

Dear County Council Chairman and County Council Members,

My name is Shaza Ahmed. I am residing in Montgomery County, Gaithersburg since 2016. I am a single mother with 4 children, one of them with disability. I have been struggling for years to find an affordable house that me and my children can call home. In 2021 I was finally being offered a housing choice voucher and I struggled to find owner to rent a house from. I applied for 100 of houses but all turned my application down. I reach out to so many places that can help me with finding the suitable home that the owner would accept me as a renter with the housing choice voucher. Me and my family were being homeless for several weeks until we found out an owner that would accept the voucher.

I would encourage you to support projects like the Affordable Housing Acquisition and Preservation.

This project provides funding for acquisition and/or renovation of properties for the purpose of preserving or increasing the County's affordable housing inventory. The County may purchase properties or assist not-for-profit, tenant, or for-profit entities, or Housing Opportunities Commission with bridge financing to purchase and renovate properties. The monies may be used to purchase properties that are offered to the County under the Right of First Refusal Law or otherwise available for purchase. A portion of the units in these properties must serve households with incomes that are at or below incomes eligible for the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program. A priority should be given to rental housing.

- **Nonprofit Housing Preservation Fund:**

- The Montgomery County Council has recently approved nearly **\$20 million** to fund the new **Nonprofit Housing Preservation Fund**. This initiative, introduced by Council President Andrew Friedson, aims to provide capital lending to nonprofit housing developers. The goal is to **preserve existing affordable housing**.
- It is expected that more than **4,500 affordable units** will be preserved once the Nonprofit Housing Preservation Fund reaches its full funding goal of **\$50 million**.
- Montgomery County's initial investment of **\$20 million** will help preserve over **1,800 units** of affordable housing within the next year.
- This historic funding reflects the county's commitment to accessible housing options for residents, especially in the face of the ongoing housing crisis.

- The Nonprofit Housing Preservation Fund is modeled after the successful **Housing Production Fund**, which has been replicated in other jurisdictions across the nation.
- At-Risk Affordable Housing Units:
 - According to the **2020 Planning Department Preservation Study**, Montgomery County is at risk of losing **7,000 to 11,000 unrestricted, naturally occurring affordable housing units** by 2030.
 - The creation of the Nonprofit Preservation Fund is a significant step in addressing this challenge and preserving affordable housing options for the community.
- The HOC plays a crucial role in financing affordable housing developments. They use funds to construct mixed-income, mixed-use new developments in Montgomery County.
- These developments include units where at least **30%** are income-restricted. Specifically, **20%** of the units are affordable at or below **50% of the Area Median Income (AMI)**, and **10%** are at or below **Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) income limits (65% - 70% AMI)**.

I urge you to support and approve and to allocate additional funding for housing projects. Affordable housing is a critical need, and by investing in these projects, we can make a tangible impact on the lives of our fellow citizens.

Thank you so much for opportunity to share this very important story.