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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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PUBLIC HEARING :
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS :
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A hearing in the above-entitled matter was held on
October 22, 2014, commencing at 7:30 p.m. in the Council
Office Building, Seventh Floor, 100 Maryland Avenue,
Rockville, Maryland.

- MERCY JOSEPH, Chairman
- WYNDELL BANKS
- DEBRA ROANE
- MEKIA BARCLIFF
- DENISE JOHNSON
- JUDITH JAMISON
- JASPER COX
- MARIA DE LA CRUZ MAGOWAN
- ALTHEA GREY-MCKENZIE
- DEBORAH ROZELL
- BARBARA WILSON
- ANDREW FARRELL
- SULA TYLER

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MS. JOSEPH: Good evening, and welcome to the
3 Community Development Advisory Committee's annual public
4 hearing.. I'm Mercy Joseph, Chairman of the Community
5 Development Advisory Committee. The Community Development
6 Advisory Committee is appointed by the County Executive to
7 assist him in planning related to community development
8 activities and is charged with the responsibility for
9 reviewing the community development block grant applications
10 and making recommendations for funding awards. To assist
11 the Committee in making its recommendations, this public
12 hearing will consider testimony from residents and
13 interested groups on community development needs in
14 Montgomery County and related to the County's past
15 performance in meeting community development needs. The
16 Committee will also accept written testimony from
17 individuals or organizations that do not wish to make oral
18 presentations. Written testimony should be submitted to the
19 Division of Community Development no later than 4:30 p.m. on
20 November 24, 2014 for consideration by the Committee. Each
21 individual wishing to speak should hold his or her comments
22 to three minutes and persons representing organizations will
23 have five minutes for presentations. The Committee will be
24 given the opportunity to ask questions of each speaker after
25 their presentation. Please remember that tonight's

1 testimony is to address community development needs and past
2 performance and not specifics of any application under
3 consideration for funding. So please restrict your oral
4 comments to just non-application related comments.
5 Applicants for funding will be contacted next week and given
6 a separate opportunity to meet with members of this
7 Committee.

8 At this point I would like to ask members of the
9 Community Development Advisory Committee to each of you
10 introduce yourselves and state the geographical location of
11 your residence. By turn we can start from there.

12 MR. BANKS: Good evening, my name is Wyndell Banks
13 and I live in Silver Spring.

14 MS. ROANE: Good evening, my name is Debra Roane
15 and I live in North Bethesda.

16 MS. BARCLIFF: Good evening, my name is Mekia
17 Barcliff and I live in North Bethesda.

18 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening, my name is Denise
19 Johnson and I live in Gaithersburg.

20 MS. JAMISON: Good evening, my name is Judith
21 Jamison, I live in Germantown.

22 MR. COX: Good evening, I'm Jasper Cox. I live in
23 Silver Spring.

24 MS. JOSEPH: I'm Mercy Joseph, I live in Potomac.

25 MS. DE LA CRUZ MAGOWAN: I'm Mary Cruz Magowan,

1 from downtown Bethesda.

2 MS. GREY-MCKENZIE: Good evening, I'm Althea Grey-
3 McKenzie from Silver Spring.

4 MS. ROZELL: I'm Deborah Rozell. I'm from
5 Bethesda.

6 MS. WILSON: I'm Barbara Wilson. It's debatable.
7 I'm from Rockville.

8 MR. FARRELL: Andrew Farrell. Silver Spring.

9 MS. TYLER: Good evening. I'm Sula Tyler and I'm
10 from North Bethesda.

11 MS. JOSEPH: Okay. We will now open the public
12 hearing on community development needs. Ms. Luanne Korona,
13 Chief, Community Development Division in the Department of
14 Housing and Community Affairs regrets she was unfortunately
15 unable to be here tonight. But she would like to have her
16 testimony read into the record. Matt?

17 MR. GREEN: My name is Matthew Green. I work for
18 the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community
19 Affairs and I'm also a staff liaison to this committee.
20 Funds from the Community Development Block Grant Home
21 Investment Partnership and Emergency Solutions Grant
22 programs which are federal programs are awarded to
23 Montgomery County annually. The CDBG and Home programs are
24 administered by the county's Department of Housing and
25 Community Affairs while the ESG program is administered

1 under an agreement with the Department of Health and Human
2 Services. The amount of money allocated for these programs
3 by Congress has been cut in recent years. For the county's
4 fiscal year 2016, beginning July 1, 2015, we expect to
5 receive about the same amount of funding as we were awarded
6 for this year. This would mean approximately 4.2 million in
7 CDBG and 1.4 million in home funds and 279,000 in ESG. In
8 the past we received more with CDBG and Home funding reduced
9 by 20 percent since fiscal year 2010 and ESG reduced from a
10 high of 400,000 received in fiscal year 13. While federal
11 funding has been reduced, the county's community development
12 needs continue to grow. This money is being used to
13 revitalize older commercial and residential neighborhoods,
14 and to help low and moderate income residents in the
15 creation and preservation of affordable housing and support
16 the activities of nonprofit organizations providing a wider
17 range of services benefitting lower income residents. The
18 economy, while improving, is still not as robust as we would
19 all like. Montgomery County is a desirable place to live
20 but many residents cannot find affordable housing and
21 without the resources to identify or obtain all the services
22 they need for themselves or their loved ones to thrive. All
23 of these federal funds are used to assist lower income
24 residents of the county and each has its own set of
25 regulatory requirements that must be met. For example, the

1 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires
2 that county CDBG funds be allocated in areas or for projects
3 or activities that directly benefit people with low and
4 moderate incomes. In Montgomery County currently, a family
5 of four with an income of \$68,500 or less meets the income
6 threshold. In addition the cities of Rockville and Takoma
7 Park participate with Montgomery County in implementing CDBG
8 activities and each carries out the citizen participation
9 process to determine which activities best suit their
10 community development needs. The Home Program funds are
11 primarily provided as loans to developers for the
12 acquisition, construction and/or rehabilitation of housing,
13 affordable to low and moderate income residents and
14 emergency solution grant funds are used for assistance to
15 persons who are homeless or who are at risk of becoming
16 homeless. A more detailed explanation of all three programs
17 as well as information regarding community development needs
18 can be found in the consolidated plan for Montgomery County
19 as posted on the department's website. In fact, testimony
20 here tonight begins the process of identifying needs and
21 will be reflected in the development of a new five-year
22 consolidated plan, the document that creates a need
23 assessment, market analysis and strategic plan for
24 addressing priority needs. Montgomery County also works
25 closely with the Office of Human Rights and other

1 stakeholders to affirmatively further fair housing in the
2 county. The county has made progress in addressing
3 previously identified impediments to fair housing but more
4 needs to be done. Later this evening, you will be hearing
5 more about fair housing needs from several of our speakers.
6 Overall, meeting the needs for affordable housing, vibrant
7 commercial areas and support services for our most
8 vulnerable populations continue to be high priorities. The
9 creation of affordable housing sufficient to meet demand,
10 the need to provide realistically appropriate, culturally
11 sensitive services to our increasingly diverse county
12 residents, especially services required by an aging
13 population and others with special needs including the
14 homeless, veterans, persons with disabilities and youth are
15 ongoing challenges. This hearing will provide you with
16 additional insights into community development needs and
17 serve as a forum for comment upon past performance and
18 meeting those needs. On behalf of the Department, I commend
19 each of you for your willingness to volunteer and extend
20 thanks for Director Rick Nelson for your service on this
21 Committee. Thank you.

