers. The Regional Navigator Program, established in 2019, now provides child trafficking victims immediate, specialized care in nearly every county. Yet, despite these

Currently, child victims of sex trafficking can be arrested, handcuffed, detained, and incarcerated for prostitution—a charge that blames them for the sexual abuse they've suffered. An adult survivor of child sex trafficking testified last month in support of Safe Harbor, revealing that after three years of being trafficked in College Park between the ages of 12 and 15, it was being arrested and handcuffed that was the most traumatizing. When we arrest a trafficked child for prostitution, we tell them that they deserved to be punished.

Selling a child for sex, known as sex trafficking, is a crime; being the child shouldn't be. Safe Harbor legislation ([House Bill 297/Senate Bill 292](#)) recognizes these children as victims who have had a crime committed against them; that no child willingly participates in their own victimization; and that there is no such thing as a child prostitute under federal law. The House passed the bill unanimously and the grassroots Maryland Coalition for Safe Harbor has submitted more than 4,900 constituent letters in support. Still, the bill is stalled in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. No vote has been scheduled and inaction threatens the bill.

[Click here](#) to find ways you can help move the Safe Harbor Bill and save young victims of sex trafficking from criminal prosecution!

*[Click here](#) for the whole opinion piece, which was published in the March 13, 2023, issue of "Maryland Matters."



GIRL POWER CONTEST

Volunteer!

**Protect elections and reproductive rights
in a key judicial seat**

Contact Voters to Flip the Wisconsin Supreme Court!

Why should you get involved in the Wisconsin Supreme Court election if you don't live in Wisconsin? Among other things, the results will impact two issues: elections and reproductive rights.

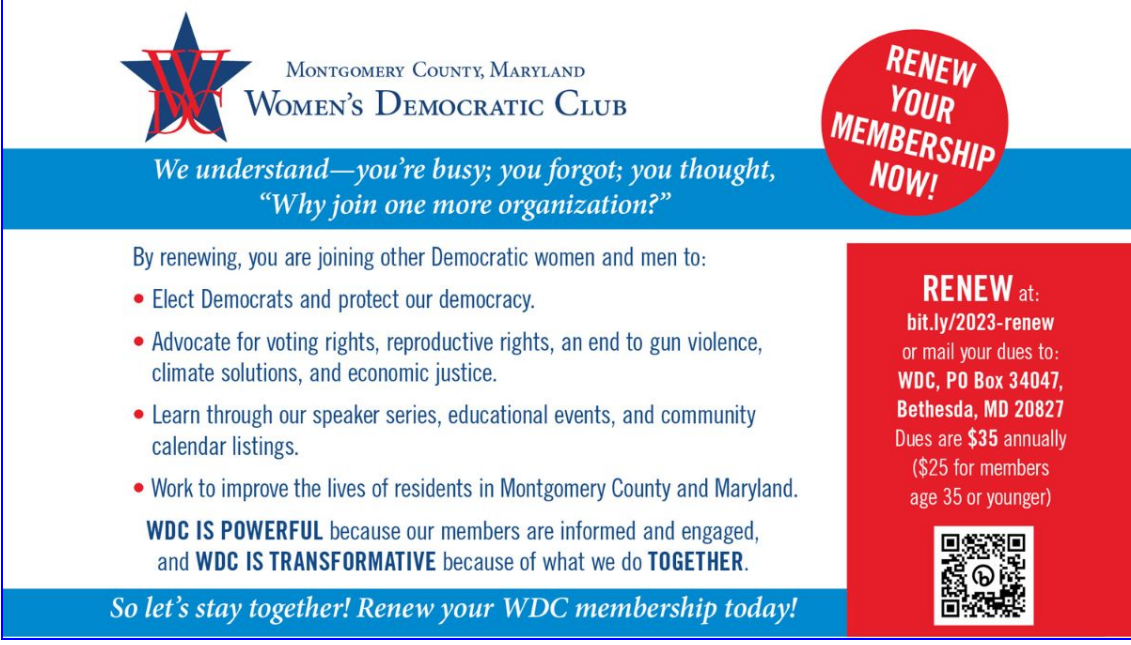
A [Janet Protasiewicz](#) victory will give the court a liberal majority that will likely redraw heavily gerrymandered districts, influence how this key swing state's 10 electoral votes are awarded in the 2024 presidential election, and overturn Wisconsin's 1849 ban on virtually all abortions. If Protasiewicz's MAGA opponent Daniel Kelly wins—after being voted out of his WI Supreme Court seat in 2020—conservatives will retain their stranglehold on the

