



November 28, 2021

Members of the Montgomery County Council

Dear Montgomery County Councilmembers,

I am Bill Tompkins, Executive Vice President & COO of the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. I also volunteer as a Leadership Team member of Montgomery Moving Forward. I am writing in support of Bill 42-21 on the Early Care and Education Coordinating Entity.

Thanks to all the County councilmembers for co- sponsoring this legislation, including Council Vice President Albornoz, and Councilmembers Navarro and Rice for leading this effort.

There are many important reasons to support this, but I would like to focus on its importance towards advancing Montgomery County's economic development efforts. Simply speaking, having a stronger coordinated network of services to provide support, guidance and a stronger educational experience for the County's children beginning at their earliest formative years helps ensure that we have a strong and healthy network of workers for tomorrow. Combining this focused effort with the positive personal, productive, and financial impact a coordinating entity will have on parents and employers, creates a win/win for Montgomery County as a great place to live, work, and play. It also makes us more competitive and alluring when people have a choice as to where to live.

The current pandemic has had a disproportionate personal and financial impact on businesses and families, and their ability to recover. We are not all at the same level of stability and without doing some things differently, we may never be. The childcare system was turned upside down by the pandemic and its impact will have a potentially lasting negative effect on children's' long term learning ability, and on equity in the workplace as we see large numbers of workers (many more women than men) leaving the workforce to address childcare needs.

Its time to do some things differently. Government cannot do it all on its own, and without the combined and significant involvement of businesses, parents, educators and other stakeholders, the current childcare system cannot be improved to meet the needs of our society. An independent coordinating entity which embraces both the private and public sector ensures a better sense of participation and accountability and moves us towards a high quality more equitable and successful system for early childcare and education.

Please vote in support of Bill 42-21 as it will go a long way towards helping our children and our parents succeed and towards a brighter future for Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

*Bill Tompkins*

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