

HHS/ED ITEM #1
May 4, 2011
Worksession

MEMORANDUM

May 2, 2011

TO: Health and Human Services Committee
Education Committee

FROM: Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Worksession: FY12 Operating Budget, Public Libraries deferred items**

Those expected for this worksession include:

- Parker Hamilton, Director, Department of Public Libraries
- Eric Carzon, Business Manager, Department of Public Libraries
- Bruce Meier, Office of Management and Budget
- Marty Stephens, Literacy Council of Montgomery County
- Frank Mallon, Board President, Literacy Council of Montgomery County
- Heather Ritchie, Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy

During the discussion of the Public Libraries budget, HHS Committee Chair Leventhal questioned why the Literacy Council of Montgomery County (LCMC) receives County funding for adult literacy services through the Public Libraries and the Montgomery Coalition on Adult English Literacy (MCAEL), and whether MCAEL should administer all County funding.

A chart highlighting key differences in the operations of the two organization is attached at ©1-3.

LCMC Services

The Literacy Council provides the services described below. Additional information about Literacy Council services is attached at ©1-6.

English as a Second Language (ESL) & Basic Literacy Tutoring: LCMC serves 900 or more adult learners annually through trained volunteers who meet with two or three adult students or a single student at locations throughout Montgomery County, for two hours each week.

ESL Classes: LCMC conducts ESL classes at sites around Montgomery County. These classes provide nine hours of instruction for 10 weeks, and meet Maryland and national standards for adult ESL education. There is no charge for the classes but learners are strongly encouraged to purchase their own textbook.

English for Daily Living Classes: LCMC provides an 8-week “English for Daily Living” life-skills class to give busy parents a way to learn simple contextual English in a short program conducted at their children’s school. The classes are taught by volunteer teams of lead teachers and classroom assistants. The classes are open to LCMC wait-listed learners as well as parents whose children attend the partner school.

Conversation Classes: LCMC offers conversation classes or “clubs” providing the opportunity for English learners to practice and develop their skills in American idiomatic English in a supportive and friendly environment. LCMC active or wait-listed learners may join the conversation classes free of charge at sites around Montgomery County.

Computer-Based Language Lab: LCMC wait-listed and active students can supplement their literacy or ESL tutoring by practicing their skills in a five-seat computer-based Language Lab. Located in the LCMC's Rockville office, the lab is equipped with Rosetta Stone (ESL) and Lexia SOS (Basic Literacy) software. Volunteer Lab Assistants provide initial training to students, who then can schedule time at their convenience to work independently in the Lab.

GED-i Program Pre-Testing: LCMC offers entry pre-testing for the Maryland GED-i program, a free, teacher-supported online learning program for GED test preparation offered to Maryland residents. The GED tests offer an alternate and acceptable way for an individual 16 years old or older to earn a high school diploma.

MCAEL

MCAEL is dedicated to strengthening the county-wide adult English literacy network with resources, training, collaborations and advocacy to support a thriving community and an optimal workforce. The Coalition supports literacy programming for both native and non-native English language speakers; however a significantly larger percentage of MCAEL's funding supports programming for adults for whom English is not their first language.

The Coalition was formed in 2005 under the auspices of Montgomery College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education department. The Coalition was formed in response to recommendations for improving the County's system for delivering adult ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programs, which recommendations were developed by a Council-initiated Task Force. In 2006, MCAEL incorporated as an independent non-profit organization, transitioning out of the College to new offices.

Because of MCAEL's special expertise in providing training, technical assistance, and assessment of ESOL programs, the organization has been charged with managing ESOL grants from the County Executive and the Montgomery County Council. Non-profit agencies seeking funds for literacy services, including ESOL, are asked to apply directly to MCAEL. Disbursing approximately \$500,000 in County funds, the coalition supports an average of 15 literacy programs annually, out of a network of over 70 programs. Council staff understands that MCAEL does not deliver direct services.

County Funding for LCMC

County funding for LCMC through MCAEL and Public Libraries from FY10 through FY12 is shown in the table below.

