

2013 Women's Legislative Briefing

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Senator Barbara Mikulski brought the crowd of almost 700 to its feet more than once during her rousing exhortation to those attending the 2013 Women's Legislative Briefing on Sunday, January 27. The 33rd annual Briefing, held at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville, was designed to inform Marylanders about legislative proposals before the state General Assembly and the U.S. Congress that address issues of specific concern to women.

To the overwhelming enthusiasm of the audience, Senator Mikulski urged women to "suit up, put on your lipstick, square your shoulders" and take on the fight for equal rights and for legislation that will address domestic violence, pay equity, educational equity, and much more.

Eighty-eight women's and community organizations helped organize the program with the Montgomery County Commission for Women, and funding from Kaiser Permanente as the Gold Sponsor and AARP as the Silver Sponsor. Forty-eight of these organizations provided exhibits lining the hallways.

Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett and Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker helped open the event. The highlight of the program was a keynote address by [Dr. Bernice Sandler](#), widely known as "the godmother of Title IX," introduced by Dr. Susan Leggett-Johnson, Associate Medical Director of Human Resources, Chief Compliance Officer and Executive Diversity Leader for the Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group. Dr. Sandler described the history of her involvement in the ground-breaking gender equity legislation, while living right here in Montgomery County, more than forty years ago.

In recognition of her extraordinary achievement inspiring the language for Title IX and her persistence in working for its passage in 1972, as well as her continued research and advocacy for educational equity ever since, Dr. Sandler was inducted into the Montgomery County Women's History Archive at the Women's Legislative Briefing. In this, the 41st anniversary year of both the passage of Title IX and the establishment of the Montgomery County Commission for Women, Dr. Sandler became the 41st woman to be awarded this honor.

County Council President Nancy Navarro then introduced Senator Benjamin Cardin, Congressmen John Sarbanes and John Delaney, and skillfully moderated their insightful and informative panel discussion on Women's Issues in Congress.

The opening plenary session was followed by eight seminars each featuring legislators and prominent advocates: Effective Legislative Advocacy; Advocating for Older Women's Issues; Health Equity: The Promise of Health Care Reform for Women;

Women in the Public Realm; Women, Families and Poverty; Making the Workplace Work for Women; Safety, Justice and Human Rights; and a special presentation of *Miss Representation*, a compelling documentary on women's issues in the media.

The Briefing closed with a kick-off of the Maryland Earned Paid Sick and Safe Days Campaign – urging support for a bill that will require all employers in Maryland to provide earned, paid sick leave to all employees, whether full time or part time, salaried or hourly wages.

The Montgomery County Commission for Women is grateful for the continuing cooperation and support it receives for the Women's Legislative Briefing. It is especially appreciative of the contributions of the eighty-eight women's and community co-sponsoring organizations and the dozens of volunteers and hundreds of hours they lend to this effort, and to Kaiser Permanente and AARP without whose financial support this event would not be possible. The Commission also greatly appreciates the time and expertise donated by the 48 legislators, public officials, advocates and subject experts who donated their time to serve as speakers, panelists and moderators in the program. Above all, the Commission appreciates the hundreds of women and men who believe these issues are so important that they will give up an entire Sunday afternoon on a cold day in January to participate.