22 MS. JOSEPH: Okay. Now I will read out the names
23 of you speakers and I announce the names, if you could state
24 your name, address and organization you're representing and
25 then the Committee will after your presentation, the

1 Committee will have, if they have any questions, we can
2 address them. So Kim Ball. Is Kim Ball here?

3 MS. BALL: Here. Want me to come up?

4 MS. JOSEPH: State your name and address and
5 organization.

6 MS. BALL: Good evening. My name is Kim Ball. I
7 actually represent Montgomery County Department of Health
8 and Human Services, Special Needs Housing. I'm the
9 administrator for homeless services and I was asked to give
10 you an overview of our populations, homeless population in
11 Montgomery County. Each year we participate in what we call
12 a homeless point in time count. In 2014, this was done in
13 January, which was a very cold winter this past year. Our
14 homeless count went down to 891 from 1,004 in 2013. This 11
15 percent decrease could be due to some changes in our
16 continuum of care which included an increase in our
17 permanent supportive housing which is geared towards
18 vulnerable adults, increase in our Veteran Affairs
19 Supportive Housing, known as VASH. But it could also be an
20 indirect cost or incorrect, indirect effect by the frigid
21 weather. We collaborated with the police and outreach teams
22 to go out to hot spots encampments and reach out to people
23 that were unsheltered. But because of the frigid
24 temperatures last year which were -20 degrees, we did not
25 find a lot of people out in the cold. So our increase of a

1 little bit of sheltered persons went to 4 percent. Overall,
2 though, our numbers went down. Our total number of families
3 in shelters also went down from 366 in 2013 to 288 in 2014.
4 Our homeless population continues to suffer from multiple
5 disabilities considering chronic substance abuse, severe
6 mental illness, chronic health conditions. We saw a slight
7 increase with our numbers of physically disabled persons and
8 with our families with domestic violence. During this year
9 we have also increased our numbers to provide rapid
10 rehousing services for our families and those are twenty
11 units that will be provided for families that are low
12 income. We're also focusing on that youth population which
13 is 18 to 25. We're utilizing emergency solutions grants for
14 prevention and for rapid rehousing and we're also housing,
15 we're also holding a homeless resource day which is a
16 collaboration that we have with the City of Gaithersburg,
17 and that will be on November 13, 2014. That will provide
18 over 60 vendors that allows us to work with our homeless
19 people that are coming in to get them IDs, resources,
20 connect them with benefits and also hopefully connect them
21 with opportunities for shelter. Our gaps in our system
22 continue. As has already been stated, employment is a major
23 gap in our system. The other one is not just affordable
24 housing but low income housing and additional childcare
25 subsidies for our families that are working in minimum or

1 low wage jobs, do not have sufficient funds for childcare
2 and so they have to have that balance of which ones do they
3 provide. Any questions?

4 MR. BANKS: Is there a reason why you do the count
5 in the wintertime as opposed to when the weather's nicer?
6 Just curious.

7 MS. BALL: The count is actually done in
8 collaboration throughout the state and throughout the
9 country. And it is a requirement of our federal Housing and
10 Urban Development and they choose the time frame.

11 MR. BANKS: Thank you.

12 MS. BALL: Thank you.

13 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you. Rob Goldman?

14 MR. GOLDMAN: Good evening. My name's Robert
15 Goldman. I'm president of Montgomery Housing Partnership.
16 And I appreciate the opportunity to testify. Sixteen years
17 ago I was sitting in your shoes, in your seats as a member
18 of the CDAC Committee, so I appreciate and understand the
19 commitment of time that you put into this. As I said, I'm
20 president of Montgomery Housing Partnership and our mission
21 is to preserve and extend quality affordable housing in
22 Montgomery County. And our approach to that is really a
23 comprehensive approach in which we're not only housing
24 people but we're empowering the families that live there at
25 our properties and strengthening the neighborhoods around

1 where affordable housing is located. Through these
2 strategies, we have developed almost 1,400 quality
3 affordable homes in Montgomery County and provide preschool
4 and afterschool programs to more than 300 county children
5 and work directly with various neighborhoods including Long
6 Branch, Glenmont and Montgomery Village.

7 The need for affordable housing in the county is
8 acute and plays a critical role in the success of Montgomery
9 County residents. Two recent Washington Post articles
10 highlight the need for affordable housing in this area. One
11 recent survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that
12 those living in the D.C. area spend more on housing and
13 housing-related costs than people living anywhere else in
14 the country, even more than those in San Francisco and New
15 York City. A second article found that in 2000, in
16 Montgomery County in the year 2000, there were no census
17 tracts with more than 18 percent of the households making
18 under the poverty level. And now today there are 12 census
19 tracts meeting that criteria. Furthermore as of last year,
20 44 percent of the renters in the county were only earning
21 \$50,000 or less meaning that at most they could afford is
22 \$1250 a month on housing costs, while the average rent in
23 the county is over \$1400 a month. A recent national survey
24 was conducted to understand what happens when people spend
25 too much on housing and more than half the Americans

1 surveyed had to make at least one trade-off in the last
2 three years in order to afford their housing. These include
3 no longer saving for retirement, taking on second jobs at
4 the expense of family time, accumulating credit card debt,
5 cutting back on healthcare. These trade-offs not only put a
6 strain on the individual families but increase the strain on
7 the safety network. At the same time that the demand is
8 projected to increase, Montgomery County is also losing its
9 supply of affordable housing. Between 2000 and 2008, the
10 number of units affordable to households making 60 percent
11 or less of the median fell by 16 percent, representing a
12 loss of 18,000 affordable rental units. Montgomery County
13 Planning Department estimates that there is a shortage of
14 about 43,000 to 50,000 units of affordable housing. This
15 shortage is especially acute for our families. Also of
16 concern to us is the sort of need for educational and
17 educational attainment. A quarter of Montgomery County's
18 population is younger than 20 years old. Programs such as
19 early childhood learning, afterschool enrichment and
20 vocational training are critical to ensuring that our youth
21 are prepared to move into the workforce. Thirteen percent
22 of Montgomery County Public School students are not
23 graduated from high school. Additionally 34 percent of
24 students participate in the free and reduced price meals.
25 To put it another way, almost 51,000 children live in homes

1 where there is a struggle to put food on the table each day.
2 As a county, we must be more innovative to support our
3 families and their need for quality affordable housing and
4 the supports for impactful educational opportunities. Thank
5 you for this opportunity to testify and my thoughts on some
6 of the needs, the community development needs. I welcome
7 any opportunity for follow-up discussions. Thank you.

8 MS. JOSEPH: Any questions?

9 MS. DE LA CRUZ MAGOWAN: I have a question. Do
10 you have any housing and transportation collaboration?
11 Because we all know that it's cheaper to live farther from
12 the business centers and probably would help your
13 institution to get some agreement, some collaboration with
14 transportation in Montgomery County so these people could
15 have the opportunity to have a home which is cheaper but at
16 the same time be able to go to work.

17 MR. GOLDMAN: We don't. It's a great point and
18 it's a struggle. You know, to afford affordable housing, I
19 think what we see is people either live further out as
20 you're mentioning and leads to our transportation and
21 clogging of our streets or people live in overcrowded
22 situations, you know, two or three families living in two-
23 bedroom apartments or one-bedroom apartments. Or they live
24 in really unsafe conditions. Or they are, you know, some
25 people are just grabbing a couch somewhere just to survive.

1 So these are difficult situations that families face and
2 unfortunately we don't have any easy answers. But it's a
3 good point and something worth considering, is there some
4 transportation mechanisms that make at least that part
5 cheaper?

6 MS. GREY-MCKENZIE: I have a question. Thank you
7 so much. I just wanted to know what areas or regions you
8 cover?

9 MR. GOLDMAN: So we're county-wide. So we own
10 properties throughout the county. Much of our -- so we own,
11 as I said, 1400 units throughout the county. Much of what
12 we are own are larger apartment buildings and many of those
13 are down county. But we also, you all may be familiar with
14 the MPDU program, the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit
15 program where any building that's built in the county, for
16 profit, nonprofit, 12-1/2 to 15 percent of the units have to
17 be set aside as affordable. Not to go into too much detail,
18 but 60 percent of those units are sold as home ownership and
19 40 percent are sold as rental units. Within that 40
20 percent, a small portion is offered to nonprofits. And so
21 we own about 125 unit MPDUs which tend to be upcounty. We
22 also have just bought two buildings in Gaithersburg. So we
23 have properties throughout but a larger concentration
24 probably downcounty.

25 MS. GREY-MCKENZIE: Thank you.

1 MR. GOLDMAN: Yes?

2 MS. ROZELL: Is there a percentage that are
3 accessible?

4 MR. GOLDMAN: Absolutely. And so, you know, many
5 of the buildings we buy are garden style apartments which
6 unfortunately the way they were built, you either have to go
7 upstairs or downstairs to get to a unit. But what we do is,
8 when we buy a building and do a substantial renovation, we
9 try to find as many units as we can that we can make
10 accessible. And so we're creating exterior entrances and
11 doing other creative things. To do that is what we look to
12 do.

13 MS. ROZELL: So you don't have a percentage that
14 you require?

15 MR. GOLDMAN: There is a percentage. I don't know
16 it off the top of my head. And we do the best we can within
17 that, but yeah, absolutely. Great. Thank you very much.

