

Dear Montgomery County Council,

We are submitting this testimony in regard to the **proposed redistricting map of Montgomery County**.

Our family lives in North Bethesda in the Luxmanor area (in District1). We have been Montgomery County residents for over 50 years.

The proposed redistricting plans for Montgomery County will place the North Bethesda area into a newly gerrymandered district with Silver Spring/Takoma Park.

As is obvious, the map of the two areas shows them to be **completely non-contiguous, unlike any other of the newly drawn districts**.

We have heard many of the reasons cited by the committee in favor of this bow-tie looking configuration, but the most cited is that the 50,000-person population of North Bethesda will fit nicely with the almost 100,000-person population of Silver Spring/Takoma Park to meet the requirement for districts to include approximately 150,000 persons. *This particular argument supports the fact that the lines were deliberately drawn to manipulate the boundaries.*

From almost any perspective, it is obvious that the needs and issues facing North Bethesda are incompatible with the major business development issues of Silver Spring, in particular. The issues most relevant to North Bethesda, especially the explosion of residential development as it impacts our **storm water management problems, traffic and roads, schools, fire and police**, are not the high priority issues impacting Silver Spring and Takoma Park. The high priority issues of North Bethesda are hand-in-hand the same issues of the Bethesda community and even of the Rockville community. We share the same services of schools, fire and police with Bethesda and our contiguous neighbors. *It makes no sense to un-attach North Bethesda from Bethesda with regards to county district representation.*

At a time when all over the country fair and equal representation is under attack by gerrymandering, by passing unduly restrictive voting rules, and by handing over decisions as to whether to certify elections to an unrepresentative state legislature, **Montgomery County should be especially cognizant of gerrymandering our county to create a district where the ability to have our voices heard for equal representation is put at risk.**

This proposed map should NOT BE APPROVED!

Thank you.
Joanne and Martin Severe