

## **PASSING OF FORMER CAROLINE COUNTY COMMISSIONER MARIO J. GANGEMI**

Former Caroline County Commissioner Mario “Marty” J. Gangemi passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, October 16 at the age of 65.

Mr. Gangemi was a longstanding member of the Caroline community, moving with his family to a farm near Goldsboro in 1953. A lifelong supporter of public education, Mr. Gangemi graduated from North Caroline High School in 1965. He worked locally for Choptank Electrical Cooperative, retiring in 2005 after 35 years of distinguished work.

Mr. Gangemi’s service in local government began in June 2002. He was appointed by the Governor to complete the term of a County Commissioner who died in office. Mr. Gangemi was subsequently elected to a four-year term that November. While County Commissioner, Mr. Gangemi served as chairman of the Roads Board and the Board of Estimates. He also represented the County government on numerous other boards, including the Social Services Advisory Board and the Mid-Shore Regional Council, a body where he served as chairman.

With deep roots in Caroline rural life, Mr. Gangemi was firmly dedicated to the preservation of the county’s rural heritage. He played an important role in crafting innovative programs that balance preserving undeveloped land with protecting individual property rights. Through the dedication of Mr. Gangemi and other local leaders, Caroline County ranks among the top counties in the state for land preservation

A stalwart supporter of the local school system, Mr. Gangemi was a candidate for the Board of Education at the time of his death. While serving as County Commissioner, he worked tirelessly to improve Caroline’s public schools. Among many projects, the modernization of Colonel Richardson Middle School occurred during his time in office. He also helped to establish the funding mechanism that has made numerous other school improvement projects possible.

Perhaps Mr. Gangemi’s most lasting public legacy is the relationships he helped foster between the County government and its allied agencies like the local Board of Education. Caroline County is widely considered unique in Maryland because of the unparalleled degree of cooperation and collaboration between public agencies here, a stark contrast to the often competing and clashing relationships in other counties. Remembered as a genuinely warm and caring individual, his unassuming leadership style built the foundation for lasting partnerships between a wide range of individuals and institutions.

After his term of service as County Commissioner, Mr. Gangemi continued to actively serve the community through a variety of volunteer commitments, including a record of exceptional service the United Way of Caroline County.

The son of first-generation Sicilian immigrants, Mr. Gangemi was a deeply devoted family man. The County government joins his wife, children, grandchildren, and the Caroline community in mourning his loss. The County Commissioners extend their deepest sympathies to Mr. Gangemi’s family and friends and have ordered County flags be flown at half mast to honor the memory of his public service.

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