18 MS. JOSEPH: James Stowe.

19 MR. STOWE: Good evening to all of you and Madam
20 Chair and to all the members of the Committee. I want to
21 first of all introduce to you Louise Kauffman who is the
22 acting Chair of the Interagency Fair Housing Coordinating
23 Group. We'll talk a bit about that. I'm going to ask her
24 also to say a word or two about a very special initiative
25 that the group is engaged in. But I do have written

1 testimony tonight to share with you quickly. And then I'll
2 offer up an opportunity for her to share a very important
3 piece that is being done by the Interagency Fair Housing
4 Coordinating Group.

5 Good evening, my name is Jim Stowe, and I'm the
6 Director of the Office of Human Rights. My office is
7 charged with the responsibility of enforcing the county's
8 civil rights code which includes the area of fair housing
9 activity for the county. Our office also serves as a
10 coordinator of the fair housing activity for the county and
11 provides staffing to the Interagency Fair Housing
12 Coordinating Group whose purpose is to facilitate and
13 promote the county's efforts to prevent discrimination in
14 housing. The overarching mission of our office in all of
15 the county government is to eliminate barriers and
16 impediments to fair, affordable housing and affirmatively
17 further fair housing in Montgomery County. The coordinating
18 group consists of members of more than eight different
19 departments, local governments, community organizations and
20 real estate professionals who have housing concerns as part
21 of their mission. We continue our efforts with our fair
22 housing testing program, designed to identify and address
23 discrimination in the rental and sale of housing. These
24 efforts will be followed up by notification of the housing
25 provider of our finding and then re-test and enforcement if

1 necessary. We find potential violations. We hope these
2 procedures serve as a deterrent for future discriminatory
3 practices. We will continue to focus on the areas of source
4 of income, national origin, and disability in this year's
5 testing cycle. We continue to maintain our efforts to
6 create greater public awareness of fair housing laws through
7 educational and outreach activities, providing training and
8 technical assistance to housing professionals including real
9 estate agents, mortgage lenders, property managers,
10 appraisers, builders and others in the industry on ways to
11 provide access to equal housing opportunities and to prevent
12 housing discrimination. We have also worked to ensure our
13 efforts include similar educational information for the
14 housing seeker who sometimes finds it difficult to
15 understand the laws, new programs and to avoid the many
16 housing scams currently in the marketplace today. We
17 coordinate much of these efforts through the Department of
18 Housing and Community Affairs Housing and Financial Fitness
19 Fair each year for which we participate, provide sponsorship
20 and planning support. Some of the other education and
21 outreach programs within the Office of Human Rights include
22 as mentioned, we work with the Interagency Fair Housing
23 Coordinating Group, the one-stop shop seminar for property
24 managers, real estate agents and other housing industry
25 professionals. We also strive to get our youth involved and

1 create an awareness of fair housing concerns to our human
2 rights diversity camp where we introduce civil rights and
3 human rights concepts to fifth grade students from
4 throughout the county. Students also participate in a fair
5 housing poster contest at the camp where they apply what
6 they have learned to their poster creation. The winning
7 poster is displayed on the most trafficked Ride On bus
8 routes throughout the county and our winning poster artist
9 receives a cash prize presented at their school by County
10 Executive Isaiah Leggett, along with their poster unveiled
11 on a Ride On bus. In addition, we are continuing our movie
12 media program with national screening media to utilize movie
13 screens in Germantown and Rockville theaters. In any given
14 week, we have potentially 23,000 residents hearing the
15 message of fair housing and equality in all areas of our
16 lives through our agency's message. In a year, well over
17 one million images on fair housing go across the movie
18 screens to our residents in these two communities and
19 beyond. I hope you will agree that we have been good
20 stewards of the resources granted to us through this
21 committee. I certainly want to thank you and for your
22 support for our future efforts as well. We can always use
23 more resources as most of the folks who come before you will
24 probably say. I would like to thank the Committee for this
25 opportunity to offer these thoughts and testimony for your

1 consideration. We continue to have a good working
2 relationship with my colleague, Director Rick Nelson and his
3 staff in the Department of Housing and Community Affairs and
4 want to also express our appreciation for their support and
5 cooperation. I'm more than glad to answer any questions or
6 address any concerns that the Committee may have. If not,
7 then -- yes, ma'am?

8 MS. DE LA CRUZ MAGOWAN: What is the process to
9 handle discrimination cases?

10 MR. STOWE: What happens is that persons can come
11 to our office. We're located at 21 Maryland Avenue, right
12 there in the Rockville Memorial Library and file a
13 complaint. Our complaint forms are also on line at our
14 website. And one needs simply just to come in and file a
15 complaint or drawn down the actual form and bring it in. We
16 have an intake process that allows us to kind of understand
17 what the concern is, to assure it's under our jurisdiction.
18 Once we do that, we call that perfecting the complaint, we
19 move next then to actually investigation of the complaint
20 itself.

21 MS. JOSEPH: How many complaints do you receive on
22 average?

23 MR. STOWE: On average, we're somewhere between
24 200 to 250 complaints per year. Of those about 16 to 25 of
25 those are housing complaints. And so the rest end up being

1 a multiplicity of employment and disability related kind of
2 complaints.

3 MS. JOSEPH: So are these things that can be
4 prevented in the future or like these are a repetitive
5 thing, that it's just human nature or something like that?

6 MR. STOWE: We hope. Certainly we're in business
7 because people do not always apply the law fairly to
8 everyone, particularly in the area of housing. We are
9 finding a lot of folks have some issues and concerns there.
10 As our community becomes more and more diverse, you may know
11 that we now are a majority minority community here in
12 Montgomery County. And it's a very different housing
13 certainly community for most of our housing providers than
14 they have had in the past. And so we're starting to see a
15 little bit of issues relative to that. Our chair, Louise
16 Kauffman, can talk about our new initiative, I think will
17 help kind of get some of this on the survey.

18 MS. KAUFFMAN: There are a couple of things that
19 we've done in the last year or two of which we're very
20 proud. One of them is that as you all are aware, Montgomery
21 County has additional protections over and above the federal
22 fair housing law. In every property where real estate
23 transactions occur, you often see the federal fair housing
24 poster displayed. We've noticed in testing and in other
25 arenas that often the Montgomery County poster has not been

1 displayed. So one of the initiatives we took on was to
2 update the Montgomery County poster, distribute it widely.
3 It's in English and Spanish and really work closely with
4 real estate, property management to make sure that that
5 poster is also displayed. That's very important because of
6 the additional protections. In addition, we worked closely
7 this year with the Department of Housing and Community
8 Affairs on their rental housing survey that goes out
9 annually to do a survey that also included questions related
10 to accessibility. Someone mentioned that it's something
11 that we're very interested in determining the number of
12 accessible units in the county. We don't have a good notion
13 of what that is. Raise ethnicity so that we're really
14 trying to pull in a lot of information about what's out
15 there in the rental properties.

16 MR. STOWE: One of the things we're doing too in
17 the efforts to try to make properties more visible is
18 another issue we've been working a lot as well one of our
19 members has been here to champion that, Jackie Simon. And so
20 our efforts really are to ensure that we have a good idea
21 about what's out there in the marketplace for our home
22 seekers. And once we do that, then we have the ability to
23 ensure them that there's open access to those units by every
24 person who is a resident of our community. And that's our
25 goal and that certainly is our task for this coming year.

1 MS. JAMISON: What type of source of income
2 discrimination do you see most often?

3 MR. STOWE: A couple things. One is that there
4 are persons who may confine that particular acceptance of
5 source of income to be just one instrument. As an example,
6 something that comes from HOC. And we don't accept anything
7 else. Well, the law is much more broad than that and once
8 one is able to establish a regularity of that income from a
9 number of different kinds of sources, then that particular
10 housing provider must consider that as a source of income.
11 And sometimes our housing community is not always aware of
12 that nuance -- well, it's not quite a nuance, it's the law.
13 And so sometimes we have the opportunity to kind of educate
14 these people further about that. So when I said early on
15 about the testing, that being an element of what we're
16 testing for so that again we see again that problem out
17 there occurring over and over again, that obviously it is
18 something we've got to do more education around as well.
19 And so when we do our one-stop shop fair housing seminar, we
20 will focus on then the area of source of income to give
21 additional information to our housing providers about what
22 that means, what may be various sources of income and also
23 the fact that we're not trying to tie anybody's hands and to
24 force anybody to rent to someone. They still have to go and
25 look at credit and those kinds of issues to determine

1 whether or not he or she is a viable candidate for that
2 apartment or for that house. So we're not trying to
3 eliminate anybody's ability to do fair and good business.
4 What we are saying is that this is the law. And so
5 certainly we must be able to adhere to that. We give
6 persons an equal opportunity. Then if they've got then a
7 visible way of showing they've got this source of income
8 coming in every month and they do have the ability, by the
9 way, as a housing provider to also check and verify that
10 indeed that is the case. And they must then make that
11 available to every person.

