

APPROVED



COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Friday, March 25, 2022

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland convened via video conference at 9:30 A.M. on Friday, March 25, 2022.

PRESENT

Councilmember Gabe Albornoz, President
Councilmember Andrew Friedson
Councilmember Sidney Katz
Councilmember Evan Glass, Vice President
Councilmember Tom Hucker
Councilmember Craig Rice
Councilmember Hans Riemer

ABSENT

Councilmember Will Jawando
Councilmember Nancy Navarro

The President in the Chair.

SUBJECT: Meeting with U.S. Senator Ben Cardin

Senator Cardin, in his opening remarks, stated that the two most challenging and important issues facing Congress are Putin's war with Ukraine, and the confirmation of Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson, who he said is extremely qualified for the position. He stated that President Biden's priorities are the priorities for Maryland's delegation and include restoring the United States' global leadership, getting COVID under control, and rebuilding the Country to become fairer and more competitive. Mr. Cardin noted that Montgomery County has received over \$442 million in COVID relief funds, and an additional \$389 million from the Department of Education to provide essential services. He noted the need to get inflation under control but expressed the view that the underpinnings of the economy are strong. He discussed the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill, which includes \$4 billion for Maryland for roads and bridges and \$2 billion for transit improvement, and includes funding for broadband improvements, water infrastructure, and \$238 million for the Chesapeake Bay program. He discussed the \$1.5 trillion 2022 Omnibus Appropriation Bill, which includes funding for federal agencies and the federal workforce; and now includes

an earmark process, which includes funding for the City of Rockville's emergency power generation project.

Responding to questions from Councilmembers, Senator Cardin noted the difficulty in getting a "Build Back Better" package through Congress, but that he believes a Pre-K program and affordable childcare would eventually be included in a final bill, but is not optimistic about the inclusion of a child credit. He noted the FY22 Omnibus Bill included support for local federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and commented on the urgent need to approve additional funding for COVID therapeutics as current funding would be depleted by June, and that the administration is seeking an additional \$22 billion for COVID relief. He is working to replenish the Restaurant Revitalization fund and expressed the hope that funding would be added to the next COVID relief package. He is working to extend waivers for child nutrition and to enact legislation to make permanent the changes made during the pandemic to provide funding for school nutrition programs and telehealth services. Noting that over 10 million Ukrainians have been displaced to date due to the war, he said President Biden would be pushed on immigration issues. They are working with the Small Business Administration to provide venture capital funds targeted to small and minority-owned businesses, adding they would continue to reach out to small businesses who really need assistance from the federal government.

This is an accurate account of the meeting:



Judy Rupp
Clerk of the Council