

Hello. My name is Jennifer Diamond, and I support the efforts described in Thrive 2050 to make Montgomery County a more affordable place to live. I was born and raised in Montgomery County. I've lived in Silver Spring and worked in the DC area as an adult for the past seven years. I work in the nonprofit sector, and due to the cost of living in this part of the county, for five of those years, I had a roommate. When I began searching for my own apartment in Silver Spring, I found myself priced out of many modern, centrally-located apartment buildings, while simultaneously earning too much to qualify for income restricted apartments. On the rare occasion when I was able to find an apartment I liked within my budget range, the cost of parking and utilities priced me out again. I now spend half of my monthly take home income on rent, instead of the recommended 33% for all housing expenses. With saving for the future, this reduces the amount I can contribute to investing in the local economy. I believe that everyone, of all races and incomes, should be able to find safe, clean affordable housing without having to compromise on features that are important to them, such as location, space, appliances, or air conditioning. People who work in the nonprofit sector, or other industries where salaries may be lower than average should not be penalized for not earning six figures or more. There needs to be more affordable, and attainable, housing for people who earn \$50,000 or less. I support any policies that make it easier for people to find an affordable place to live, including allowing more types of housing, funding affordable housing programs, strong renters rights, and expanding homeownership programs. Thank you.