

Once again I forlornly submit my correspondence, below, as written testimony. Please repeal the mask mandate. I am tired of the Council—the Council, not COVID—making Montgomery County an unpleasant place to live and work.

Dear County Executive Elrich and Members of the Council:

It was with fury and despair that I read this morning of yet another amendment to the Council's mask rules, with yet another alleged end date and yet another set of metrics. I would be a fool at this point to believe that if the metrics are met, or if we hit the end of February and they aren't, the mandate will be allowed to expire. I write, as a resident of Montgomery County, to urge in the strongest terms that the Council do nothing: just let the mask mandate expire.

The enactment of CDC's mask recommendations into county law was a regulatory fiasco that has never made sense in this highly vaccinated county. The enactment of a (high!) vaccination threshold was a sensible, if conservative off-ramp.

But the extension in January was a breach of trust: the Council repealed the vaccination metric because we were going to meet it. The Council enacted, and I grudgingly supported, the Friedson Amendment to end the mask mandate on a date certain, with frequent re-evaluation of whether an extension is necessary.

Now the Council proposes to breach our trust again. Instead of evaluating the situation biweekly as promised, or acknowledging the plummeting rates of COVID and absence of any hospital crisis, the Council will now again jettison the off-ramp, extend the mandate for a full month, and bait us all with a new set of metrics.

Just stop it. There is no evidence that the County's mask mandate does any good, and you are making daily life here worse. We got vaccinated, COVID is dropping, our hospitals appear fine, and we should be allowed to live normally.

You have lost my trust and my support, and if this November does not provide succor at the ballot box, I fear I will have to move in order to escape this pandemic of overreaction.

David Krinsky
Rockville, MD

[correspondence sent by email, 21 January 2022, to Mr. Elrich and the Council; testimony includes minor corrections]