	MCAEL Funding	Public Libraries Funding
FY10	\$50,000	\$141,000
FY11	\$42,500	\$111,390
FY12 Recommended	TBD ¹	\$111,390

Council staff understands that funding from MCAEL supports the ESL classes that LCMC offers. Funding through the Public Libraries supports the one-on-one tutoring services offered by LCMC. A chart highlighting key differences in the operations of the two organization is attached at ©1-3. In FY11, County funding of \$153,890 supported approximately 21% of LCMC's operations.

Discussion

Council staff understands that the funding arrangement between LCMC and the Public Libraries has been in place for many years and significantly predates the creation of MCAEL. Because the partnership has worked well, the Executive branch has seen no reason to alter the arrangement.

In correspondence to the HHS Committee Chair (©7-8), MCAEL representatives explain the important role that LCMC plays in the coalition. They emphasize the valuable nature of the LCMC's comprehensive approach to providing literacy and ESL services, and suggest that "[w]ere the County funds [to] cease to flow for these programs, MCAEL would unlikely be able to offer LCMC substitute support." MCAEL representatives do not, however, take a position on whether the County should move the literacy funding for LCMC in Public Libraries into MCAEL for distribution purposes.

The Committees may want to clarify what synergies exist or are created through a relationship between LCMC and the Public Libraries or LCMC and MCAEL. In the absence of a compelling reason to keep LCMC funding through the Public Libraries, Council staff recommends transferring this funding to MCAEL as part of the FY13 operating budget process. MCAEL would be tasked with distributing the funding according to its best judgment, which could include funding LCMC at its current level.

Council staff does not recommend transferring the funding in FY12. Doing so would unfairly prejudice LCMC's ability to compete for the resources as MCAEL has already solicited grant requests for FY12 and potentially lead to a disruption in service.

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¹ For FY12, the Literacy Council requested \$55,000 from MCAEL. MCAEL cannot make funding allocations until after the Council approves the budget on May 26. MCAEL staff has already cautioned applicants that they are unlikely to get more than they received in FY11, and could potentially receive less.

From: Marty Stephens [marty@literacycouncilmcmd.org]

Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2011 12:41 PM

To: 'bruce.meier@montgomerycountymd.gov'

Cc: 'eric.carzon@montgomerycountymd.gov'; 'Hamilton, Parker'; 'frankmallon@msn.com'; 'Heather Ritchie'; 'Kim Brown'

Subject: Response to County Council Request--Literacy Council / MCAEL Differentiation

Parker Hamilton and Eric Carzone have advised me that the County Council has requested clarification as to the purpose and operational differences of the Literacy Council of Montgomery County and MCAEL—Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy. While both organizations work to provide English literacy services to adult learners in the county, the Literacy Council provides direct service to adult learners, while MCAEL is an umbrella organization of English literacy providers that provides resources, training, collaborations and advocacy to support its providers, of which we are one of those direct-service providers.

Below is an overview of both organizations outlining who we are and how we go about serving the county's continuously growing community of adult learners in need of basic and ESL literacy skills. While both organizations focus on the same community, each organization has a significantly different function in its efforts to improve the quality of life for the adult learners it serves and those learners' abilities to become active participants in the Montgomery County community.

A copy of a letter from MCAEL to Councilman Leventhal is also attached to help clarify the distinct differences, but linked purposes of the Literacy Council and MCAEL. As noted in that letter, contract funds received from Montgomery County, and administered by MCPL, are used to support LCMC's Basic Literacy and ESL Tutoring Programs, while grant funds from MCAEL are used to support LCMC's ESL Class Program. The Library's support of the tutoring program and MCAEL's support of the ESL Class Program are essential to the continuation of LCMC's efforts to improve the literacy capabilities of people in Montgomery County.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

