



Dear District 1 Residents and Friends,

It has been gently suggested (by my staff among others) that if I shared information more frequently, my normal *Berliner Brief* might actually approximate "brief." So, in that spirit, here is a very brief update on my work on your behalf.

Roger Berliner
Councilmember, District 1

HELP is On the Way

On February 24, I introduced legislation, with the support of five of my colleagues, that will create a County Home Energy Loan Program ([HELP](#)). I am more excited about the potential of this initiative than any energy and environmental legislation I have worked on over the past 30-plus years. This revolving fund will simultaneously help homeowners reduce their utility bills and their carbon emissions by 20 to 30%, put people to work in the new green economy, and not require any expenditure by the County. Under HELP, a homeowner would voluntarily obtain a home energy audit from a certified auditor, take the results to the County, and the County will provide a zero-interest 15-year loan to make the clean energy improvements, including solar. The loan is secured by a lien on the property, and the loan itself runs with the property, which means that a homeowner does not have to worry about how long they will be in their home when making such an investment. The County's role in this long-standing effort to break the financial barriers to home energy efficiency is what is so key. It has been my pleasure to work with Congressman Chris Van Hollen on this measure, as he has secured funding for HELP in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and is introducing legislation to create a federal HELP program. For more information regarding HELP, click [here](#).

Spending Disclosure Bill Passed

I am pleased to share with you that the spending disclosure legislation that I sponsored was enacted on February 24, 2009. The Bill requires the County to develop and operate a searchable public website displaying information on certain County payments to contractors and grantees that total more than \$25,000 in any fiscal year. I believe this is an important step in achieving greater government accountability and transparency for the taxpayers of Montgomery County. A similar law at the federal level was sponsored by then-Senator Obama, and Senator Raskin sponsored a similar measure at the state level. The full text of the legislation can be found [here](#).

Senior Forum on March 6

One week from today on Friday, March 6, I will be hosting a Senior Forum at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad from 2 - 4 pm. United States Senator Ben Cardin will be our featured speaker, along with Stan Hinden, former *Washington Post* financial writer and author of *How to Retire Happy*; and Commander Russ Hamill from the Montgomery County Police Department. Please see the [event flyer](#) for more information, and feel free to pass it along to anyone you think might be interested. No RSVP's are necessary, just join us!

Unsubscribing

You received this email because you have signed up for the **Councilmember Berliner (District 1)** newsletter from Montgomery County eSubscription. If you want to **unsubscribe** to this newsletter, Go to [eSubscription](#), and select **Update An Account**. When you see the list of newsletters to which you are subscribed, check off **Councilmember Berliner (District 1)** newsletter.

Privacy Policy | Accessibility

As an eSubscriber user, you agreed that we may contact you by email and use the information you submit as described in the Montgomery County [Privacy Policy](#). If you would like to opt-out of receiving a particular email at this email address, then please [unsubscribe](#) to indicate your preferences.

Please do not reply to this email. Replies to this email will not be responded to or read. If you have any questions or comments, contact us by [email](#) or postal mail: Montgomery County Government, Office of Public Information, 101 Monroe Street, 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850.