

# Public Comment and Questions - Web Submissions - March 10, 2025

## Public Forum

Total Submissions: 13

Date Received	Note	Submission	Details
19-Feb-25		<b>Name *</b>	Rebekah Jacobs
		What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *	District 3
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<a href="https://bethesdamagazine.com/2020/10/05/high-school-principals-support-keeping-sros-school-district-says/">Will SRO's return to MCPS high schools? How effective has the community engagement officer program been? Many principals wanted SROs (https://bethesdamagazine.com/2020/10/05/high-school-principals-support-keeping-sros-school-district-says/) in schools not ONLY for school safety, but because SROs built relationships and created positive police interactions.</a>
20-Feb-25		<b>Name *</b>	Michael McKinney
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Cities 60 years
		What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *	District 6
		<u>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</u>	Why would you want to police searching someone under the current laws. Who mine suspicious situations are called in. Do to all the vehicles stolen and theft of our belongings from our vehicles. They will no longer be able to stop suspects at 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning. Your hanging in a not acting right. This proposal is actually insane. Why and stop with the the racial crap. This police department is one of the most monitored from body cameras to the state of

			maryland to the federal government. Is that dog just don't hunt, No more. Why Why?
22-Feb-25		<b>Name *</b>	Mary Anne Clark
		What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *	District 3
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	I was born and raised in MoCo and have lived here 71years. It is very sad how enforcement of the law has devolved. I am left to wonder why County officials continue to tie the hands of law enforcement officers and release repeat offenders, even juveniles, onto our streets to reoffend. Changing the definition of consent to search is just one more legislative step in the wrong direction. You imply that people in Montgomery County are not smart enough, educated enough, experienced enough to understand "consent"?? Add this to its Ok to have expired plates, registration and therefore no insurance and all the other efforts being made to tie the hands of our dedicated police officers. What's next, just get rid of police all together and let people do as they may?? ENOUGH ALREADY!!
27-Feb-25		<b>Name *</b>	Susan Burkinshaw
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	District 5
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	I am writing to express my support for consent searches. When used appropriately, as in our county historically, they are a best-practice precision tool that has proven to yield many benefits, including finding weapons that otherwise may not be recovered. Furthermore, they have not been overused in Montgomery County, as indicated by body worn camera footage. More importantly, we should be considering reinstating the best practice School Resource Officer program - a prevention and intervention community-wide program that demonstrated proven taxpayer benefits when looking at positive officer relationships with students, preventing countywide crime and efficiencies in officer deployment that benefited the county at large. The made-up CEO

			program should be eliminated and a proven best-practice School Resource Officer program should be reinstated. That, in conjunction with continuing the prudent use of consent searches, may help to undo the damage caused by our county leaders scripted "advocates" that have eviscerated our county police program. Please protect the black and brown people of our county, who are disproportionally victims of crime here. The social experiment of defunding the police in Montgomery County must be ended immediately.
3-Mar-25		<b>Name *</b>	Ferd Hoefner
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Presbyterians for Police Transformation
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	District 4

