

Bill 16-21
Environmental Sustainability-Building Energy use Benchmarking and
Performance Standards-Amendments

TESTIMONY OF PARIM SHAH

POSITION: SUPPORT

Thank you President Hucker, Vice President Alborno, and members of the Montgomery County Council. My name is Parim Shah and I am a rising 7th Grader at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Middle School. To build a better future for my generation and the ones to come, I encourage you to support Bill 16-21. Our economy, habitats, and everyday lives will be affected by climate change. From Olney to Silver Spring to downtown Rockville our communities will suffer if we don't take swift action to combat climate change. Bill 16-21 promotes racial equity, environmental justice, and a better future.

Climate change will affect Montgomery County's low-income and minority communities disproportionately. Poor infrastructure and pre-existing health conditions contribute to the vulnerability experienced by communities of color. Further, de facto segregation still exists in Montgomery County, clustering low-income residents in places more exposed to climate change. People of color account for 63% of Montgomery County's population, so these issues affect the majority of residents. Obstacles like these make climate change an issue of racial equity. Bill 16-21 addresses this by increasing Building Performance Energy Standards. Many communities that are vulnerable to climate change would greatly benefit from this.

Additionally, the Office of Legislative Oversight estimates Bill 16-21 will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, one of the top causes of climate change. By reducing greenhouse gases, air pollutants are also reduced in Montgomery County, reducing residents' exposure to unhealthy pollutants. As described by the OLO, reducing greenhouse gasses will especially benefit communities of color and low - income communities. Climate change is a real threat to our daily life and reducing greenhouse gasses would help us combat it.

Along with these regulations, I hope Montgomery County also provides financial support for low - income residents and support to mitigate the costs of compliance. This will reduce the financial burden on the residents of Montgomery County while still regulating energy standards.

Bill 16-21 will benefit low-income and communities of color, reduce greenhouse gasses, reduce utility costs, improve job creation, and reduce pollution for Montgomery County residents. I encourage members of the Montgomery County

Council to support Bill 16-21. The next generations are counting on you to do what is right and combat climate change for their future. Thank you.