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OPEN LETTER TO MARYLAND PTA MEMBERS

Dear PTA Member:

By now, I am sure you have heard about the legal action against National PTA and hopefully, have read the Maryland PTA 2019-2020 Annual Report. I received your comments, questions, and concerns about the legal action but interestingly, I got no feedback about the condition of our 105-year-old organization.

To say the least, Maryland PTA did not take the decision to initiate litigation against its parent organization lightly. However, the aggressive action and refusal to compromise in the face of misrepresentations and exaggerations without an objective review left us few options. We acknowledge and appreciate that some within the State believe it would have been better to permit National PTA to take over our organization, restructure it, and possibly replace the current Maryland PTA Board of Directors. How can any of us be absolutely certain that would result in a better Maryland PTA? (Unfortunately, similar action was taken with the District of Columbia PTA ("DCPTA"). Based on National PTA membership reports, DCPTA had 967 members in FY 2018, 412 members in FY 2019, and ended FY 2020 with 120 members.)

I became your president in the midst of conflict that erupted during the 2019 State Convention over the wholly revised bylaws and concerns about Maryland PTA finances. I assumed this position with the hopes that I could resolve the conflict and enhance the benefits of PTA membership through strong advocacy, strong constituent association support, and judicious management. The discovery of Maryland PTA's insolvency, continued internal conflict instigated by the adoption of new bylaws, and the onset of a global pandemic became the perfect storm that has led us to where we are today.

I recognize that many of you have lost faith in Maryland PTA and question the credibility of the Board of Directors. Please know the majority of the Board of the Directors are accomplished professionals who have children in or graduated from Maryland schools and are passionate about the PTA mission. We agreed that preventing the unfounded, hostile takeover of Maryland PTA is not in the best interest of OUR children.

As we work to put this unfortunate experience behind us, Maryland PTA will fervently continue to advocate for the safe return of students to their classrooms, increased funding for school construction and education overall, reform of school discipline practices, and dedicated resources to improve the quality of life for all Maryland children. We are also committed to training local PTA leaders and encouraging more, diverse and inclusive involvement at the County and State

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levels, as well as helping constituent associations maintain compliance with State law and PTA bylaws.

Yes, Maryland PTA is a part of the larger, worldwide PTA family. However, the priorities of the Maryland PTA Board of Directors are the children and members in this State. Maryland law is not identical to other states' law, and in many instances, it is drastically different. Therefore, we must insist that National PTA respect state constituent association rights, rules, and authority. Relinquishing that position would effectively render Maryland PTA futile.

On behalf of the Maryland PTA Board of Directors, thank you for being a part of the oldest and largest child advocacy organization in this State. Thank you for believing in, supporting, and invigorating the PTA mission of making every child's potential a reality by empowering and engaging families and communities to advocate for ALL children.

Yours in Service,



Dr. Edna Harvin Battle
President