12 MS. JOHNSON: Do you find that there are repeat
13 offenders in your testing?

14 MR. STOWE: One of the things we do find is this
15 and one of the things that we do with our testing program is
16 that we try our best to make sure that you are not aware
17 we're testing. So the idea there is that we have persons
18 who have an enormous amount of turnover sometimes in those
19 who are leasing agents, and so forth, and that sometimes
20 creates a problem for various property owners out there.
21 And to your question specifically, once in a while we do see
22 folks who didn't quite get it the first time around. And so
23 what we do is we again make that housing provider aware we
24 were there. Here's what we found. Give them an opportunity
25 then to address that concern. We go back and in fact we re-

1 test. And if it's the second time, in fact if we find the
2 same violation again, then we in fact file a complaint on
3 behalf of Montgomery County and pursue that through that
4 process.

5 MS. ROZELL: Can you explain a little what your
6 testing program is?

7 MR. STOWE: The testing program is basically we
8 try to simulate a rental experience that you and I might in
9 fact have if we were out there renting an apartment or
10 buying a house as it were. And our testers go out. And we
11 try to do matched pairs. And what that basically means is
12 that we try and have folks who have similar sort of
13 backgrounds but may have differences in terms of race, in
14 terms of sex, in terms of national origin, in terms of
15 disability to present themselves as renters, prospective
16 renters. And they try to rent the apartment. And what we
17 really look at is the relationship that happens between that
18 renting agent and that potential housing renter. And they
19 should be consistent with either one of those persons
20 regardless of those various differences that I just
21 described. And we're looking for those differences and
22 whether or not they in fact violate the law. And somehow
23 then became a barrier for that person not being able to
24 acquire that apartment or to acquire that home as the case
25 may be. And it's those variables that we're looking for to

1 determine whether or not they are in fact under our
2 jurisdiction. If there are issues of race, issue of color,
3 issue of religion, those things come up, sexual orientation,
4 etc. Ways that we look for to see whether or not they
5 became an issue for that person being able to acquire that
6 property. And so then you send a second person through. If
7 his experience or her experience is not the same and somehow
8 then we will be able then to equate that with a different
9 appearance or a different situation, circumstance, whatever,
10 then we've got a violation, at least a potential one. And
11 so we move in that direction.

12 MS. WILSON: Ms. Kauffman made a statement
13 regarding display of the Equal Housing poster? Can you
14 clarify that just quickly for me? People don't put it up?
15 They don't want to show it?

16 MS. KAUFFMAN: They don't seem to understand --
17 everybody knows the federal fair housing law has to be
18 posted. But lots of properties we found all seem surprised
19 when we tell them that they also have to put up a Montgomery
20 County Fair Housing poster. I work for the City of
21 Gaithersburg. In our jurisdiction, I've notified all of
22 code inspectors when they're out in properties to make sure
23 that the poster is there. If not, I'm notified and I make a
24 poster -- you know.

25 MS. WILSON: Is Montgomery County peculiar in that

1 requirement or do other counties in the state have that same
2 requirement?

3 MR. STOWE: I'm not so sure of other counties in
4 terms of that particular requirement. I would suspect they
5 probably do. But in our case, they're supposed to be posted
6 in a conspicuous place so that a consumer coming in can see
7 that and be able then to know that if something don't sound
8 quite right that they can in fact follow up themselves
9 because they see that sign that says you can call our
10 offices, or what the case may be. And particularly this is
11 of concern as we have more and more persons who may not have
12 English as their first language who are part of our
13 community. And oftentimes find themselves in situations
14 where they're either afraid to come forward with a complaint
15 because that might lead to other kinds of issues or concerns
16 for themselves or their families and/or sometimes things are
17 not readily explained to persons because again that language
18 may present a problem. And so we're working very, very hard
19 to ensure them that all of our providers know that it has to
20 be there and again where there is languages that are
21 predominant in many parts of our community, as Spanish, it's
22 in Spanish so people can actually read that as well.

23 MS. KAUFFMAN: As Jim had mentioned earlier about
24 source of income, source of income is pretty unique in
25 Montgomery County. It's not even the law in the State of

1 Maryland nor is it in the federal government. So when a
2 prospective tenant goes into an apartment and they see the
3 Montgomery County code and they see that source of income
4 cannot be used to discriminate, that's important information
5 for them.

6 MS. WILSON: Okay. That was the reason for my
7 question, whether indeed there was some ulterior motive for
8 not displaying --

9 MR. STOWE: Yes, yes, yes, yes. And I would just
10 say lastly that we have -- the vast majority of our housing
11 providers who are doing the right thing. I would be remiss
12 if I didn't say that, privately, in this microphone. But
13 there are some who are struggling a little bit. I will say
14 this as well, we've got those who are serving in this
15 capacity as well and I think Committee Member Rozell, I
16 think I pronounced that closely, the issue of disability is
17 a real concern because we've got some aging stock out there
18 that sometimes is not accessible then for persons that may
19 utilize wheelchairs and other devices coming and going. And
20 so we are really, really concerned that we get that done
21 right and that our community also gets it done right as
22 well.

23 MR. BANKS: Do you have statistics on the length
24 of time from filing of a complaint to resolution?

25 MR. STOWE: I can give you what the anecdotal is

1 at this point in time. But I think right now we're looking
2 at about 15 months from the time someone actually files a
3 complaint to the time it goes into full process. We have
4 features within the law that allows us then to stop things
5 in place. We have restraining orders and those kind of
6 things that if someone were to, in fact, be subject to some
7 adverse action, we're able then to stop that in place until
8 we get through the investigation so forth and so on. So it
9 does allow us some flexibility. If someone files a
10 complaint with HUD as an example, that complaint must be in
11 fact at least handled within 100 days. What that means, got
12 to be real clear about what that means, that means we will
13 attempt to do it within 100 days. Beyond that, I'm required
14 then to notify you if I'm utilizing Title VIII that we've
15 gone beyond 100 days and give some idea about what it may
16 take then to finish that in terms of the actual
17 investigation. So we're behind that a bit. But our sense
18 is that we want to be a lot more thorough, we believe, in
19 doing what we do in our offices and thereby would think
20 producing a better product at the end of the process. It's
21 what we believe.

22 MS. BARCLIFF: Can you clarify how much of your
23 findings if any are available to the public and at what
24 point they may be available?

25 MR. STOWE: Our findings are available at the very

1 end of our process and meaning that the actual case has been
2 closed and then it becomes then a public record at that
3 point in time. But before that point it's confidential. I
4 would not be able to tell you today whether or not I've got
5 a case against any person for that matter, today. I can
6 neither confirm nor deny, as we say, that one even exists.
7 Now parties are able then to certainly share that
8 information as they choose to upon agreement with one
9 another but in terms of us being able to do that as an
10 agency, we cannot do that. It's a confidential closed
11 matter. Now we do at the end of the year, of course, give a
12 series of reports that kind of shares with the public about
13 how many cases were processed, how many in fact were
14 employment, housing, public accommodations, etc. So that
15 information is certainly available on a yearly basis. And
16 so that certainly can be gotten at any point in time.

17 MS. JOSEPH: Okay. Thank you very much. Louise
18 Kauffman, you don't have any other presentation apart from
19 this one? No. Okay. All right. Thank you. Sara Portman-
20 Milner?

