

Good evening! My name is Deborah Kimmel and I'm asking you to support a low cost, high volume spay/neuter clinic accessible to Montgomery County residents.

This year, Montgomery County's animal shelter will take in about 4,000 dogs and cats with a \$4M operating budget for the shelter alone. This budget is for intake, care and disposition of dogs, cats and other unwanted animals. It doesn't include animal control field officers or veterinary care. That's about a thousand dollars average in taxpayer dollars to shelter an unwanted animal.

You know how much it costs to spay/neuter a cat or dog? With our proposal, about a hundred bucks. A hundred bucks to prevent unwanted litters of cats and dogs that end up at the shelter costing an average thousand dollars each. Operating full time, our clinic can spay/neuter more than 3,000 dogs and cats a year.

Our proposal leverages a free surgically equipped mobile clinic, which was visited by Councilmember Mink as part of a recent trip to Philadelphia. Thank you, Councilmember Mink!

Our clinic will reach out to residents who live with challenges that impede pet ownership and public animal welfare. Challenges that are financial, mobility, transportation, language, literacy or just everyday struggles of raising a family on a tight budget.

Importantly, our clinic will be compliant and consistent with county codes and protocols.

Councilmembers received a report on the county shelter audit completed a few months ago. The report noted that shelter intakes are decreasing across the US but increasing here in Montgomery County. The report found that Montgomery County should be spay/neutering about 5 thousand cats and dogs every year to decrease shelter intake of

unwanted animals. This is far more than the 400 surgeries covered by a small grant from the shelter. Current small-scale spay/neuter programs lack capacity or are too expensive to provide this service effectively across our county.

Our proposal was developed in collaboration with the Office of Animal Services. It was approved by the outgoing Director Tom Koenig. It was part of last year's budget but eliminated by a legislative analyst. We look forward to again approving this initiative and working with the incoming Director, Caroline Hairfield.

I am respectfully asking you to advocate for funding spay/neuter as part of Animal Services budget.

Thank you!