

21st Century Jury System and Pay

It is shameful that the citizens of this city are subject to a \$15-a-day stipend for an all-day process that often times forces hard-working citizens to miss an entire day at work and have to make other arrangements for their children's daycare or after-school pick-up. As the next Clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, I will work with city and state leaders to double the daily stipend issued to jurors, going from \$15 to \$30 a day, as the current level of payment barely pays for parking in downtown Baltimore, let alone trying to purchase lunch or pay for gas/public transit.

I will also fight to protect citizens looking to serve as jurors and fulfill their democratic obligation by ensuring that employers who try and force employees opting to serve on juries to pay a certain amount of their salary for that day back to the company is held accountable for such egregious actions. If an employee, who is a citizen first, chooses to abide by the laws that govern our state and actually show up for jury duty – as so many of our citizenry does not – then they should be rewarded, not penalized by their greedy employers looking to benefit financially off the backs of their employees.

We also must implement a new juror selection process, eliminating the current antiquated system that leaves people more puzzled and perplexed than assured of if and when they should appear. Implementing a 21st century operating system in my first year should help address many of these issues and tamp down juror angst, while also having a GPS system that directs jurors to the exact location they are supposed to report to in the morning.

We have a long way to go in upgrading the services and systems that govern the operations of the city's circuit courthouses; however, I am confident that my 21st century vision for this office, along with the progressive people I have on my team, will be enough to turn this system around for the betterment of Baltimore in the coming years. I ask that you read each component of this plan, digest the failures I have identified and feel free to offer me your own ideas and suggestions as to how we can improve the quality of life for those having to work in, or do business with, these two important court facilities.