21 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: My name is Sara Portman-
22 Milner and I'm the co-founder and co-director of Sunflower
23 Bakery in Gaithersburg, whose mission is to provide skilled,
24 on-the-job training to prepare young adults with development
25 or other cognitive disabilities for employment in baking or

1 related industries. It's timely and appropriate that I'm
2 speaking to you this evening because October is National
3 Disability Employment Awareness Month and it celebrates the
4 many and varied contributions of America's workers with
5 disabilities. When a typically developing young adult is
6 ready to pursue higher education or vocational training,
7 they have a multitude of choices. If they're not really
8 interested in a college education and need training to go
9 right to work, they may choose IT, beauty school, auto
10 mechanics or culinary arts to pursue. However, if they have
11 developmental or other cognitive disabilities, the field is
12 dramatically narrowed by the dearth of programs designed to
13 address and accommodate their unique learning and other
14 needs. They do not have choice and they find themselves
15 having to settle for what's available. Just imagine
16 struggling through elementary and secondary schools where as
17 students they have often been told what they can't do or
18 what they're really not good at. Then, upon receiving a
19 certificate of completion on graduation, the only options
20 either emphasize the very same challenges or other
21 alternatives that aren't of interest. How would each of us
22 feel if we didn't have the opportunity to pursue our
23 interests and our passions? Unfortunately, currently, there
24 are very, very few new or innovative programs in Montgomery
25 County that provide employment choice and self-determination

1 for these young adults. Indeed, almost 55 percent of the
2 people in Montgomery County with cognitive disabilities are
3 not in the labor force, as opposed to 13.5 percent of those
4 who do not have such disabilities. And according to the
5 Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, 31 percent of
6 the individuals ages 15 to 34 with disabilities were
7 unemployed in 2013. This difference is already apparent in
8 the initial years after high school. Due to their
9 disabilities and age, such young adults are at risk and have
10 significant financial needs given their lack of employment
11 options for them. Young adults with developmental or other
12 cognitive disabilities need more skilled job training
13 opportunities to make career choices leading to increasingly
14 meaningful and personally satisfying employment. And their
15 options need to have natural or other supports built in but
16 would consider and accommodate the special learning needs,
17 address challenges with interpersonal relationships,
18 communication of boundaries, and support possible
19 accompanying struggles such as anxiety, depression or
20 obsessive-compulsive behaviors. It's quite the challenge,
21 right? Well, there are a few very noteworthy programs that
22 enable these young adults to not only develop marketable and
23 transferrable job-specific skills but also appropriate
24 workplace behavior, communication and self-advocacy. Only
25 in the past few years, programs such as Project Search

1 Montgomery, Project Search NIH, Project Search Smithsonian
2 which Ivymount School has played a key role have provided
3 real world job exploration and preparation for high school
4 students. In addition the Transitioning Youth Retail
5 Project of the ARC offers classroom training and work
6 experiences with retail partners, preparing individuals with
7 intellectual disabilities for employment in the retail
8 sector. Through our work at Sunflower Bakery, we've seen
9 firsthand the overwhelming need for more of these
10 opportunities, because there is no one size fits all program
11 for individuals with cognitive disabilities. Just as there
12 is no such thing for typically developing young adults.
13 While we offer individualized on the job skills training in
14 pastry arts, there are some young adults who love working
15 with food but may not have the fine motor coordination
16 necessary for baking or the ability to focus on the precise
17 multiple steps of a recipe in a bustling production kitchen.
18 Yet they have a wonderful attitude towards hard work and are
19 eager to continue in a similar position. So far neither
20 Project Search nor other county endeavors have ventured into
21 training individuals and to the business operations or
22 marketing sales aspects of the retail food industry. Food
23 industry training and jobs offered to this population so far
24 have focused on delivering meals in nursing homes, washing
25 dishes, busing tables and other lower-skill tasks. We see a

1 tremendous opportunity to teach on the job business skills
2 by focusing on business operations, data entry, bookkeeping,
3 answering phones, managing product and supply inventory and
4 procurement and scheduling, and also to teach marketing and
5 sales, outreach to new businesses, online presence,
6 promotions and advertising and to teach customer service,
7 assisting customers, filling orders, serving as a barista
8 and product presentation. An innovative and ideal inclusive
9 environment that would utilize the confluence of these
10 business skills would be a café, staffed by individuals with
11 and without disabilities. In such a business, supervisors,
12 mentors and coworkers without disabilities would likewise be
13 trained to serve as natural supports and learn how to
14 accommodate coworkers unique needs. Such an endeavor would
15 increase the number of employed individuals with
16 developmental or other cognitive disabilities working in
17 integrated settings. It would equip such employees and
18 student interns with skills and knowledge desired by
19 employers. It would offer additional choices in careers and
20 equally important, it would enable members of the community
21 into interact with well-trained --

22 MS. JOSEPH: Sara, do you have a printed copy of
23 your -- can you put that in the file? Because I think we'll
24 have to --

25 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: Oh, I'm sorry, I just had the

1 last sentence. I'm sorry. Can I just finish the last
2 sentence? To interact with well-trained individuals with
3 disabilities, breaking barriers and promoting full and
4 meaningful community inclusion.

5 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you. Sorry to interrupt.

6 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: I do have the written copy
7 here which I'll turn in.

8 MS. JOSEPH: Any questions for Sarah?

9 MS. JAMISON: How many individuals do you train at
10 one time and how many instructors do you have?

11 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: Remember we're talking about
12 a production bakery and we're about to move to a café. We
13 have 15 people we train in a given year. We have three
14 professional pastry chefs, full-time, who work with them.

15 MS. JOSEPH: So do you have an application pending
16 with the Committee for the café?

17 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: For a café. That's for the
18 whole next, to give a new opportunity for people who can't
19 just bake.

20 MS. JOHNSON: What are the age ranges?

21 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: Eighteen to 27 is our target
22 age. We don't reject someone who is a little older. We
23 don't do younger than 18 because we want them to stay in
24 school, we want them to get maximum benefit from that
25 opportunity. And they're also young.

1 MR. COX: How about the training cycle? How long
2 is that?

3 MR. BROWN: Excuse me, I don't mean to cut you
4 off. But really this is a specific application based series
5 of questions and the forum for that is a presentation before
6 the individual CDAC. Just to keep a level playing field, so
7 if we could perhaps -- if you'll let me have your written
8 testimony, I'll see that it's duplicated and circulated to
9 everyone.

10 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: Super.

11 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

12 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: And I can answer questions
13 other than just tonight?

14 MS. JOSEPH: Yeah.

15 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: No problem.

16 MS. WILSON: I'm not sure if I'm in order, either.
17 Correct me if I'm not. Do you have graduates already and if
18 so, how many?

19 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: Seventy-five percent of the
20 people who graduated from our program are currently employed
21 in jobs all over, from restaurants to caterers to --

22 MS. WILSON: I hear 75 percent. That could be
23 more?

24 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: We've had 25 graduates; 75
25 percent, do the math.

1 MS. WILSON: I can do the math. Thank you.

2 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: And since then we've had more
3 people getting jobs.

4 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you, Sara.

5 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: Thank you very much.

6 MS. JOSEPH: Laurie Wexler (phonetic sp.)

7 MS. PORTMAN-MILNER: She's not here.

8 MS. JOSEPH: She's not here today? Okay. Oh,
9 she's part of the -- yeah, sorry. Sharon Choi?

10 MS. CHOI: Actually I won't be speaking, we have
11 somebody else representing our organization.

12 MS. JOSEPH: All right.

13 MS. CHOI: She's later on the list.

14 MS. JOSEPH: Oh, okay. Who is she?

15 MS. CHOI: Aisha Marsano.

16 MS. JOSEPH: Aisha Marano?

17 MS. CHOI: Marsano.

18 MS. JOSEPH: Marsano. Okay. So later in the
19 list. All right. Megan Pauley (phonetic sp.)?

20 MS. ROSEN: She's actually not speaking. I am.
21 I'm the next name on the list.

22 MS. JOSEPH: Okay. Stephanie Rosen?

23 MS. ROSEN: Yeah. I will stay here if that's

24 okay? Hi everyone, good evening. Thank you. I'm Stephanie
25 Rosen. I'm the --

