



***Baltimore County Executive Campaign Kickoff – Nick Stewart
April 29, 2025
(As Prepared)***

Introduction

Wow—good evening, everyone!

What a crowd! I've got a question for you: Who's excited for the future of Baltimore County?

Let me start with a huge thank you to Dave McClure, Dr. Scott, Abby Beytin and Barry Williams. Each of you has made a real impact on our County, and I'm truly honored to have your support.

To Hugh and Caroline Sisson, and the entire Heavy Seas team – thanks for making this possible. And of course, shoutout to Evan Brown, Keith Holsey and our friends at State Fare for the amazing food.

We have everything we need for a special night. Because tonight, with your help, we're launching this campaign for a bolder Baltimore County!

We're building a movement for the future—and every single person in this room is part of that. So thank you for being here and for believing in what we can do together.

If you'll allow me a personal moment, I want to thank my best friend, my counselor, my heart – Katie Stewart. Thank you for who you are and all you do. And thank you our four amazing kids and chaos-makers. Charlotte, TC, Henry and Will – I love you guys.

And thanks to Katie's parents, Tom and Deb, for all the support you give us – and the chaos you help manage at home.

To my Dad, thank you for believing in me. I know Mom is with us in spirit. She would've loved this.

Kate Haaf, my sister. Thanks for always backing me up. I love you.

And finally to my team, thank you so much for bringing us to this moment. We have an incredible team of folks who are willing to give of themselves and are committed to this effort. I am so, so grateful.

Baltimore County – A Place of Strength

Alright, let's do this. Why are we building this coalition? What's so special about this moment?

My friends, Baltimore County is a place of enormous strength. We have something for everybody – trails and beaches, research and innovation, working farms and a global logistics hub.

The County is also very personal to me. It's where my grandmother spent her entire career serving our school system. It's where my parents raised us. And it's where they chose to stay – even when my Dad started a small healthcare business near DC, they didn't move us closer. Instead, he commuted three hours each day, to ensure we'd stay rooted in this place we love.

But now, this place is at a crossroads. We have a housing crisis. Property tax assessments just jumped 25%. Malls and shopping centers are dying. Economic growth has stalled. And, for the first time in a century, we're losing population.

On top of that, we have a president seeking to gut government in the name of "efficiency." Our County is home to more than 14,000 federal workers, many who've spent their entire careers in service to our Country. So to those workers in this room, let me say this clearly: You're not a waste; you're our patriots -- and we stand with you.

What's this all mean, put together? It means families are stretched thin. Seniors aren't able to age in the communities they've built. Public servants – police and fire, nurses and teachers – can't afford to live in the County they serve. This isn't just a policy issue; it's a moral one. It's a moral issue.

And while some would like to blame "the others," the secret is we've largely done this to ourselves. There are reasons why everything feels so hard and so scarce.

It's because our systems aren't built for today. We're too focused on rules and red tape and less on results. It simply can't take 6 years to build a new home in our County. It can't take 15 years to build a new high school. It can't take an hour and a half to go from Rosedale to Tradepoint Atlantic by bus. Redevelopments can't be delayed over and over until they're in the grave.

This is our moment to choose progress over endless procedure.

So We're Running

And so we're running. We're running to bring this big, beautiful County together as "One County."

Yes, we're diverse. But we're not a series of fiefdoms, run by individual councilmembers. We're One County, and we're so much stronger when we work together.

So, we're running. We're running to bring County government into the modern age, where decisions are driven by data and everyone has the facts to hold us accountable.

Congressman Olszewski and his team started this work – they took a very stubborn County, where it's often about who you know and not the merit of your idea, and they changed it. But there's work to do.

And so we're running. We're running to bring fresh thinking to our problems. You know, I've served on the School Board, and on the Workforce Development Board, and on the Southwest's CDC board, and I co-founded the advocacy group We The People, but I've never been a full-time politician. I'm not wed to the way it's always been.

I'm here because it's time for an outsider with the vision to meet this moment and the practical experience inside and outside government to back it up and deliver.

I'm here because it's time to imagine a new future -- where young families can afford to buy a home, raise their kids in strong, safe schools, build vibrant careers and communities, and enjoy their retirements all right here in this County we love.

In short, I'm running to make sure the same opportunities my parents gave me will be there for the next generation.

And That's Where You Come In

And that's where you come in. I need your help.

Go to the website. Sign up to volunteer. Host a meet and greet. Invite your neighbors. Share your ideas. Challenge mine.

We've already created a 30-page platform, built from more than 300 meetings. But I'm not done listening. I need your voice.

More importantly, I need your belief, not in me or this campaign, but in us -- in Baltimore County and what we're capable of.

Conclusion

I'll close where we started. We're blessed with so many strengths.

We have everything we need to solve our own challenges.

And what is that thing? What's always allowed us to meet the moment -- from the Battle of North Point in 1814 all the way to the transformation of Bethlehem Steel? It's us. It's each other.

Look around this room. It's filled with talented people -- healers, protectors, educators, creators -- all willing to give of themselves, who believe there's dignity in each person, who believe we have a responsibility to advance a common good. Those are our values.

I've never been more hopeful. I believe -- in my bones -- that now is the time. We can do the hard things. We have to do the hard things.

We can look at this County of ours and instead of just asking "why," as the great Irish poet said, we can ask "why not?"

We can dream and we can deliver, at the very same time, if we do it together.

I'm so grateful for each of you. And I'm so excited for the work ahead. Let's do this. Let's do it together. Thank you!

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