

April 3, 2026

Dear Montgomery County Council:

My name is Kifle Gebremedhin age 78 and I care for my 73-year-old spouse, Tsedal Yeshak, who has breast cancer, diabetes, and dementia. My wife depends on me to care for her 24 hours a day. I have been benefiting from respite as it is the only break, I get from caregiving. I have worked all my life, and I am not eligible for any service other than respite care which, however, is never enough for it is 140 hours only. I recently learned that due to cost containments, the respite program is reducing the number of hours from 140 to 120. I am deeply concerned about this as the ability to step away briefly, rest, and take care of my own needs and to continue caregiving will further be jeopardized. A limit of 120 hours per year is simply not enough and would put added strain on me and so many other families already doing their best. I do not have the financial means to place my wife in assisted living and the only relief I get is from the respite program. My wife does not move, speak or feed herself. I feed her myself. She wouldn't open her mouth to anybody else. That was what happened when she was in the hospital. So, I cannot be away from her. Despite all the difficulties, what I do for her is the least I can do. She took care of me for 43 years. More importantly, I love her dearly. I am hoping you will be able to increase the hours based on the needs of individuals because those hours are life savers for me, which I am very grateful for.

Thank You for your consideration.

Kifle Gebremedhin, husband of and caregiver for Tsedal Yeshak

Kifle Gebremedhin