

Testimony by Mindy Landau
Montgomery County Chapter

Brady United Against Gun Violence

Good afternoon. My name is Mindy Landau and I have lived in Montgomery County for 30 years, and my two children attended Montgomery County Public Schools during this period. I am a co-founder of the Montgomery County Chapter of Brady United Against Gun Violence and a member of the Brady Maryland Executive Committee.

I urge the Council to vote to remove law enforcement resource officers from Montgomery County Schools. There is no current research that supports the idea that SROs are effective at deterring school violence or mass shootings. However, there is research showing that black and brown students are traumatized at the sight of law enforcement officers at their schools, since they are a constant presence in their communities and many young children have peers or family members who have been victims or been exposed to violent crimes. Studies also show that black and brown students are disciplined at higher levels than their white peers, and that armed presence in schools is associated with an increase in middle school discipline rates, a decrease in high school graduation rates, and a decrease in college enrollment.

I urge you to consider replacing each SRO with a mental health professional, such as a licensed clinical social worker, who can meet the needs of students without criminalizing them.