		<p><b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing</b></p> <p>*</p>	<p>Presbyterians for Police Transformation is a 5-year old ministry of the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church. We commend you for scheduling the upcoming March 10 meeting concerning consent searches.</p> <p>We strongly supported the Freedom to Leave Act. Please read more about us and our views on the bill in our testimony before the County Council at <a href="https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2024/20240227/testimony/item10-FerdHoefner.pdf">https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2024/20240227/testimony/item10-FerdHoefner.pdf</a>.</p> <p>While we are saddened that the bill did not move forward, we were nonetheless pleased there were some administrative changes made in the aftermath. As we recently wrote to the PAB:</p> <p>"We agree with your recommendation for better translation tools, improved officer training on the voluntary nature of consent searches, and standardized protocols. While we are disappointed the Council did not approve the Freedom to Leave Act, we are glad that citizen pressure resulted in some minimal policy revisions at the administrative level, as announced on December 2 by MCPD. Considering those revisions, including the new consent search application, we strongly encourage the Board to provide oversight of the implementation of these revisions, and to ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the new requirements for consent searches being faithfully and consistently followed?</li> <li>• Is the consent search app clear and understandable to the driver?</li> <li>• Are all consent searches being reviewed within 5 days by an executive staff member, and are the reviews turning up any problems?</li> <li>• Has the revised process resulted in any changes to racial disparities regarding traffic stops in general as well as consent searches in particular?"</li> </ul> <p>We encourage the ACP to ask and seek answers to these same questions! We are also quite concerned that the administrative changes from last December encourage but do not require reasonable and articulable suspicion prior to any consent search. This current policy ambiguity is not at all helpful to the officers involved and makes it all but impossible to determine and adjudicate violations. We strongly encourage you to recommend a mandatory 'reasonable and articulable suspicion' standard for all consent searches!</p> <p>Thank you again for scheduling this meeting on consent searches and for considering our questions and recommendation.</p> <p>Ferd Hoefner, on behalf of the Takoma Park and Silver Spring members of Presbyterians for Police Transformation</p>
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4-Mar-25		<b>Name*</b>	Nell Rumbaugh
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 2
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>Consent searches do not violate the 4th amendment.</p> <p>County council's (esp jawando &amp; mink &amp; their small but loyal parade of activists) have undermined the constitution &amp; policing to such an extent that it has resulted in the present crime rates. Criminals are committing crime with impunity thanks to your efforts. Around our schools, on our roads, at local banks, at our malls.</p> <p>It's time to get this county back to be a safe and pleasant place to live and leadership needs to repair the damage it has done.</p> <p>Take action to hold up the members of law enforcement, not tear them down. Make this place safe. Do a ride along every week with the police. Ask your children if they feel safe going in the bathrooms of their schools. Look at how people drive around here. this place is increasingly dangerous and unpleasant &amp; you have made it this way.</p>
4-Mar-25		<b>Name *</b>	Ruth Rumbaugh
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Ruth
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 2

		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>The advisory board should NOT be getting monetary by Council members! This is called a "conflict of interest". Pretty basic concept. Any advisory committee needs to be completely independent.</p> <p>Also, law enforcement can not be expected to make no mistakes. Everyone in every kind of job makes mistakes. Our police morale is atrocious and criminals morale is up.</p> <p>Montgomery county is dangerous and unpleasant; leadership has created this present state.</p>
		<b>Name *</b>	Andrea Simon
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Concerned citizen who supports the Montgomery County Police Department
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	District 3
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>1. My understanding is that the ACC has received ZERO complaints regarding consent searches, so why is this a topic on which the ACP has decided to focus? It has never been easier to file a complaint. People who testify before council regarding troublesome police interactions should be advised to file a complaint so that the body-worn camera footage can be reviewed.</p> <p>2. The ACP has already taken a stance on consent searches in testimony submitted to council: "...we ask that you...fully ban consent searches in Montgomery County." If the ACP hears at this forum that the public supports the consent search policy as it currently stands, will the ACP support the will of the people?</p> <p>3. The "disparity" issue is misleading, given that so many traffic stops involve drivers who don't reside in MoCo. Any supposed disparity must be viewed regionally. But when you talk about disparity, please be sure to acknowledge that crime victims in MoCo are disproportionately people of color. So when you ban or limit consent searches, and that leads to illegal guns remaining in circulation that could otherwise have been seized, please think of who that gun</p>

