

Good afternoon.

My name is Ramaya Jackson, and I am a resident of Takoma Park, and I am employed locally, in the retail industry. I work selling suits and tuxes and this is a very busy time of year for me. It's prom season and heading into wedding season, so I have many customer appointments right now. So please excuse my absence. I enjoy my work helping people create memories in the right outfit for their special occasions and life events.

I'd like to thank this County Council for the opportunity to speak today about my personal experience with NCCF's Affordable Housing program, and why you must continue to fund programs like this in Montgomery County at their current level to ensure that more people can continue to live safely in this community.

I have been in my current home for three years now, but before that I was living in Rockville. I am not the type of person to dwell on or revisit the past.

My life now is much more peaceful. My mental, physical, and emotional health has changed drastically since I found my current home because I no longer need to worry about affording a place to live. The payments are affordable, not too high, but right in the middle. I can now use the money I earn to get groceries and pay for other necessities without having to worry about affording rent.

This program is so important because there are people out there, right now, that are not safe. They may be trapped in an unhealthy or dangerous living situation. If they can look towards affordable housing, they will have a place to be safe and rest, without being worried about their survival; and take care of their family.

It is hard to find a spot in this County, and it is nearly impossible if you are not wealthy. Good quality places to live in safe areas should be affordable for everyone. I wake up with a sense of peace and clarity.

Thank you!