



910 Clopper Road, Suite 205N, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878 (301) 840-1400, Fax (301) 963-3918

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget
Department of Finance, Economic Development Fund
Support for COVID-19 Response – Reopen Montgomery, \$14,000,000
PUBLIC HEARING – July 7, 2020
SUPPORT

The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce supports the \$1.4M special appropriation to provide reopening grants for County businesses that incur reopening expenses to comply with State and County health regulations following the COVID-19 health crisis.

We greatly appreciate the Council's support of businesses throughout the pandemic. Just as the Telework Assistance Program provided valuable assistance to keep businesses work from home throughout the shutdown, this initiative will help businesses reopen their doors in a safe and effective manner.

We certainly support the cautious reopening of businesses in Montgomery County. We appreciate the safety measures required to open up to employees and the general public. However, there are costs involved in reopening. Sometimes significant costs. For some businesses it may be as easy as signage or hand sanitizers, for other businesses it may be a major capital purchase to completely reconfigure their space.

I would request that the application process be similar to the Montgomery County Telework Grant in that there is advanced notice as to when the application is available and that the awarding of grants is on a lottery basis and not a first-come, first-served option. We have learned from the various financial packages that those businesses most in need of the aid, often take longer to get the necessary documentation in order to apply for the grant.

We wholeheartedly support funding to help businesses reopen and thank you for all you are doing to help businesses make it through this crisis.

Thank you.

Marilyn Balcombe
President & CEO
mbalcombe@ggchamber.org
301-922-2951 cell