			<p>is destined for, or on whom it may have already been used.</p> <p>4. Disparity does not equal bias. That would mean no other variables are at play. To extrapolate on that "logic," if a disparate number of males age 18-25 account for all arrests, that does not mean that police are biased against males age 18-25. If very few senior adults, relative to census, are arrested, that does not mean that police are biased toward senior adults.</p> <p>5. Officers report being subjected to a tremendous amount of disrespect and threats. Anyone who believes otherwise should go on ride-alongs and watch body-worn camera footage. Councilmember Luedtke has stated: "I've been present with police when I've watched a young person get in your face, scream at you, utter expletives about police. And I was on a ride-along in June in downtown Silver Spring where I watched the biracial officer who was with a female African-American officer who also showed up to handle that call both have projectiles thrown at them along with the screaming, all because they just asked, 'could you please not stay on the staircase of this building because you're obstructing entrance and exit from the building.'" To assert that people are always afraid to say no to police is untruthful. Besides, camera footage shows the truth of the interaction.</p> <p>6. I trust our police officers. They are the ones who have knowledge, experience and expertise, and they know back stories to which we are not privy. They are the ones who put on bulletproof vests and leave their loved ones every day to protect people of all backgrounds in MoCo. I am skeptical of people who sit in chambers and on boards, who have never even gone on ride-alongs or attended the citizens' academy, telling the subject matter experts how to do their job. And, at the end of the day, we have body worn camera footage that tells the truth of every interaction. If an officer acts in bad faith, it's memorialized on video.</p>
5-Mar-25		<b>Name *</b>	Joanna Silver
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Silver Spring Justice Coalition
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not</u>	District 6

		<a href="#">know, please see the County District Map *</a>	
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>Please accept this statement on behalf of the Silver Spring Justice Coalition in conjunction with the March 10 ACP meeting on MCPD's Consent Search Policy: MCPD's consent search policy was modified as a compromise in lieu of further consideration of the Freedom to Leave Act. The Freedom to Leave Act would have banned all consent searches during traffic stops absent documented reasonable and articulable suspicion that evidence of a crime or criminal conduct would be found inside a vehicle. MCPD's Consent Search Policy does not achieve what the Freedom to Leave Act would have required and leaves Montgomery County's drivers, especially its most vulnerable drivers of color, at continued risk of over-policing and harm. Not only is the policy completely voluntary (whereas the Freedom to Leave Act would have required the policy to be in effect), it does not actually prohibit consent searches in any circumstance. Instead, it simply states that consent searches "should" not be performed absent reasonable and articulable suspicion. Moreover, it does not provide any guidance to officers to determine when they "should" or should not decide to conduct a consent search absent reasonable and articulable suspicion. The absence of any bright-line rules in the policy means there is no way to determine whether an officer violated the policy, creating an ambiguity that is unfair both to members of the public who might be searched and to officers who might be disciplined. Finally, we know from the data and from hearing from many community members, that the absence of formal complaints filed by members of the public does not mean that consent searches and the traffic stops that lead to them are being performed properly, equitably, or without bias. This policy is insufficient. It must be amended to substitute the word "should" with "shall" or "must," and the policy must be required by County law; it cannot remain in existence at the discretion of the current police Chief.</p>
6-Mar-25		<b>Name*</b>	Jordy Diaz
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Young People for Progress

		<a href="#"><u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u></a>	District 1
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>On behalf of Young People for Progress (YPP), I am submitting the following question regarding MCPD's Consent Search Policy, as discussed during the December 9, 2024, Public Safety Committee briefing.</p> <p>MCPD's current policy states that consent searches "should" not be performed absent reasonable and articulable suspicion, yet it does not explicitly prohibit them under any circumstance. This lack of clarity creates ambiguity, leaving officers without clear guidance on when consent searches are permissible and preventing the public from fully understanding their rights. Additionally, this wording makes it difficult to determine whether an officer has violated the policy, undermining accountability and enforcement.</p> <p>We supported the Freedom to Leave Act because data consistently shows that consent searches disproportionately impact communities of color without significantly improving public safety. Studies indicate that Black and Latino drivers are more likely to be subjected to consent searches, despite being less likely than white drivers to have contraband. In Montgomery County, this disparity is evident: Black residents make up 18% of the population but account for 43% of all searches (OLO Report 2022-12). Furthermore, these searches rarely lead to the recovery of firearms—only 1 in 205 traffic stops (less than 0.5%) result in a firearm being found (Montgomery County Council briefing, February 6, 2023). Additionally, research highlights that many individuals feel pressured to consent, particularly those facing language barriers, disabilities, racial profiling, or prior negative experiences with law enforcement (William J. Stuntz, "Miranda's Mistake"). Given MCPD's staffing shortages, resources would be better allocated toward addressing more serious offenses rather than conducting ineffective searches with minimal returns.</p> <p>Given these findings, we ask the following:</p> <p>Why does MCPD's policy use the term "should" rather than "must" in restricting</p>

