

Testimony of Mitchell Tropin
Executive Vice President of SEIU Local 500
Co-director of the Montgomery College Part-Time Faculty Union
On the FY 2023 Operating Budget
April 19, 2023

Good evening, Council President and members of the county council. My name is Mitchell Tropin. I am executive vice president of SEIU Local 500 and I am co-director of the Montgomery College Part Time Faculty Union, which is affiliated with Local 500.

I want to urge this council to fully support Montgomery College's proposed budget for the next fiscal year. This council has been a strong supporter of MC over the years and the Council was especially supportive during the pandemic. We thank you for that.

Looking forward to 2023 and beyond, one of the outcomes of the COVID pandemic has been a generation of young people who want more than minimum wage jobs or careers with limited promise of advancement. MC stands ready to help those young and not so young people find jobs and occupations that provide bright futures and better outcomes.

There's another way to describe what MC is working to achieve. Most everybody supports spending taxpayer money for infrastructure.

Fully supporting Montgomery College's fiscal 2023 budget is a way to fund an infrastructure of a different variety.

At MC, we build:

- roads to better paying careers that helps the county's economy,
- construct bridges to middle class lives where people can afford homes and support families and

- develop highways for students to achieve their dreams. That is no small order.

In working to help to build these pathways to brighter futures, MC is always looking for ways to turn those paths into super expressways.

For example, the college is working hard to build relationships with four-year institutions across the U.S. so students can transfer more easily. Students are realizing the huge financial advantage of two years of MC, followed by two or three years at a university.

That is a super-highway to the future without expensive luxury lanes.

Montgomery College also is committed to giving students real choices between attending face to face classes on a campus or taking courses online. We understand that students learn differently and offering this choice leaves no student behind or in a position where they cannot succeed.

I am particularly excited by plans to develop an education center in East County that I hope will become a full-service campus in years to come.

Finally, no infrastructure project can be successful without good people involved in the planning, building and operation of the project. In the case of MC, we have outstanding faculty who go the extra mile to help students succeed.

In many of the courses, coaches and tutors are assigned to give the instructor an extra helping hand in guiding students to successful course completions.

I further want to urge the council to provide funding that will ensure all faculty, coaches, tutors and staff receive the pay raises they so richly deserve.

In conclusion, this fall when our campuses are fully open, I hope you visit an MC campus. And after seeing students going to class, interacting with other students and faculty, you can say to yourself ``I helped build that.'' And you deservedly can feel very proud.

Thank you very much.