

April 10, 2026

Re: Support for Developmental Disabilities Supplement in FY27 Operating Budget

Honorable President Fani-González and Montgomery County Council Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Council about the FY27 Operating budget, specifically regarding the County Supplement for disability service providers (“DD-supplement”). Jubilee Association of Maryland is a residential service provider in Montgomery County and a member of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee (InterACC), a coalition of 41 providers.

Recognizing budget challenges across the county and state, **we respectfully ask the Council to include an additional 3% increase to the County Executive’s proposed 2.5% increase in the DD-supplement.** This would bring the total to **\$23,573,825** and would reflect the rise in the cost of living and the expansion of services. For close to 50 years, the Montgomery County Government has provided a match to leverage state-funded services for county residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These critical funds are paid directly to local provider agencies licensed and funded by the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) to supplement Direct Support Professional (DSP) wages.

Despite meaningful progress made with support of the county, the supplement has not accounted for a growth factor since FY22, while the number of people supported and the number of DSP hours have increased. In addition, the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) reimbursements to providers are decreasing for the second year in a row. In FY26, DDA reduced the geographic differential rate by about 5% for Montgomery County and other identified counties, directly impacting our ability to operate in a high-cost environment to support Montgomery County residents. In FY27, DDA is set to make an additional 2% rate cut to all services and a 4% cut to Personal Support Services. Meanwhile, federal Medicaid funding remains precarious.

The supplement enables Jubilee to pay \$2 per hour more to our 400+ DSPs, who support over 150 people in residential services. That increase impacts employee retention and service quality.

DSPs provide in-person, individualized daily support in people's homes and communities. This may include assistance with participating in community activities, emotional and behavioral support, taking medication, maintaining personal hygiene, managing money, developing relationships, and more. For example, one Jubilee DSP has helped the person he supports with his sporting events and practices, vacationing, and joining weekly mass, where the client is an altar server.

DSPs are vital in helping people with disabilities live, work, and thrive in Montgomery County, and the County supplement is instrumental in ensuring people can earn a living wage in this demanding but rewarding line of work. Thank you for your consideration and continued support.

Sincerely,
Steve Keener
Executive Director