

Good afternoon. My name is Deborah Miller and I am the Director of Maryland Government and Community Relations for the JCRC of Greater Washington. I am here today in support of Zoning Text Amendment 21-03, Charitable, Philanthropic Institution – Kitchens.

As you know, the JCRC is the umbrella group representing over 100 Jewish social services agencies, synagogues and schools throughout the greater Washington, DC region. One of our highest priorities is to advocate on behalf of our social service institutions that provide non-sectarian services to thousands of Montgomery County residents each year, thereby contributing to creating a vibrant, inclusive, compassionate, and equitable community.

We are particularly proud of Bikur Cholim which provides healthy, culturally appropriate kosher meals to patients and their caregivers for FREE. Last year, the organization served over 2800 meals and are on track to exceed that number in 2021.

We support this ZTA which will allow Bikur Cholim to expand its mission with a kitchen on the premises so it can prepare and cook more meals to distribute to more patients and more hospitals in need. ZTA 21-03 is a win-win for the county.

We thank the lead sponsor of this initiative, Councilmember Andrew Friedson, and his co-sponsor, Councilmember Nancy Navarro, who also worked on the original ZTA, and of course, the entire council for its support of Bikur Cholim's critical work.