	Literacy Council of Montgomery County	MCAEL-Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy
Date of Origin	1963	2005
Type of Organization	501(c)(3)—Direct provider of Basic Literacy and ESL Literacy services for adult learners	501(c)(3)—Community coalition of over 70 adult English literacy programs
Mission	To help adults living and working in the county achieve functional levels of reading, writing and speaking English so that they may improve their quality of life and ability to participate in the community. Note: The ultimate goal is to increase literacy, self-sufficiency and workforce readiness.	Dedicated to strengthening the county-wide adult literacy network with resources, training, collaboration and advocacy to support a thriving community and an optimal workforce.
Services / Programs	Provides direct literacy education services to native English speaking illiterate adults and to foreign-born adults with limited English proficiency through: 1. Basic Literacy Tutoring Program —free one-on-one confidential tutoring for native English speaking illiterate adults—provided by LCMC trained volunteer tutors—started in 1963. 2. ESL Tutoring Program —free one-on-one confidential tutoring for foreign-born adults who are Limited English Proficient—provided by LCMC trained volunteer tutors—started in 1967. 3. ESL Class Program —10-week structured classes offering 90 hours of intensive ESL instruction—offered at sites throughout the county in areas of highest need—led by paid	Provides the following programs with two primary goals: (1) strengthening the capacity of adult English literacy service providers to deliver high quality, effective programs that meet the needs of learners; and (2) engaging the broader community in supporting and addressing English literacy. 1. Capacity Building of adult English literacy services through community grants, workshops, technical assistance, networking meetings, resource library, instructor training, awards and job/volunteer postings. 2. Knowledge Center to support English literacy throughout the community—data

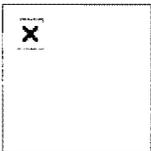
	<p>teachers and volunteer teaching assistants—started in 2008.</p> <p>4. English for Daily Living Classes—8-week class offering 16 hours of “life skills” English literacy instruction to parents of elementary-school students at school locations throughout the county—led by volunteer LCMC-trained instructors—2008.</p> <p>4. Conversation Classes—structured, small group classes for LCMC students to provide opportunity for adult learners to practice literacy skills with other learners—led by LCMC trained volunteers.</p> <p>5. Computer Language Lab—free ESL and Basic Literacy self-guided computer-based instruction for adult learners who are wait listed for a tutor and/or who wish to supplement their literacy education—started in 2007.</p> <p>6. GEDi Online Program—12 week, learner-paced online instruction to prepare adult learners for the GED examination--includes orientation, administration of pre- and post-tests, and the opportunity to take the GED practice test to further ensure preparedness for the actual GED exam—started in 2008.</p> <p>Note: All programs are direct literacy service to adult learners.</p>	<p>collection and analysis, reports and provider directory.</p> <p>3. Advocacy and Outreach through coalition-building, connecting the literacy and larger communities, promotion of adult literacy and policy advocacy at the local, state and national levels.</p> <p>Note—no direct literacy service provided to adult learners.</p>
Basic Literacy Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LCMC is the only organization in Montgomery County providing free, confidential one-on-one tutoring for basic literacy adult learners. ▪ Trained tutors work with students up to the 4th grade reading level. <p>Note: Montgomery College offers Adult Basic Education classes to adult learners with reading skills at the upper elementary levels.</p>	<p>Works with a number of organizations that provide basic literacy service, including LCMC.</p> <p>Note—does not provide direct literacy service to adult learners.</p>
Adults Served	<p>Over 1600 adult learners were served in FY 2010 with 1200 in the one-on-one tutoring program, nearly 300 in the ESL Class Program, and 125 in the English for Daily Living class program.</p> <p>Note: 20% of adult learners served are Basic Literacy and 80% are ESL Literacy.</p>	<p>MCAEL administered 15 grants in FY 2010 to 14 organizations to support Adult ESL programs and capacity building. Over 5,700 learners enrolled in programs funded under these grants, with approximately 4,000 unique individuals served, including LCMC.</p> <p>Through the full coalition of over 70 programs, MCAEL supports over 20,000 adult learners along with 1,500 instructors and staff.</p> <p>Provides the only comprehensive provider directory of literacy services in the County.</p>
Funding Sources	<p>Tutoring Program, English for Daily Living Classes, Conversation Classes and Computer Language Lab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Montgomery County contract * ▪ Private foundation grants 	<p>MCAEL’s Capacity Building Program and Public Engagement Program are supported through a variety of funding sources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Montgomery County Contract*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual contributions ▪ Corporate contributions ▪ Proceeds from fundraising events ▪ Registration fees ▪ United Way, Combined Federal Campaign and Maryland Combined Charity Campaigns <p>ESL Classroom & GEDi Online Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maryland DLLR Adult Education grant ▪ MCAEL grant ▪ Private foundation grants. <p><i>* The contract between Montgomery County and the Literacy Council of Montgomery County has been in effect since 1968 and is for the purpose of providing one-on-one tutoring service for adult learners who lack functional levels of English skills.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foundation Grants Housing Opportunities Commission ▪ Private Foundation Grants ▪ Corporate Contributions ▪ Individual contributions ▪ United Way, Combined Federal Campaign and Maryland Combined Charity Campaigns <p><i>* The contract between Montgomery County and MCAEL provides approximately 70-80% of total funding.</i></p>
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# LITERACY COUNCIL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND, INC.