Important note: Wisconsin Supreme Court elections are nonpartisan, so it's vitally important that voters learn who Janet Protasiewicz is, what she stands for, and how they can help her win.

Our friends and allies at [Silver Spring Progressive Action](#), [DoTheMostGood](#), and [J Walkers Action Group](#) list multiple ways to get involved. Sign up by clicking on their respective links.

WDC Membership

**Has your membership lapsed?
Watch for our postcard!**



 MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

*We understand—you're busy; you forgot; you thought,
"Why join one more organization?"*

By renewing, you are joining other Democratic women and men to:

- Elect Democrats and protect our democracy.
- Advocate for voting rights, reproductive rights, an end to gun violence, climate solutions, and economic justice.
- Learn through our speaker series, educational events, and community calendar listings.
- Work to improve the lives of residents in Montgomery County and Maryland.

WDC IS POWERFUL because our members are informed and engaged,
and **WDC IS TRANSFORMATIVE** because of what we do **TOGETHER**.

So let's stay together! Renew your WDC membership today!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

RENEW at:
bit.ly/2023-renew
or mail your dues to:
**WDC, PO Box 34047,
Bethesda, MD 20827**
Dues are **\$35** annually
(\$25 for members
age 35 or younger)



If you haven't already done so, renew online [here](#). You may also mail your \$35.00 annual dues (\$25 for members 35 years old or younger) payable to "WDC" and mail to: WDC, PO Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827.

By renewing your membership, you are building community and political muscle with other Democratic members, clubs, and allies to elect Democrats and support progressive Democratic policy goals. WDC is excited to work with each of you, as we advocate for our WDC priorities, and present our Speakers Programs, Community Education Panels, social events, and service projects. Join us!

WDC needs you! Can you help us in one of these positions? Not sure what a position entails? Come try it out—no obligation!

- Membership Co-Chair
- Community Education Co-Chair
- Finance Committee Member
- Historian Co-Chair
- Communications Committee Members
- Advocacy Committee Chair, Co-Chair, or Member

Interested? To learn more, please contact [Diana Conway](#) and make sure to put into the subject line: "*Volunteering with WDC.*"

Are you friendly, persuasive, and interested in helping WDC build up our active membership? If yes, please join our Membership and Outreach Committee! In particular, we are looking to recruit assistance/expertise in the following areas:

- Membership follow-up/outreach to WDC members—reaching out via phone calls, texts, or emails
- Membership outreach to non-WDC members who have attended WDC events
- Technical Assistance with data reports. We will teach you how to use our MyWDC database.
- Assistance with locating venues/logistics for live happy hours once they resume

To learn more please contact [Enid Light](#).

Do You Enjoy Using Software?

If you would like to join our WDC team, please volunteer to help us. You can learn one or more of our software or social media tools and have a real impact.

Contact [Mary Lou Fox](#).

WDC Resources

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[YouTube Speakers & Events](#)

DONATE to WDC

Copyright © 2023 WDC | Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).



Calendars:

WDC • [Community](#) • WNDC_ • MCDCC_ • [MDDEMS](#)

Tag Us on Facebook @MCWDC or on Twitter @MoCoWDC
[Join Our Members Only Facebook Group](#)
