

Danuta Krotoski

I am speaking today as a 30-year resident of Montgomery County and a cancer survivor whose daily chemotherapy leaves me immunocompromised and thus at high risk for serious Covid-19 illness. I am grateful that so many residents of Montgomery County have been vaccinated and wear masks thus showing their care and concern for their fellow citizens.

I strongly recommend that the County adopt the amendments to institute vaccination requirements to enter bars, restaurants, recreation centers and other covered establishments and that the County approve the requiring continued wearing of masks in enclosed.

Though vaccines do not provide 100% protection, they have been shown to reduce the amount of infective particles and duration of infectivity thus reducing the potential of infecting others in enclosed environments. Furthermore, wearing of masks has also been shown to reduce the exposure to infective viral particles. At a time of new variants

Though I have taken responsibility to maintain safety by wearing KN95 masks and keeping a safe distance from others, I also have to count on others to maintain safe environments for shopping and for dining and other forms of entertainment. This is especially true as more infective variants have appeared and will continue to appear.

I have visited New York City where my daughter lives and have felt safe attending plays, museum exhibits and even indoor dining because participants must show proof of vaccination and wear masks. These requests have not been onerous in New York and have been shown to be effective in other countries in Europe. I no longer participate in these activities in Montgomery County because I do not feel safe, here, despite my own precautions. Requiring proof of vaccines and wearing masks will make our venues safer for all Montgomery County residents.

Many previous speakers have given the impression that providing proof of vaccination is an imposition which it is not (this is not protected by HIPPA), yet places where this requirement is in place such as New York or Europe, citizens understand that this is one important way of reducing the impact of the pandemic and that each of us need to play a part in order to protect all our residents.