

"Good day,

My name is Justin. I'm a middle school teacher writing this as an individual supporting proposed rent stabilization.

As an educator who wants the best possible outcomes for his students, it is important to me to be able to live in the same county where I work. This allows me to attend more evening events at my school, building relationships and integrating myself into the local community. Thanks to the previously existing stabilization measures on the books, I have been able to do just that. Not only have the current stabilization measures allowed me more opportunity to connect with my school community, but it has also allowed me additional financial benefit. I can afford to live in an area that will enable me to not own a car as public transportation is competitive with driving - and much less stressful.

A large rent increase that prices me out of my current home would likely price me out of Montgomery County. This would cause me to not be a part of my school community as I currently am. The long commutes I see so many other people already priced out of Montgomery County make every day would become my reality. Just as they leave immediately at the end of the duty day to beat the traffic to Howard County or Frederick County, I would find myself doing the same thing. Furthermore, I would be forced to take on the expenses of car ownership, causing additional potential financial hardships. As I have witnessed with other former colleagues, these hardships and stresses caused them to leave the teaching profession altogether. It is not unreasonable to think that there is a direct correlation between a person being able to afford to live in the county they work in and a person choosing to find other employment.

Rent stabilization methods would remove this uncertainty, allowing for predictable increases to be planned for and budgeted around. This makes it much more likely that people like myself would be able to remain in the homes and communities they now enjoy. While I speak for myself here today, I am sure that other educators feel like I do and would be similarly impacted by significant rent increases. Thank you.