

## COMMEMORATION

Who would have thought that on September 11, 2008, marking the 7th anniversary of the terrorist destruction of the World Trade Center where 72 police officers died, the Montgomery County Council would hold a joint committee meeting to question police officer disability benefits.

That is exactly what Council Public Safety Committee Chairman Phil Andrews and Council Management and Fiscal Policy Committee Chair Duchy Trachtenberg did to commemorate the deadliest day for law enforcement in the history of the United States.

Our disability benefits are designed to care for police officers so they can respond to calls for citizens without hesitation or pause to consider the personal and family consequences of a career-ending injury.

If there is any fraud, it should be addressed on a case-by-case basis. However the facts are that our disability pension benefit has been legally bargained, publically legislated, and openly reported. Each and every year, the county council is provided a financial report on the system.

Although the percentages of disability retirements to total number of officers have not increased over 22 years, Mr. Andrews and Ms. Trachtenberg seek to violate the collective bargaining process to change benefits and protections that we have had for many, many years. They ought to be ashamed.