

Annual Legislative Breakfast brings stakeholders together

County Executive outspoken on pension-shifting plans



County Executive Kamenetz, President Abby Beytin

To push the cost of funding teacher pensions back to the counties would be “bad public policy,” declared County Executive Kevin Kamenetz to a crowd gathered for the annual legislative breakfast, many of whom were members of the state delegation. He explained that Baltimore County income is declining for the “first time in history,” going on to express his view that a push-back would be merely shifting the problem of funding pensions, not solving it. Kamenetz said that his fellow county leaders in Maryland are all opposed to the idea, and said that such a move would force the counties to raise taxes.

Senator Kathy Klausmeier described the pending legislative session as an “ambitious” one, saying that the delegation needs to hear from educators on the issues during the session and only half-jokingly, asked for constituents’ prayers,



Most of the short speeches given by those representing the County Council, Board of Education, school system, and state legislature contained acknowledgements of the importance of education and educators, as well as assurances that educator input is valued—and many commented on the current tough economic times.

TABCO President Abby Beytin summed up the association’s position as she wrapped up the commentary portion of the event, saying, “We get it. Financially, times are tough, but we also understand that the price of good quality public education is a solution to those tough times. If we undercut our spending on education, we are undercutting the economic future of our state. Maryland is number one and has been for the past three years. We can directly tie this to the Maryland Legislature enacting the Thornton School Funding Initiative. Dr. Alvin Thornton and the commission he chaired understood the value and the cost of public education. You, our legislators, understood as well and passed the legislation that gave us the ability to maintain high standards in our public schools.”



Delegate Dana Stein, President Beytin, Delegate James Malone

She went on to say, “The easy way to fix our budget woes is to cut school funding. Whether it is through a relaxing of the Maintenance of Effort law or pushing pension costs back to the locals, the results will not be in Maryland’s best interests....” To quote one of our famous thinkers, Benjamin Franklin, ‘Don’t be pennywise and pound foolish,’ when crafting our budget and upcoming legislation for the upcoming session.”



Board of Education member Rodger Janssen, TABCO member Schimica Gauldin



Photography by Win Leitzer

Legislative breakfast~ *who are these people and why should I care?*

TABCO’s sponsorship of an annual breakfast that brings educators together with elected officials and school system leadership has continued annually since its inception during the presidency of Mark Beytin. The event makes it easy for educators to sit face-to-face with the people who make the decisions that affect virtually everything about their jobs. I’ve always been puzzled by teachers who retreat behind statements such as “I’m not political” or “I can’t keep up with that stuff.” This works only if they are content with the way things are, or are content to com-

plain without a hope of seeing anything change.

Experience has taught us that our voices do matter, and that when the voice of TABCO leadership is joined by the amplified noise made by the membership, things can change...remember AIM?

The people referred to in the title’s question are important to you—specifically and individually.

How many faces can you match to their names and positions? C’mon—you know chapter and verse on football players or the desperate housewives...get to know the folks who affect your lives!

Angela Leitzer



ANSWERS BELOW—SCORE YOURSELF! **14-12** correct—you’re a political junkie **11-10**—well- informed
9-8—brush up on current affairs!
7 or below—you’re out of the loop; you’d better make plans now to attend next year’s breakfast!

A. Senator Katherine Klausmeier B. County Councilwoman Cathy Bevins C. County Councilman David Marks D. Board of Education President Lawrence Schmidt E. Delegate John Olszewski, Jr. F. Delegate Dan Morhaim, “Doctor Dan” G. County Council Chairwoman Vicki Almond H. Jonathan Schwartz, Chairwoman Almond’s assistant I. County Councilman John Olszewski, Sr., “Johnny O” J. Delegate Emmett Burns K. Senator Jim Brochin L. MSEA Vice President Betty Weller M. County Executive Kevin Kamenez N. Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam