



Date: March 6, 2026

To: Montgomery County Council

From: Housing Justice Montgomery

Subject: SUPPORT for Bill 8-26, the Anti-Algorithmic Price Fixing Act

Dear **Council President and Members** of the Montgomery County Council,

Thank you to the Montgomery County Council for considering the **Anti-Algorithmic Price Fixing Act (Bill 8-26)**, sponsored by Councilmember Jawando, and co-sponsored by Councilmembers Evans and Mink. Housing Justice Montgomery and our members strongly support the passage of this bill with no weakening amendments.

We are a coalition led by people experiencing housing challenges to support each other and drastically improve housing affordability, safety, and overall quality. Our members struggle with unaffordable rents, and many of us have been evicted or experienced homelessness due to unaffordable rents. After being evicted, it is extremely difficult to find housing due to high rents across the county.

We support this bill to prevent what should already be unlawful price fixing and collusion between landlords that result in higher rents for tenants. These algorithms and software are already under major scrutiny across the country as well as in our own state assembly. We applaud the County Council taking steps to protect renters sooner. If we are going to rely largely on the private market to supply housing, as we are now, then we welcome changes that can better regulate that market.

However, we want to draw attention to the fact that algorithms and software are not needed for landlords to collude indirectly with one another. All a landlord needs to do is look at other properties raising their rents, and due to the inelastic demand of housing, despite no improvements to service or the property they can raise their rents too. Again, we welcome additional protections for renters against an unfair market, but we think the council needs to also begin considering more transformative legislation aimed at seriously tackling the housing crisis at its core.

In the meantime though, we believe that this bill can prevent the worst kinds of widespread collusion and safeguard renters from rampant extortion by corporate landlords. So again, we ask that you support Bill 8-26 with no weakening amendments.

In partnership,
Housing Justice Montgomery

CASA

Democratic Socialists of America (Montgomery County)

Housing Justice Montgomery

Jews United for Justice

Shepherd's Table

Progressive Maryland

Everyday Canvassing

Enclave Tenant Association