## FY 11 Budget Reductions In Relation To Program Results

The Literacy Council budget was reduced by \$29,610 or 21% in FY 2011, leaving the organization with a budget of \$111,390 to support its commitment to Montgomery County to provide literacy and ESL services to county residents and workers with a tutoring program. To accomplish the goal of providing a quality tutoring program while dealing with budget reductions, several significant cuts were made to the Literacy Council's budget and overall program, as outlined below:

### FY 11 Budget Reductions

1. **Staff Hours:** A 25 percent reduction was implemented in the number of hours for staff who conduct the volunteer tutoring program, reducing the hours from 140 to 105 per week. This cut affected 5 staff members—2 ESL Coordinators, 1 Basic Literacy Coordinator, 1 Workshop Coordinator and the Deputy Director, who is responsible for oversight of the program. These staff members were part-time employees who were significantly impacted from these cuts, both personally and professionally, as their ability to serve adult literacy learners has been greatly reduced.
2. **New Tutor Orientations:** Due to the reduction in staff hours, LCMC reduced the number of New Tutor Orientations from 9 to 7 per year, which resulted in less prospective volunteer tutors learning about the tutoring program and then signing on to become a tutor. This reduced number of orientation sessions was scheduled more equitably throughout the year, to lessen the number of prospective volunteers who may be lost to other volunteer opportunities in the community.
3. **Tutor Workshops:** The number of Tutor Workshops (2-6 hour sessions each) was reduced from 9 per year to 7 to enable the staff to better manage the tutors coming into the program with their reduced work hours. In addition, new tutors were no longer provided the *Laubach Way to English Level 1 Teacher's Manual*, but are provided with information on handout materials.
4. **English for Daily Living Book Fee:** Instituted a \$15 fee for the student book used in the English for Daily Living Classes in elementary schools. This fee is in addition to the \$15 one-time registration fee that LCMC charges all of its adult learners.
5. **Reduction in Monthly Student Interviews:** The number of students being interviewed and brought into the program each month has been reduced by over 50 percent, to allow adequate time for Coordinators to manage student intake and assessment, student/tutor pairing and over all management of the student/tutor relationship. Each Coordinator has been limited to intake and assess less new students per month, which brings less new students into the program. In the first 6 months of FY 11, 150 new students were brought into the tutoring program, in comparison to 330 in the same time period in FY 10.
6. **Changes to LCMC Library Operations:** a) Instituted a limited loan period for Laubach materials to one year and other materials to shorter time periods; b) Removed student skill books and workbooks from library shelves and placed them in a secure location to allow LCMC to better manage its inventory of books; and c) Advise tutors to download materials from the LCMC website versus incurring copying and mailing charges for those materials.

### FY 11 Tutoring Program Reduction in Impact

1. **Number of Volunteer Tutors Trained:** Due to reductions in staff hours and in the number of training workshops conducted, LCMC is currently training 180 tutors annually versus 300+ trained annually in FY 2009 and before. This greatly reduces the Literacy Council's ability to serve a fast-growing adult learner literacy-needs audience in Montgomery County.