			<p>consent searches absent reasonable and articulable suspicion?</p> <p>What specific criteria, if any, does MCPD provide to officers to determine when they “should” or should not conduct a consent search?</p> <p>How does MCPD ensure accountability when the policy lacks clear, enforceable language, and how will officers and the public be able to determine whether a violation has occurred?</p> <p>Does MCPD collect and publicly report data on consent searches, including racial and demographic breakdowns, to assess potential bias in their application?</p>
7-Mar-25	Direct to Council Staff	<b>Name*</b>	Mark Disler
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	4

		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>I have two questions for Chief Yamada and a comment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the advantages police consent searches provide for the safety of the residents of Montgomery County?</li> <li>2. What changes did the MCPD's consent search policy of December 2, 2024 make to the consent search policy that existed prior to that date?</li> </ol> <p>"Residents of Montgomery County are entitled to safe communities and the fair enforcement of the law. These goals, properly understood and undertaken, are not in conflict.</p> <p>Consent searches are a valid and constitutional means for law enforcement officers to help keep County residents safe. The MCPD should ensure its officers are trained in their fair administration. Calls for their blanket elimination reflect a disturbing distrust of County law enforcement and a disregard for public safety.</p> <p>While not constitutionally required, the MCPD has imposed a number of procedures for the conduct of consent searches. These procedures should be periodically assessed to ensure they are not so burdensome as to discourage constitutionally conducted searches that would otherwise have been undertaken in furtherance of public safety.</p> <p>County government should redouble its efforts to address the alarming staffing crisis in the MCPD instead of discouraging and demoralizing County law enforcement officers by pursuing policies that impede public safety and reflect a disturbing mistrust of County law enforcement."</p>
7-Mar-25		<b>Name *</b>	Janelle Wright
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Avenel Community Association
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	District 1
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>Does Montgomery County consider national crime statistics when making decisions about the investigative tools available to the Montgomery County Police Department? Specifically, has Montgomery County considered statistics about the percentage of arrests that are made, in part, by the use of license plate readers or the percentage of arrests that follow from mundane traffic stops? Thank you for considering my question.</p>

7-Mar-25	Direct to Council Staff	<b>Name *</b>	Natalia Paley Whitman
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Jews United for Justice
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>The concept of tzelem elohim — the idea that all people are created in the Divine image and therefore are equally precious and worthy — is central to Judaism. It is so central that our sacred texts declare that destroying even one life is akin to destroying a whole world. But here in Montgomery County, police consent searches are not treating Black and Brown residents as the divine beings that all of us are. Both County-wide data and the personal stories of residents who have experienced consent searches demonstrate that they are not being used equitably and that especially Black residents are much more likely to be subjected to this form of interrogation. Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) believes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council should pass a law requiring a consent search policy with minimum standards, as were set forth in the Freedom to Leave Act. A voluntary policy that can be changed or withdrawn at any time does not provide the community with the protection and assurance it needs.</li> <li>• The current MCPD consent search policy does not prohibit consent searches absent reasonable and articulable suspicion, nor does it provide guidance to officers to determine when they “should” or should not decide to conduct a consent search. MCPD should amend its policy to replace the word “should” with the word “must” or “shall.”</li> <li>• MCPD's repeated insistence that a lack of formal complaints about consent searches means that these searches are being performed properly, equitably,</li> </ul>

