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**Testimony before Montgomery County Council in
support of the *Resolution to Approve Special
Appropriations to the FY26 Operating Budget***

President Stewart, Vice President Jawando, and Council members:

I am Larry Bram, Senior Vice President at Easterseals DC MD VA , a 30+ year resident of Montgomery County, and a Board member of the Children's Opportunity Alliance. I'm here today to thank you for your support of this Special Appropriations Bill and urge you to support its passage.

As Nonprofit Montgomery's recently released Federal Impact Supplement Report highlights, these are incredibly trying times for nonprofit organizations. Government shutdowns, cuts to key programs, and uncertainty are all causing deep concern even as demand for services dramatically increases. Let me provide two examples from Easterseals. We have about 10 low-income families that want to enroll their children at our Silver Spring Child Development Center but are unable to because of the current freeze on Child Care Scholarships from the State of Maryland. That's 10 parents who must stay home with their children rather than be a part of the Montgomery County workforce, with the benefits that would bring to both their family and our economy. A second example is our Adult Medical Day Center. About 75% of our participants – about 50 people -- are funded through Medicaid. The upcoming cuts to Medicaid don't specifically eliminate this funding, but as a Home & Community-Based Service, it is an optional program under federal regulations. As the state tries to incorporate less funding into its calculus, this entire industry is at risk of being cut or eliminated. Again, these are real families who will have to make difficult decisions if this service is not available to them. This is what keeps me awake at night.

This appropriation to provide additional direct funding to key human service programs as well as provide funding for innovative infrastructure-building projects is absolutely needed. Projects like the Children's Opportunity Alliance and the new county Child Care Shared Services Pilot clearly demonstrate the power of sectoral leveraged solutions. I hope some of this fund will be used to fund similar sector-based and cross-sector pilots to solve really difficult problems.

The need is immediate, so I hope the systems will be in place get these funds to the organizations that can maximize their impact as soon as possible.

Thank you.