

January 4, 2010

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

We are the students of Mrs. Laurie Hogan's 7th Grade homeroom at Galena Middle School in Galena, MD. In case you haven't visited this area before, it is a beautiful rural part of Kent County, MD. We are not a heavily populated area, rather we are a farming community and proud of our natural resources here by the Chesapeake Bay which provide for good hunting and fishing. The history of Kent County is rich with stories of President Washington and the College named after him as well as colonial architecture and the Chestertown Tea Party.

Kent County Public School students like us participate in the Character Counts! Character Education program. That is the reason we wanted to write to you. Your campaign and the actions you have taken since being elected have shown that you are a man of character and that you are trying to make laws with issues of character in mind. In Character Counts! there are six pillars of character that we study: Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Fairness, Trustworthiness and Caring. We have talked about some of our community's concerns in light of these pillars and wanted to share some of our ideas with you. The concerns we listed and the Pillars we tied them to are:

Homelessness – Fairness, Citizenship, Caring
Pollution – Respect, Citizenship, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Caring
Laziness – Responsibility, Citizenship, Caring
Joblessness/Cutbacks – Responsibility, Caring
Fraud – Fairness, Caring
Wars – Respect, Citizenship, Caring
Crime - Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Caring, Citizenship
Healthcare – Caring, Responsibility, Fairness
Lack of integrity – Respect, Trustworthiness, Responsibility, Caring

As we discussed these and other issues that are a concern to us as students as well as to our communities it became clear that Caring was involved in all of them. We would suggest that as decisions are made, the element of Caring which involves compassion, kindness, gratitude, forgiveness and helping people in need be considered.

We hope that you will continue to make all these issues of good character a priority during your administration. If there is anything we can do to help you besides raising these issues and talking to others about them, please let us know and we would be glad to try.

Sincerely,

Signed by all class students.