			<p>and without bias is incorrect.</p> <p>We join with our partners, including Young People for Progress and the Silver Spring Justice Coalition, to urge the county to take the necessary steps to make traffic stops more safe and equitable.</p>
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Date Received	Note	Submission	Details
45707		<b>Name *</b>	Rebekah Jacobs
		What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *	District 3
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<a href="https://bethesdamagazine.com/2020/10/05/high-school-principals-support-keeping-sros-school-district-says/">Will SRO's return to MCPS high schools? How effective has the community engagement officer program been? Many principals wanted SROs (https://bethesdamagazine.com/2020/10/05/high-school-principals-support-keeping-sros-school-district-says/) in schools not ONLY for school safety, but because SROs built relationships and created positive police interactions.</a>
45708		<b>Name *</b>	Michael McKinney
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Cities 60 years
		What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *	District 6
		<u>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</u>	Why would you want to police searching someone under the current laws. Who mine suspicious situations are called in. Do to all the vehicles stolen and theft of our belongings from our vehicles. They will no longer be able to stop suspects at 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning. Your hanging in a not acting right. This proposal is actually insane. Why and stop with the the racial crap. This police department is one of the most monitored from body cameras to the state of maryland to the federal government. Is that dog just don't hunt, No more. Why Why?
45710		<b>Name *</b>	Mary Anne Clark
		What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not	District 3

		know, please see the County District Map *	
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	I was born and raised in MoCo and have lived here 71years. It is very sad how enforcement of the law has devolved. I am left to wonder why County officials continue to tie the hands of law enforcement officers and release repeat offenders, even juveniles, onto our streets to reoffend. Changing the definition of consent to search is just one more legislative step in the wrong direction. You imply that people in Montgomery County are not smart enough, educated enough, experienced enough to understand "consent"?? Add this to its Ok to have expired plates, registration and therefore no insurance and all the other efforts being made to tie the hands of our dedicated police officers. What's next, just get rid of police all together and let people do as they may?? ENOUGH ALREADY!!
45715		<b>Name *</b>	Susan Burkinshaw
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 5
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	I am writing to express my support for consent searches. When used appropriately, as in our county historically, they are a best-practice precision tool that has proven to yield many benefits, including finding weapons that otherwise may not be recovered. Furthermore, they have not been overused in Montgomery County, as indicated by body worn camera footage. More importantly, we should be considering reinstating the best practice School Resource Officer program - a prevention and intervention community-wide program that demonstrated proven taxpayer benefits when looking at positive officer relationships with students, preventing countywide crime and efficiencies in officer deployment that benefited the county at large. The made-up CEO program should be eliminated and a proven best-practice School Resource Officer program should be reinstated. That, in conjunction with continuing the prudent use of consent searches, may help to undo the damage caused by our county leaders scripted "advocates" that have eviscerated our county police program. Please protect the black and brown people of our

			county, who are disproportionally victims of crime here. The social experiment of defunding the police in Montgomery County must be ended immediately.
45719		<b>Name *</b>	Ferd Hoefner
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Presbyterians for Police Transformation
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 4
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>Presbyterians for Police Transformation is a 5-year old ministry of the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church. We commend you for scheduling the upcoming March 10 meeting concerning consent searches.</p> <p>We strongly supported the Freedom to Leave Act. Please read more about us and our views on the bill in our testimony before the County Council at <a href="https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2024/20240227/testimony/item10-FerdHoefner.pdf">https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2024/20240227/testimony/item10-FerdHoefner.pdf</a>.</p> <p>While we are saddened that the bill did not move forward, we were nonetheless pleased there were some administrative changes made in the aftermath. As we recently wrote to the PAB:</p> <p>"We agree with your recommendation for better translation tools, improved officer training on the voluntary nature of consent searches, and standardized protocols. While we are disappointed the Council did not approve the Freedom to Leave Act, we are glad that citizen pressure resulted in some minimal policy revisions at the administrative level, as announced on December 2 by MCPD. Considering those revisions, including the new consent search application, we strongly encourage the Board to provide oversight of the implementation of these revisions, and to ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the new requirements for consent searches being faithfully and consistently followed?</li> <li>• Is the consent search app clear and understandable to the driver?</li> <li>• Are all consent searches being reviewed within 5 days by an executive staff member, and are the reviews turning up any problems?</li> <li>• Has the revised process resulted in any changes to racial disparities regarding traffic stops in general as well as consent searches in particular?"</li> </ul> <p>We encourage the ACP to ask and seek answers to these same questions!</p>