1 COURT REPORTER: Please speak into the microphone.

2 MS. ROSEN: Okay. Can you hear me now? I'm

3 Stephanie Rosen, I'm the Executive Director of the National

4 Alliance on Mental Illness in Montgomery County, Maryland.

5 I'm here representing our organization. And I want to thank

6 you for giving me the opportunity to tell you what keeps me

7 up at night and what we as an organization think is really

8 important. Evan Rosenstock (phonetic sp.), Ryan Walden

9 (phonetic sp.), Kyra Harrison (phonetic sp.) and Jacob

10 Jesuitas (phonetic sp.), hopefully I didn't mispronounce

11 that last name. If you're not familiar with those names,

12 they're all -- they all were Montgomery County high school

13 students who tragically died by suicide within the last

14 year. Jake most recently died only a few weeks ago. We as

15 a community have failed these students, their families and

16 the hundreds of others who suffer from mental illness. So

17 when we talk about our most vulnerable populations and our

18 most vulnerable residents, I want you to remember that

19 mental illness happens to young adults. Fifty percent of

20 people living with mental illness have their first symptom

21 at the age of 14. Fifty percent. Seventy-five percent will

22 experience their first symptom by the age of 24. It's also

23 extremely prevalent. According to the National Institute of

24 Mental Health, in children age 13 to 18, the lifetime

25 prevalence -- so that's by the time they turn 18 -- 46

1 percent will have a mental illness. This includes a whole
2 bunch of different disorders which I'm happy to answer
3 questions about later. The lifetime prevalence of a severe
4 disorder is 21 percent. That's one in five. This means
5 that in Montgomery County Public High Schools by the time
6 they graduate, 20,963 students will have a mental illness
7 and 9,689 students will have a severe mental health
8 disorder. One of the biggest tragedies is untreated mental
9 illness in that almost one-half of youth age 8 to 15 with a
10 mental illness received no mental health treatment within
11 the last year. And another staggering statistic is that
12 although 50 percent of individuals experiencing symptoms by
13 the age of 14, the average delay of onset from symptom to
14 treatment is eight to 10 years. This also
15 disproportionately affects the lower income individuals.
16 It's been shown that lower income individuals are more
17 likely to have a mental disorder and suicide attempt than
18 their higher income counterparts and that the majority of
19 those who do not seek treatment are lower income
20 individuals. So in summary, mental illness is common in
21 children, found at a higher rate in low income individuals
22 and those same lower income individuals are less likely to
23 get treatment. What happens with untreated mental illness?
24 It can lead to high school dropouts, substance abuse and as
25 I mentioned earlier, death by suicide. Sadly studies show

1 that stigma is one of the greatest barriers to treatment and
2 that's where we as a community can make a huge difference.
3 The majority of individuals who receive treatment early
4 recover and are able to effectively manage their illness and
5 lead fulfilling, productive lives. And prevention and early
6 intervention are the keys to helping people avoid serious
7 mental illness and those tragic outcomes I mentioned
8 earlier. I would like us as a community to educate our
9 youth, educate our teachers and all who interact with youth
10 and parents and teach them how to best advocate for their
11 own behalf and on behalf of their family members and
12 friends. I would urge you to fund mental health education
13 and treatment programs, support our populations most at risk
14 and continue reacting to crisis but to also focus on
15 prevention and early treatment. I want to end with a little
16 bit of a ray of hope in that mental illness and again
17 reiterate is treatment leads to full recovery and I'm living
18 proof that even though you have a mental illness, it doesn't
19 mean you can't live a fulfilling life. So thank you.

20 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you.

21 MS. JAMISON: Does the county or your office have
22 a suicide prevention hotline?

23 MS. ROSEN: So the suicide prevention -- that's a
24 great question. There is a national suicide prevention
25 hotline which is available. And that's the line that -- I

1 mean, I wouldn't want to reinvent the wheel. It's a really
2 great program. It's a national suicide prevention hotline.
3 One of the things that we do is we encourage students, when
4 we tell them the number, to take out their phone immediately
5 and we all program it into your phone right then and there.
6 Because sometimes you can't find that card when you need it.
7 Any other questions?

8 MR. COX: Which part of the county do you provide
9 services to?

10 MS. ROSEN: The entire county.

11 MR. COX: Entire.

12 MS. ROSEN: And we've been around for 36 years.

13 MR. BANKS: Have you noticed an increase in the
14 incidence of mental illness lately. Because it seems to be
15 in the news more these days. Do you have an idea as to why
16 or would you?

17 MS. ROSEN: So I'm not sure if the incidence has
18 gone up but certainly the conversation about it has
19 increased, which I welcome. I welcome that we're talking
20 about this and that you let me talk to you guys about it
21 today. The sad part is that individuals living with mental
22 illness are more likely to be victims of crime rather than
23 perpetrators. What do you hear on the news is when
24 untreated mental illness does cross intersect with violence,
25 which is the most tragic of outcomes. I don't know if it's

1 happening at a larger rate but I know I'm a graduate of
2 Montgomery County Public Schools. I won't say when, but I
3 didn't know of any suicides. And to hear that four were
4 within the last year is absolutely heartbreaking. These
5 were students with very bright futures. And their families
6 are, of course, devastated and the community is affected as
7 well. Yes?

8 MS. WILSON: Does it happen when people call the
9 national hotline that it gets referred to the county, if
10 indeed that person is a county resident?

11 MS. ROSEN: The prevention hotline does provide
12 local resources, but I don't know if they provide NAMI
13 Montgomery County specifically. We do have a crisis
14 intervention center but part of, part of the problem is not
15 only having in place what to do when there's a crisis but
16 teaching students how to take care of it and teaching
17 teachers and parents how to take care of it before there's
18 that imminent risk of suicide. There are evidence-based
19 practices out there and I just want our county to be using
20 them and fund those.

21 MS. JOSEPH: I know that, I can understand that
22 treatment of mental illness would be more difficult in a
23 lower income population and so that -- but the incidence of
24 mental illness itself, why is that higher amongst a lower
25 income population? I would think that it should be even.

1 MS. ROSEN: Yeah. So mental illness typically
2 doesn't discriminate but unfortunately lower income
3 individuals are more likely to experience trauma. And
4 trauma is one of the environmental factors that can lead to
5 mental illness. So it's really based on trauma.

6 MS. JOSEPH: Environment based issues?

7 MS. ROSEN: So mental illness has a genetic and an
8 environmental component. Unfortunately we don't know
9 everything about the brain right now, which I wish we did.
10 Any other questions? Thank you for your time.

11 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you.

12 MS. ROSEN: Have a good evening.

13 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you Stephanie. Rose McDonald?

14 MS. MCDONALD: Good evening. My name is Rose
15 McDonald and I'm the Director of Vocational Services in
16 Montgomery County for Target Community and Educational
17 Services. Target has provided supportive employment
18 services for individuals with intellectual and developmental
19 disabilities who live in Montgomery County for over 15
20 years. With our experience in this field, we understand the
21 critical need for supportive employment services, which
22 assist individuals with disabilities in Montgomery County to
23 secure and maintain meaningful, gainful employment that
24 promotes a productive and high quality of life while
25 fostering self sufficiency. According to the U.S. Census

1 Bureau's 2012 American Community Survey, there are
2 approximately 75,848 individuals with a disability living in
3 Montgomery County. The unemployment rate for these
4 individuals was 14.3 percent which is much higher than the
5 unemployment rate of 5.1 percent during the same time frame
6 for individuals without disabilities. The unemployment rate
7 specifically for individuals with developmental disabilities
8 is much higher. The National Association of Councils on
9 Developmental Disabilities reported in November 2011 that
10 the unemployment rate for these individuals was about 88
11 percent. Many individuals with intellectual, developmental
12 and other disabilities have very few opportunities to find
13 employment. These individuals are looking to lead
14 productive independent lives but sometimes need assistance
15 to increase their employability and to secure and maintain
16 their jobs. These individuals desire to be contributing and
17 self-sufficient members of our community in which they live.
18 A study reported in the Journal of Policy Analysis and
19 Management that 56 percent of individuals with intellectual
20 disabilities who receive job coaching were still working a
21 year later, compared to 9 percent of those who didn't
22 receive any job coaching. Supportive employment programs
23 work to assist individuals and customize job exploration,
24 job placement, skill enhancement, and ongoing job coaching
25 at the places of employment as needed. Supportive

1 employment assists individuals with disabilities to learn
2 various skills necessary to be successful employees
3 including resume writing, understanding expectations of
4 jobs, job interviewing techniques, math and language skills
5 and socialization skills. With support employment services,
6 individuals with disabilities are able to obtain meaningful
7 employment in the community and contribute to the work force
8 in Montgomery County. These individuals have numerous
9 skills and abilities to offer employers and are an important
10 part of our community. Our hope is that you recognize the
11 critical need for supportive employment for individuals with
12 disabilities who live in Montgomery County which provides
13 the training and support services required to assist them in
14 securing and maintaining their meaningful employment. Any
15 questions?

