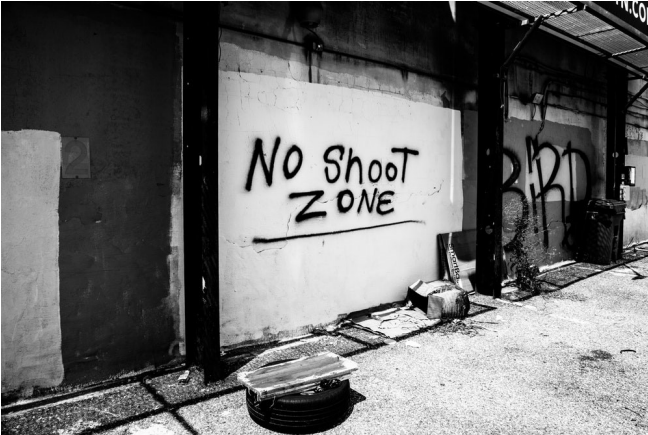


Local Politics Matter

Baltimore Deserves Better**Take Your Vote Seriously**

As we move towards the end of 2018 and another election, Baltimore City is once again on pace to register over 300 murders. As of October 18, 2018, there were 253 murders recorded in the City. This is on the heels of 2017 when Baltimore had the worst homicide rate among the nation's 50 largest cities and the second-highest violent crime rate overall, according to new data from the [FBI](#). The grim news was the latest reminder of the sustained cycle of violence that has gripped the city since 2015, when the annual number of homicides soared above 300 for three consecutive years after the unrest that followed [Freddie Gray's](#) death from injuries suffered in police custody. There were 342 homicides in Baltimore last year, 56 per 100,000 people who live in the city. That's the highest per capita in the

city's history and, according to the FBI report Monday, the highest rate of any American city with more than 500,000 people. It's also significantly higher than the rate in other big cities.

There are some obvious questions that come to mind when you analyze this situation. First, what is the short-term plan to stem the tide of murders? Shortly after she was sworn in as Mayor, Catherine Pugh talked about developing a plan to address violent crime in the City. I found this very interesting in light of the fact that Ms. Pugh is a native of Baltimore City and had been a member of the State Senate for years prior to being elected Mayor. This is an individual who came into the Mayoral position with a keen sense of Baltimore City, its neighborhoods and its politics so she should have walked into the job with a plan.

The plan should have resembled one that you see put forth by crises management professionals. The message should have said that criminals are not going to be allowed to take over Baltimore City. While a long-term strategy is certainly needed the current crises must be dealt with and it must be dealt with swiftly and in certain cases harshly.

The second question examines the situation from a political standpoint. As a lifelong Democrat I have to ask why my party has failed the citizens of Baltimore so miserably. Democrats have held the Mayor's office since 1967. This is 51 years of leadership that has culminated in a crime ridden, unsanitary, violent city that is known more for its violent nature and high-grade heroine than for the leaders that it develops and opportunities that it creates for businesses and individuals. One of the most highly regarded television series of all time is the "Wire". A show that had violence, murder, and drug dealing on the streets of Baltimore as its core theme. This is how Baltimore is viewed across the Country. It is mind boggling to see the voters of Baltimore continue to vote for the same individuals, election after election, individuals who have done nothing to move the city forward.

At some point, responsible citizens must step forward and challenge the status quo. Vote in fresh blood with new ideas. Start with a Governor who will ensure that the City gets re-sourced and yes, challenge the Democratic establishment to do what is necessary to stop the degradation of a great American City.

The citizens of Baltimore deserve more. They deserve more than a slogan. Baltimore is not "Charm City". Baltimore is "Harm City". It is not the City that "Reads". It is the City that "Needs". Yes, Baltimore needs leaders who care, leaders who put service above personal interests, leaders who come to work each and every day with a commitment to doing whatever it takes to give the good citizens of Baltimore City a fighting chance to reach their God given potential.

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