			<p>We are also quite concerned that the administrative changes from last December encourage but do not require reasonable and articulable suspicion prior to any consent search. This current policy ambiguity is not at all helpful to the officers involved and makes it all but impossible to determine and adjudicate violations. We strongly encourage you to recommend a mandatory 'reasonable and articulable suspicion' standard for all consent searches!</p> <p>Thank you again for scheduling this meeting on consent searches and for considering our questions and recommendation.</p> <p>Ferd Hoefner, on behalf of the Takoma Park and Silver Spring members of Presbyterians for Police Transformation</p>
45720		<b>Name*</b>	Nell Rumbaugh
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 2
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>Consent searches do not violate the 4th amendment.</p> <p>County council's (esp jawando &amp; mink &amp; their small but loyal parade of activists) have undermined the constitution &amp; policing to such an extent that it has resulted in the present crime rates. Criminals are committing crime with impunity thanks to your efforts. Around our schools, on our roads, at local banks, at our malls.</p> <p>It's time to get this county back to be a safe and pleasant place to live and leadership needs to repair the damage it has done.</p> <p>Take action to hold up the members of law enforcement, not tear them down. Make this place safe. Do a ride along every week with the police. Ask your children if they feel safe going in the bathrooms of their schools. Look at how people drive around here. this place is increasingly dangerous and unpleasant &amp; you have made it this way.</p>
45720		<b>Name *</b>	Ruth Rumbaugh

		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Ruth
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 2
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>The advisory board should NOT be getting monetary by Council members! This is called a “conflict of interest”. Pretty basic concept. Any advisory committee needs to be completely independent.</p> <p>Also, law enforcement can not be expected to make no mistakes. Everyone in every kind of job makes mistakes. Our police morale is atrocious and criminals morale is up.</p> <p>Montgomery county is dangerous and unpleasant; leadership has created this present state.</p>
		<b>Name *</b>	Andrea Simon
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Concerned citizen who supports the Montgomery County Police Department
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 3

		<p><b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing</b> ★</p>	<p>1. My understanding is that the ACC has received ZERO complaints regarding consent searches, so why is this a topic on which the ACP has decided to focus? It has never been easier to file a complaint. People who testify before council regarding troublesome police interactions should be advised to file a complaint so that the body-worn camera footage can be reviewed.</p> <p>2. The ACP has already taken a stance on consent searches in testimony submitted to council: "...we ask that you...fully ban consent searches in Montgomery County." If the ACP hears at this forum that the public supports the consent search policy as it currently stands, will the ACP support the will of the people?</p> <p>3. The "disparity" issue is misleading, given that so many traffic stops involve drivers who don't reside in MoCo. Any supposed disparity must be viewed regionally. But when you talk about disparity, please be sure to acknowledge that crime victims in MoCo are disproportionately people of color. So when you ban or limit consent searches, and that leads to illegal guns remaining in circulation that could otherwise have been seized, please think of who that gun is destined for, or on whom it may have already been used.</p> <p>4. Disparity does not equal bias. That would mean no other variables are at play. To extrapolate on that "logic," if a disparate number of males age 18-25 account for all arrests, that does not mean that police are biased against males age 18-25. If very few senior adults, relative to census, are arrested, that does not mean that police are biased toward senior adults.</p> <p>5. Officers report being subjected to a tremendous amount of disrespect and threats. Anyone who believes otherwise should go on ride-alongs and watch body-worn camera footage. Councilmember Luedtke has stated: "I've been present with police when I've watched a young person get in your face, scream at you, utter expletives about police. And I was on a ride-along in June in downtown Silver Spring where I watched the biracial officer who was with a female African-American officer who also showed up to handle that call both have projectiles thrown at them along with the screaming, all because they just</p>
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			<p>asked, ‘could you please not stay on the staircase of this building because you’re obstructing entrance and exit from the building.’” To assert that people are always afraid to say no to police is untruthful. Besides, camera footage shows the truth of the interaction.</p> <p>6. I trust our police officers. They are the ones who have knowledge, experience and expertise, and they know back stories to which we are not privy. They are the ones who put on bulletproof vests and leave their loved ones every day to protect people of all backgrounds in MoCo. I am skeptical of people who sit in chambers and on boards, who have never even gone on ride-alongs or attended the citizens' academy, telling the subject matter experts how to do their job. And, at the end of the day, we have body worn camera footage that tells the truth of every interaction. If an officer acts in bad faith, it's memorialized on video.</p>
45721		<b>Name *</b>	Joanna Silver
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Silver Spring Justice Coalition
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 6

