



Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak. I am Luisa Montero, director of LAYC/Maryland Multicultural Youth Center, tonight representing Nonprofit Montgomery.

During last month's public hearing on the FY 2013 budget, Nonprofit Montgomery stood along with our colleagues from the Safety Net Coalition to urge you to make key investments in nonprofit service providers that will improve our ability to continue delivering quality services to County residents. We requested a 2 percent inflationary increase to all eligible base contracts for services provided by nonprofits to help them absorb the rising costs of doing business in the County. We also requested a policy change to allow advance payments due under contracts to prevent already strapped providers from having to deliver services up front and then wait a quarter to be reimbursed.

We applaud the County for taking concrete positive steps on both requests. As you all know, since that hearing, the Leggett administration announced a new pilot policy to provide advance payments on select contracts with nonprofits up to \$25,999. We also understand that, as part of your own deliberations of this budget, you are looking at an inflationary increase for eligible contracts with nonprofits.

Tonight, we affirm our support for fair revenue-raising measures that allow the County to make sufficient investments in community needs without harming those we aim to assist. We think the proposed ambulance fee is just such a measure, and we support its adoption in Montgomery County.

We understand that this fee would pose no additional burden to Montgomery County residents regardless of their insurance status, and that we are the only jurisdiction in the region that currently does not charge this fee. Most importantly, we understand that this measure could raise as much as \$18 million per year in additional revenue. No one would argue that this is revenue that could not be put to good use.

The recent economic downturn was a tough time for the entire County, and we know that safety net programs and those vulnerable residents who benefit from them, were some of the hardest hit, enduring three successive years of brutal cuts. At the same time, the need for assistance rose. We tightened our belts, however, and tried to maintain services even as the downturn drove more and more people to our doors with requests for food, shelter, health care and other basic needs. Demand is still high, as the recovery has yet to trickle down to our residents who experience the most need.

Last month, we urged the County to begin reinvesting in its nonprofit partners who serve more than half of the County's residents. This month, we want to support a reasonable revenue option that will help you to make that investment.

The nonprofit community is committed as ever to partnering with the County. We support responsible options for raising revenue that are fairly distributed, and help the County meet its obligations.

Thank you.