



Dear Montgomery County Councilmembers:

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and our members across Montgomery County, I ask you to support Council Bill 35-21 with amendments. Whenever taxpayer dollars are getting used on construction, be it through Capital Improvement or given as a Tax Incentive, the wages earned by the workers on the project should be the county's prevailing wage to ensure local workers work on local projects.

The original Davis Bacon Act (Prevailing Wage) was created to protect local works and wages. It ensured that low-wage workers from out of state did not come and take jobs from higher-wage employees, lowering the market wage in an area and then sending their money back home to their families. In addition, it was designed to protect the market wage rate and ensure that local workers worked on local construction projects. Eventually, a companion law called the McNamara O'Hara Service Act of 1965 was created to protect the same group of workers as they serviced mechanical systems in the completed construction project.

In the last two years, the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia have both updated or created their Prevailing Wage laws with the same threshold and wage standards as Council Bill 35-21 to protect their local works. In addition, Arlington County, Virginia, Baltimore County, Maryland, and Anne Arundel County, Maryland have also worked on their local laws in these states. This bill will bring Montgomery County in line with the State of Maryland and other surrounding counties regarding construction wages, expand Prevailing Wage to include Public-Private Partnerships, and emphasize the hire of local workers.

An amendment to Council Bill 35-21, introduced by Councilman Hucker, will also let Montgomery County, the most progressive county in Maryland, lead the way on construction service. Amending this legislation to match service contracts to the McNamara Ohara Act will ensure that the people servicing the mechanical systems such as plumbing, HVAC, Sprinklers, elevators, Electrical earn the same wages for these completed construction projects as they will building them.

Council Bill 35-21 will protect local works and help keep taxpayer dollars in the county. It will ensure that a construction worker from Montgomery County isn't losing a job to a construction worker from Mississippi or Alabama just because those workers are willing to earn half the wages of the local worker.

On behalf of our members and all Plumbers and Steamfitters across Montgomery County, I ask you to support Council Bill 35-21 with the amendment to align mechanical service contracts with the federal McNamara-O'Hara Act.

Sincerely,

Jason Ascher
Political Director
Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association