

Testimony for Council Hearing for the Pro-School Resource Officer Bill (Bill 7-21)

As a former teacher, a concerned citizen of Montgomery County, and a member of Jews United for Justice, I support removal of SROs from our schools. Vulnerable youth and teenagers deserve to be educated in a safe and nurturing environment. Fear of arrest and incarceration have no place in our schools. When incidents arise, school staff should have social workers and mental health personnel to assist them in mitigating problems. These types of resources can work on a proactive and long-term basis with students who need help in working appropriately within the school environment. SROs react to situations. Their solutions often end children's education and socialization opportunities and push them into the criminal justice system. The statistics show that the arrests and incarcerations affect students of color and those with disabilities disproportionately. We in Montgomery County voted to ensure racial equality in our laws and decisions that affect our community.

Sincerely,

Barbara Schaffer

Rockville, MD 20850