2. **Number of Adult Learners Served:** The number of students in the tutoring program has been reduced from 1030 in FY 10 to an estimated 900 students in FY 11, due to a reduction in the number of new tutors coming into the program. The Council is currently turning away 30 to 35 students per month who request entrance into the program and the wait time for a tutor is now between 6 and 12 months and the interview slots that Coordinators have for student intake/assessment get filled up within the first few business days of each month. LCMC currently has a wait list of over 300 students waiting for a tutor assignment and would have much more, if the tutoring program staff was able to interview and manage more students in the program.
3. **Reduction in Number of Volunteers Employed:** The funding we receive leverages a large, well-trained volunteer workforce. In FY 10 we employed a volunteer staff of 1006, including 815 volunteer tutors, who donated over 53,000 hours of service during the year to county residents and workers through their work with the Literacy Council. As a result of the FY 11 budget cut, we are on target to employ a volunteer staff of 685, including 571 volunteer tutors, an overall reduction of over 30 percent. This translates to fewer students given the opportunity to improve their literacy skills.
4. **Reduced Ability to Refer Students from ESL Classroom Program to Tutoring Program:** In the past, the Council has been able to refer students, whom it is unable to serve in the ESL Classroom program due to extremely low English literacy levels, to the one-on-one tutoring program to best serve student needs. Since there are fewer tutors available, the Council is finding this opportunity to no longer be available in its efforts to serve the English literacy needs of Montgomery County.

#### **Testimonials from Students in LCMC's Tutoring Program**

*My experience is very important, am happy to be part of this program because now I can speak english, am start to ask questions by my self. I can go to my kids school and ask how are they doing, go to the doctor, make an appoiment. I feel so happy because no body has to translator for me. I have to thank to my techer and the program because now I feel different. I can help my kids with their homework. Thank you for this opportunity I appreciate your help.*

A. Alay

*I want to improve my English very sure. I hope I can express my thinkings and explain the ideas exactly and clearly to everybody in English. I also want to made communication with my children's school for a good relationship. I am very appreciate that the Literacy Council gave me the opportunity to learn English with Mrs. Nadya. Learning is great joyce. From Mrs. Nadya, I learned to deal with my children's school. I learned different cultures in U.S.A., Canada and India. She helped me to solve the problems in the life. She always was patient to listen to me, so I was encouraged to tell full story. You can not imagine a toture can be. She was like a wondow, guiding me to English world and bringing the light in.*

Y. Chiang

*I'm so happy of being part of Literacy Council Program. I'm getting many skills learning English. My teacher is a person very pacient with me, I'm learning a lot of English words. I want learn good English for start a college studies, for help to my daughter with her homeworks, and for a get a better job. This program is wonderfull. I will get my goals most faster that I thinked.*

A. Ugalde

*Since 2006 I started learning American English when a friend told me about the Literacy Council Program. She made the subscription for me. In this place I met my teacher Mr. Calvin. He taught with patience and continues teaching me. While I was studying English with Mr. Calvin I took an accounting course and passed with excellent grades. This was fantastic and gave me much more eagerness to learn English. Also in my daily life I feel more comfortable speaking English in my work, in my son's school and simply in the street. To me learning English is very important, because I am living and working in the United States and I would like to speak English fluently.*

Carmen M.

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## Conclusion

The Literacy Council is one of the highest-capacity literacy/ESL programs for adults in Montgomery County and is proud to be one of the most cost-effective as well. While some cost-cutting strategies put in place in FY 11 have improved our effectiveness, many of them have greatly impacted our ability to serve the tremendous literacy needs of our community. With our cost-cutting efforts initiated in FY 10, along with the additional ones implemented in FY 11, we are at the point where we may not be able to effectively serve the needs of our community. We ask that Montgomery County continue its strong support of our efforts, by fully funding our FY12 budget request of \$111,390.