		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	Please accept this statement on behalf of the Silver Spring Justice Coalition in conjunction with the March 10 ACP meeting on MCPD's Consent Search Policy: MCPD's consent search policy was modified as a compromise in lieu of further consideration of the Freedom to Leave Act. The Freedom to Leave Act would have banned all consent searches during traffic stops absent documented reasonable and articulable suspicion that evidence of a crime or criminal conduct would be found inside a vehicle. MCPD's Consent Search Policy does not achieve what the Freedom to Leave Act would have required and leaves Montgomery County's drivers, especially its most vulnerable drivers of color, at continued risk of over-policing and harm. Not only is the policy completely voluntary (whereas the Freedom to Leave Act would have required the policy to be in effect), it does not actually prohibit consent searches in any circumstance. Instead, it simply states that consent searches "should" not be performed absent reasonable and articulable suspicion. Moreover, it does not provide any guidance to officers to determine when they "should" or should not decide to conduct a consent search absent reasonable and articulable suspicion. The absence of any bright-line rules in the policy means there is no way to determine whether an officer violated the policy, creating an ambiguity that is unfair both to members of the public who might be searched and to officers who might be disciplined. Finally, we know from the data and from hearing from many community members, that the absence of formal complaints filed by members of the public does not mean that consent searches and the traffic stops that lead to them are being performed properly, equitably, or without bias. This policy is insufficient. It must be amended to substitute the word "should" with "shall" or "must," and the policy must be required by County law; it cannot remain in existence at the discretion of the current police Chief.
45722		<b>Name*</b>	Jordy Diaz
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Young People for Progress
		<u>What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</u>	District 1