16 MS. JOSEPH: Target -- this is by the company
17 Target?

18 MS. MCDONALD: Same name, different community.
19 We're Target Community and Educational Services.

20 MS. JOSEPH: And you have nothing to do with the
21 Target store?

22 MS. MCDONALD: Nope. Completely separate.

23 MS. JOSEPH: I was wondering whether this was
24 catering to the employer or not. Okay, thank you.

25 MS. JAMISON: How do you get referrals or how do

1 you get your clients?

2 MS. MCDONALD: So the clients that we serve are
3 generally funded through the Developmental Disability
4 Administration. So they have a resource coordinator who
5 will work to find different resources for them. And they
6 can recommend us. We are also on the DVA website, so they
7 can search for providers through that.

8 MS. DE LA CRUZ MAGOWAN: There are limits for the
9 age of these individuals?

10 MS. MCDONALD: So right now we serve generally the
11 most individuals with disabilities transition out of public
12 schools at the age of 21. So our individuals vary from the
13 age of 20, 21 or 22 all the way to 60 right now. We don't
14 have a limit on it. It's whatever the working age is. So
15 as long as they're willing to work, we're happy to serve
16 them.

17 MS. JOSEPH: Thank you. Now Andrew was with you?
18 Yeah, so he's not -- Aisha Marsano? So if you can give us
19 your name and your organization. So you said you were with
20 Sharon Choi, Asian-American League?

21 MS. MARSANO: Hi, my name is Aisha Marsano and I'm
22 a junior at Montgomery-Blair High School and I'm here to
23 represent Community Youth. Today I would like to talk to
24 you about the importance of maintaining youth development
25 programs and why the county should invest in these programs.

1 As you know, youth development programs provide
2 opportunities, activities and skills needed to help youth
3 grow to their fullest potential. However, there is still
4 some youth that don't acquire some of these opportunities
5 and are unable to find support. Youth development programs
6 would help enhance youth strengths in addition to providing
7 different support systems to help them along the way. For
8 example, I am part of an afterschool program called Asian-
9 American Lead, or AA Lead. AA Lead is a nonprofit
10 organization that offers afterschool programs in D.C.,
11 Maryland and Virginia. AA Lead highlights leadership
12 skills, cultural identity and educational empowerment.
13 Asian-American Lead has provided me with a lot of support
14 from my peers, mentors and coordinators. Each of them would
15 help me explore choices in my life, providing me with
16 opportunities which helps me gain the experiences in the
17 community. My peers would encourage me to overcome
18 challenges and find ways to help each other out. We would
19 create a sense of family where we would be together, knowing
20 that we're not alone. Recently I was part of AA Lead's most
21 Muslim Student Committee and we planned the third annual Eid
22 celebration. We planned our icebreaker activities and
23 created educational materials around story sharing and this
24 event created new friendships and personal insights of the
25 Muslim holiday, Eid. In the past school year, I was also a

1 part of a youth media project opportunity provided to me by
2 AA Lead. My peers and I worked on a film about combatting
3 stereotypes around Asian-American youths such as the idea
4 that for example all Asians couldn't be really smart or
5 anti-social or they know karate. So I helped produce,
6 direct and even acted in the film. My peers and I wanted to
7 share our experiences about the harmful impacts stereotypes
8 have on Asian-American youth and the message we wanted to
9 convey was to follow your own passions despite pressures to
10 conform to other people's expectations. So AA Lead has
11 provided me with community service events, college tours and
12 a variety of other opportunities that allowed me to develop
13 leadership skills. For instance, AA lead has made me more
14 confident in myself and my ability to speak in front of a
15 crowd just like I am able to do today. Being in this
16 program gave me an insight on how it's important for youth
17 to have their own voice, especially in their communities.
18 With youth development programs, I hope that youth would be
19 able to gain these opportunities in finding a bright future
20 and to become a future leader in their own community. Thank
21 you. Is there any questions?

22 MS. GREY-MCKENZIE: I have one. Thank you, again.
23 Do you know how many other programs like yours exist in the
24 Montgomery County School System?

25 MS. MARSANO: Other programs like Asian-American

1 Lead? I'm not sure, actually.

2 MS. CHOI: You said there are other -- sorry Aisha
3 -- youth development organizations in the county, but Asian-
4 American Lead is the only one targeting the Asian community
5 specifically. Thank you.

6 MS. MARSANO: Any other questions? Okay, thank
7 you.

8 MS. ROANE: Nice job.

9 MS. MARSANO: Thank you for you time.

10 MS. JOSEPH: Sarah Sorensen?

11 MS. SORENSEN: Good evening. I'm Sarah Sorensen.
12 I'm Executive Director of Independence Now. And for some
13 reason I was recorded as an individual but I had asked to
14 sign up as an organization because my colleagues will speak
15 with me as well. So Independence Now is the Center for
16 Independent Living that serves people with disabilities
17 living in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. We're
18 part of a network of 400 centers for independent living
19 across the country that provide four core services among
20 many other programs. And I have some written testimony, so
21 I'm not going to read every bit of it. But we're happy to
22 be here tonight to talk about housing issues, which is
23 obviously most important to this group. And we want to talk
24 some about the housing issues that are facing very low
25 income people with disabilities in Montgomery County. It's

1 not a well-known fact that a lot of young people with
2 disabilities often end up stuck in nursing homes, as we
3 refer to nursing facilities, because of the lack of
4 affordable, accessible housing in the county. And this
5 happens across the country. In Maryland there are about
6 20,000 people living in nursing facilities and I'm going to
7 talk mostly about the youngest group of them which, the only
8 way to really catch that in this community is under age 64.
9 And in Montgomery County at any given time, there are about
10 750 people under the age of 64 living in nursing facilities
11 just to give you a realm of what group of people we're
12 talking about. And quite often these are individuals who
13 gained disability at some point in their lives or are
14 experiencing illness or disease that leads them from
15 hospital to a nursing facility for long-term care. Many of
16 these individuals want to move back to the community and
17 receive their services in the community which is entirely
18 their right to do that. And in Maryland we have extensive,
19 long-term services and supports that exist in the community.
20 We've heard about some of them tonight. And so we want to
21 support people to do that. And the greatest barrier for
22 most of these young people who are stuck in nursing
23 facilities is the ability to obtain affordable, accessible
24 housing in the community. Often these individuals rely
25 completely on SSI for their income. And just to put that in

1 perspective for you, in 2014 the SSI level is \$721 a month.
2 So that puts you at about 10 percent of the area-needed
3 income in this county. That is half of what the extremely
4 low income level for HUD is. Just to really give you a
5 picture of it. These folks are in need of very deep rental
6 subsidies in order to ever have an apartment be affordable
7 to them. Particularly in this county. I was glad to hear
8 the figure of \$1400 as an average rent in the county. So
9 when we were reviewing the 2011, 2015 consolidated plan
10 that's been referred to tonight, we were very excited to see
11 that the county is already setting aside Home funds for
12 rental assistance for other very vulnerable, very low income
13 people in the county. And it's wonderful. That's an
14 excellent use of Home funds. So we're here tonight to ask
15 that in the consolidated plan that's currently being
16 developed that you'll be reviewing that people with
17 disabilities of SSI and are living in Montgomery County
18 nursing facilities become another designated group to have
19 Home funds set aside for rental assistance. Allowing this
20 group to be eligible for rental assistance through Home
21 funds would afford one more opportunity for these
22 individuals to get back to their lives, to their families
23 and to their communities. Federally funded housing
24 opportunities like housing choice vouchers and Section 8 are
25 becoming more scarce. The waiting list for these programs

1 in Montgomery County are extremely long. These individuals
2 who are young, working age people remain segregated in
3 nursing facilities with virtually no opportunity for
4 employment, no opportunity for social interactions and no
5 way to once again becoming contributing citizens. Home
6 funds being designated for rental assistance for people with
7 disabilities who have SSI and are living in nursing
8 facilities could create new hope and a return to community.