Respectively submitted by:

Marty Stephens  
Executive Director  
Literacy Council of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc.  
April 5, 2011

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**MCAEL**

**Montgomery Coalition for**

**Adult English Literacy**

**MCAEL Board of Directors**

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Non-Profit Consultant

**Briana Gowing, President-Elect**  
Assistant Vice President-External Affairs  
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**Tiffany Heath, Secretary**  
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CEO  
Language Matters

**Marcos Pesquera**  
Executive Director, Center on Health Disparities  
Adventist Healthcare

**Cecilia Rojas**  
Director, Latino Outreach Program  
Community Ministries of Rockville

**Clarice Somersall, Ed.D.**  
Special Assistant to the Senior Vice President for  
Academic and Student Services, Montgomery College

**Jeff Waldstreicher**  
Delegate  
Maryland General Assembly

# The Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy

April 19, 2011

George Leventhal  
100 Maryland Ave.  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Council Member Leventhal,

On behalf of the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL), we are writing to clarify the strategic and funding relationship between MCAEL and the Literacy Council of Montgomery County (LCMC).

As one of the oldest and largest supporters of English literacy in Montgomery County, LCMC has a prominent role within MCAEL's provider network of over 70 English literacy programs. MCAEL is a community coalition in Montgomery County, Maryland, dedicated to strengthening the county-wide adult English literacy network with resources, training, collaborations and advocacy to support a thriving community and an optimal workforce. Our vision is for a community in which all adult residents are employable, engaged and empowered by literacy to achieve their full potential, and in which all local businesses have access to an English literate workforce.

## STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP WITH LCMC

MCAEL relies on LCMC as a cornerstone within the coalition because of its long history and broad reach within the county to match volunteer tutors with adult English learners and offer classes at libraries and schools, which are both key for their accessible locations. Additionally, LCMC mentors other providers that have launched new tutoring programs. LCMC also actively supports and strengthens the network through its participation in provider networking meetings, where such issues as how to transition learners through and between programs are addressed. With LCMC in sound, fiscal condition, LCMC is able to support MCAEL's strategic plan goals to expand the availability of literacy services to residents and strengthen the quality of instruction and training provided throughout the county.

## FUNDING RELATIONSHIP

MCAEL supports an average of 15 literacy programs annually, out of a network of over 70 programs, through disbursement of \$.5 million in county funds. Among them, LCMC receives a grant. Funding distributed through MCAEL leverages existing resources while providing variable levels

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## The Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy

of support for programs – in FY10 for LCMC it was approximately 11% of the classroom ESOL program. Thus, this grant supplements, rather than fully supports, LCMC's English as a Second Language program. Through the grant, MCAEL works with LCMC, as well as other providers, to raise the quality of programming; improve the standards of professional development for volunteer instructors and program staff; provide capacity building support; conduct self-evaluations; and collect data and narrative reports. In other words, the county-funded grant that LCMC receives through MCAEL's grant process supports system-level goals to improve the quality of instruction and programs, while state and federal funds offer base support for LCMC's ESOL classes.

Furthermore, LCMC offers Basic Literacy and ESL tutoring, computer-based literacy and ESOL instruction, and English conversation classes, which are currently supported by county funds that flow through a County contract administered by the library, a different revenue stream than those funds that are administered through MCAEL's grant process. Were the county funds cease to flow for these programs, MCAEL would unlikely be able to offer LCMC substitute support.

MCAEL recognizes that providers within the county take unique approaches, which collectively serve the literacy needs of county residents, with all its diversity in origin, literacy level and geographic location. LCMC existed long before MCAEL was founded in 2005. LCMC's success lies within its comprehensive approach – combining classes (supported by state and federal funds, and supplemented by county grants through MCAEL), Basic Literacy and ESL tutoring, computer-based literacy and ESL instruction, and English conversation classes (supported by the Montgomery County contract and administered through MCPL).

MCAEL supports the full range of LCMC's services because we have found them to be high-quality, culturally competent, and reliably depended upon by county residents.

Sincerely,



Aryani Ong  
Board President  
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