		<p><b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing</b> ★</p> <p>On behalf of Young People for Progress (YPP), I am submitting the following question regarding MCPD’s Consent Search Policy, as discussed during the December 9, 2024, Public Safety Committee briefing.</p> <p>MCPD’s current policy states that consent searches “should” not be performed absent reasonable and articulable suspicion, yet it does not explicitly prohibit them under any circumstance. This lack of clarity creates ambiguity, leaving officers without clear guidance on when consent searches are permissible and preventing the public from fully understanding their rights. Additionally, this wording makes it difficult to determine whether an officer has violated the policy, undermining accountability and enforcement.</p> <p>We supported the Freedom to Leave Act because data consistently shows that consent searches disproportionately impact communities of color without significantly improving public safety. Studies indicate that Black and Latino drivers are more likely to be subjected to consent searches, despite being less likely than white drivers to have contraband. In Montgomery County, this disparity is evident: Black residents make up 18% of the population but account for 43% of all searches (OLO Report 2022-12). Furthermore, these searches rarely lead to the recovery of firearms—only 1 in 205 traffic stops (less than 0.5%) result in a firearm being found (Montgomery County Council briefing, February 6, 2023). Additionally, research highlights that many individuals feel pressured to consent, particularly those facing language barriers, disabilities, racial profiling, or prior negative experiences with law enforcement (William J. Stuntz, "Miranda’s Mistake"). Given MCPD’s staffing shortages, resources would be better allocated toward addressing more serious offenses rather than conducting ineffective searches with minimal returns.</p> <p>Given these findings, we ask the following:</p> <p>Why does MCPD’s policy use the term “should” rather than “must” in restricting consent searches absent reasonable and articulable suspicion? What specific criteria, if any, does MCPD provide to officers to determine when they “should” or should not conduct a consent search?</p>
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			<p>How does MCPD ensure accountability when the policy lacks clear, enforceable language, and how will officers and the public be able to determine whether a violation has occurred?</p> <p>Does MCPD collect and publicly report data on consent searches, including racial and demographic breakdowns, to assess potential bias in their application?</p>
45723	Director to Council Staff	<b>Name*</b>	Mark Disler
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	4
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	<p>I have two questions for Chief Yamada and a comment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the advantages police consent searches provide for the safety of the residents of Montgomery County?</li> <li>2. What changes did the MCPD's consent search policy of December 2, 2024 make to the consent search policy that existed prior to that date?</li> </ol> <p>"Residents of Montgomery County are entitled to safe communities and the fair enforcement of the law. These goals, properly understood and undertaken, are not in conflict.</p> <p>Consent searches are a valid and constitutional means for law enforcement officers to help keep County residents safe. The MCPD should ensure its officers are trained in their fair administration. Calls for their blanket elimination reflect a disturbing distrust of County law enforcement and a disregard for public safety.</p> <p>While not constitutionally required, the MCPD has imposed a number of procedures for the conduct of consent searches. These procedures should be periodically assessed to ensure they are not so burdensome as to discourage constitutionally conducted searches that would otherwise have been</p>

			undertaken in furtherance of public safety. County government should redouble its efforts to address the alarming staffing crisis in the MCPD instead of discouraging and demoralizing County law enforcement officers by pursuing policies that impede public safety and reflect a disturbing mistrust of County law enforcement."
45723		<b>Name *</b>	Janelle Wright
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Avenel Community Association
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	District 1
		<b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing *</b>	Does Montgomery County consider national crime statistics when making decisions about the investigative tools available to the Montgomery County Police Department? Specifically, has Montgomery County considered statistics about the percentage of arrests that are made, in part, by the use of license plate readers or the percentage of arrests that follow from mundane traffic stops? Thank you for considering my question.
45723	Direct to Council Staff	<b>Name *</b>	Natalia Paley Whitman
		<b>Organizational Affiliation, if any</b>	Jews United for Justice
		<a href="#">What district in Montgomery County do you live in? If you do not know, please see the County District Map *</a>	

		<p><b>Question/Comment for the Advisory Commission on Policing</b> ★</p>	<p>The concept of tzelem elohim — the idea that all people are created in the Divine image and therefore are equally precious and worthy — is central to Judaism. It is so central that our sacred texts declare that destroying even one life is akin to destroying a whole world. But here in Montgomery County, police consent searches are not treating Black and Brown residents as the divine beings that all of us are. Both County-wide data and the personal stories of residents who have experienced consent searches demonstrate that they are not being used equitably and that especially Black residents are much more likely to be subjected to this form of interrogation. Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) believes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council should pass a law requiring a consent search policy with minimum standards, as were set forth in the Freedom to Leave Act. A voluntary policy that can be changed or withdrawn at any time does not provide the community with the protection and assurance it needs.</li> <li>• The current MCPD consent search policy does not prohibit consent searches absent reasonable and articulable suspicion, nor does it provide guidance to officers to determine when they “should” or should not decide to conduct a consent search. MCPD should amend its policy to replace the word “should” with the word “must” or “shall.”</li> <li>• MCPD's repeated insistence that a lack of formal complaints about consent searches means that these searches are being performed properly, equitably, and without bias is incorrect.</li> </ul> <p>We join with our partners, including Young People for Progress and the Silver Spring Justice Coalition, to urge the county to take the necessary steps to make traffic stops more safe and equitable.</p>
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