9 MS. JACKSON: Good evening. My name is Deborah
10 Jackson. I am the Director of Independent Living Services
11 for Independence Now. And I'm glad to be here tonight to
12 also talk about or encourage inclusion of housing in the
13 Comp Plan for people with disabilities. I am the
14 Independent Living, Director of Independent Living Services
15 and I'm under the age of 64. I became disabled at the age
16 of 23 and began to receive disability benefits of about \$648
17 a month. I was married with three children, three beautiful
18 daughters, ages 3, 5 and 6. We were living in subsidized
19 housing. Prior to my disability, I worked as a cashier for
20 Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Williamsburg, Virginia.
21 I began receiving services from the Center for Independent
22 Living in the Hampton Roads area, serving people with
23 disabilities. And what I learned from them and getting
24 connected with those type of services that they provide is
25 the distinction of being disabled and between the

1 distinction of being disabled and being a person with a
2 disability. There is a distinction. I learned to advocate
3 for myself and others. This opened the door and I became
4 employed with the same Center for Independent Living that I
5 actually began receiving services from. I'm sharing this
6 information because I could have been a nursing facility
7 placement, receiving low to moderate income in a place of
8 needing and living only on state or federal income sources.
9 But due to community support, I've been transitioned from
10 needing support to providing support; for my family, for
11 others with disabilities and to youth by being a support in
12 the community and an active registered voter. I've moved
13 from being a renter to a homeowner. This is what we want
14 for the other Deborah Jacksons that have same or similar
15 stories.

16 MS. JOSEPH: Actually, can you file the testimony?
17 I'm sorry, we just have to --

18 MS. ROWRY: Well, we thought we were getting five
19 minutes.

20 MR. GREEN: You did.

21 MS. ROWRY: Okay. Okay.

22 MS. JOSEPH: So actually, do you have any
23 questions, anybody in the Committee, then maybe Deborah can
24 answer them?

25 MS. JACKSON: Any questions?

1 MS. JOSEPH: Actually I'm really amazed you've
2 done what you've done and so I'm very happy to say that, you
3 know, I'm so proud and it's amazing what you've done. I
4 feel you're right, everybody should be having that right to
5 be able to stand on their own and get accommodation of the,
6 that they can afford and it should be an equal right.

7 MS. JAMISON: Is the cost to live in a nursing
8 facility more than the cost of independent living or similar
9 to the cost?

10 MS. SORENSEN: Yes, I don't carry those figures
11 around in my head but typically nursing facilities are over
12 \$100,000 a year for each person that's there. And in the
13 community you're not permitted to go very high for the
14 services that you receive, even when you're getting subsidized
15 housing, is still or less or very close to the amount. Plus
16 the person has the ability to work themselves off of all
17 those benefits, too, where they don't have that ability in a
18 facility. I don't have the figures on me, but it's always
19 less expensive. The trouble is that you can't get the
20 funding for housing, you know, where in a nursing home it's
21 all packaged together, your services. You can't have that
22 in the community.

23 MS. JACKSON: And another thing with the nursing,
24 just to give you an idea of what individuals are in a
25 nursing facility, they are only allowed about \$30 a month

1 for individual expenses. Everything else goes to the
2 nursing home. So they live off of \$30 a month. So
3 transitioning back into the community where they have charge
4 of their own resources and income and income that is coming
5 in, they have more to spend with support services in place,
6 adequate housing, affordable housing and I'd like to say
7 affordable and accessible because I've heard a lot tonight
8 about affordable housing but I like to say, affordable and
9 accessible is like peanut butter and jelly. They both are
10 good individually but it's much better together. So for
11 people with disabilities the same thing, having accessible
12 housing and affordable housing, it's much better together.

13 MS. JOSEPH: Any questions? Thank you.

14 MR. BROWN: Just as a point of information,
15 Deborah, to put forth your testimony with everyone's as well
16 and that is that there is a 30-day window after this hearing
17 that you can submit supplemental testimony. So if you can
18 get a chance to share some of this stuff if you want to, you
19 can just write it down and submit it and we'll get it to the
20 members of the CDAC.

21 MS. JACKSON: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. SORENSEN: Who should I give the written
23 testimony to? Thanks.

24 MS. JOSEPH: Meredith Bowers. Meredith Bowers?
25 Ms. Bowers? Jobs Unlimited? Not here? Elizabeth Rowny?

1 You can state your name and your organization and address.

2 MS. ROWNY: Which button do I push?

3 MS. JOSEPH: There's on the bottom of the speaker
4 of the stand.

5 MS. ROWNY: Excuse me. My name is Elizabeth
6 Rowny. I'm a graduate of Sunflower Bakery, so I'm speaking
7 as an individual but sort of in favor of the café project.
8 So hello, my name is Elizabeth Rowny. I've lived in
9 Montgomery County all my life. I'm one of the adults in our
10 community with ADHD which is manifested as tremendous
11 challenges with executive functioning. And this affects all
12 aspects of my life since it's very challenging for me to get
13 organized, to prioritize my responsibilities, to follow
14 through on commitments and even to get places on time. And
15 for all these reasons, I have struggled with a number of
16 jobs over the years. People like me need the opportunity to
17 prove ourselves in work environments where there are
18 supervisors and coworkers who understand that, for instance,
19 my need for routine and for repeated explanations of
20 processes or recipes is because of my disability. If they
21 are able to understand this and meet me halfway, so to
22 speak, then I can do the tasks necessary and actually enjoy
23 my work. I want to please my bosses but it's sometimes hard
24 for me to articulate what will be most helpful. Now I'm a
25 graduate of Sunflower Bakery's pastry arts training program.

1 When it was time for me to have an internship which was
2 supported by the program, I decided I would just skip that
3 part and get a job in a bakery of my own finding. I didn't
4 think I needed any help. I was there for about two months
5 when I was let go because I could not perform the more
6 complex tasks with adequate speed and skill. I returned to
7 Sunflower and was assigned as an intern with one of their
8 employer partners. At first this was not easy for me but
9 the supervisor really understood me and pushed me to be the
10 best I could be. He sent me home if I arrived late but once
11 I learned to come on time, he taught me so many things.
12 Sunflower has created a model that is extremely effective in
13 doing genuine, measurable good for young people with
14 disabilities. During my training, I and the other students
15 in my class were taught valuable skills that will enable us
16 to thrive as contributing members of our communities and as
17 adults in our own right. We learned marketable skills. I
18 became certified as a Serve Safe Manager for food safety
19 oversight and just as importantly, we learned to take pride
20 in our abilities rather than being defined by our
21 disabilities. After graduation, I was so much better
22 prepared for a job. I got a great job in a bakery but about
23 a month after I began, the bakery was sold. Now I'm
24 thinking I'd like to be able to move up. I'd like to take
25 what I have learned and share it with others. I have heard

1 that Sunflower is planning to open a café where they will
2 sell the products I learned to bake. I firmly believe this
3 will be an incredibly helpful extension of Sunflower
4 Bakery's efforts by providing an opportunity for even more
5 people like me whether their challenges include being on the
6 autism spectrum, mobility issues, nonverbal learning
7 disabilities or other developmental delays to learn how to
8 hold a job and perform it well. And with the community's
9 support, this new café can be a stable and well-structured
10 environment for students with these difficulties to lift
11 themselves up, and I hope to be a part of it, working my way
12 up as well. Any questions?

13 MS. JAMISON: Does the American with Disabilities
14 Act, does that come into play for reasonable accommodations
15 or things like that come into play, things that you might be
16 entitled to, anti-discrimination, or are you not considered
17 protected group, do you know?

18 MS. ROWNY: Sometimes and it can be difficult for
19 somebody like me because I have a nonverbal learning
20 disability. So it manifests in very different ways. And
21 some of my fellow students also had kind of, I guess what's
22 referred to an invisible disability, that it's not as
23 obvious as like, say, a mobility issue. Or a more severe
24 developmental delay. So some of these, so yes, the
25 Americans with Disabilities Act, it can help some of the

1 people who have graduated from the program but what
2 Sunflower has done is to get us to a point where we are
3 better able, despite our disabilities, to perform certain
4 kinds of work. And they get us used to routine and help us
5 with any particular individual issues that we may have,
6 whether they're spatial or verbal or what have you. So they
7 have -- I have received accommodations in the past that have
8 been helpful. But Sunflower is like, it's a very valuable
9 extra step which I believe could be very useful to people
10 like me. Anybody else? Okay. Thank you.

11 MS. JOSEPH: Is there anybody else who wants to
12 put in any testimony? Are we all done?

13 MR. GREEN: Looks like that's it.

14 MS. JOSEPH: Yeah. All right, this concludes the
15 public hearing on community development. Written testimony
16 will be accepted by the Committee until Monday, November 24,
17 2014 at 4:30 p.m. Thank you.

18 (Whereupon, at 8:55 p.m., the hearing was
19 concluded.)

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• Digitally signed by Robin Merica

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Community Development Needs

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