

Public Testimony

Regarding: Montgomery County Council's resolution to adopt a Board of Health Regulation on Vaccination requirements to enter bars, restaurants, fitness centers and other covered establishments

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

Members of the County Council:

I live with my husband and three children in Gaithersburg in Montgomery County. **My husband and I are both fully vaccinated** (2 shots back in spring of 2021), by choice. But we have 3 children, ages 8–15, who are not vaccinated yet, because the risk to children is *extremely low*. At this point, with so much still unknown about long-term effects of the vaccine, we do not think the benefits of the vaccine outweigh the risks for them.

So we are **not** “anti-vaxxers”, but we take a moderate approach. If MoCo passes the vaccine passport, we will begin going to surrounding counties when we want to go out to eat as a family or to a movie. I do not think that you are going to convince many people to get vaccinated *just* so they can dine in a restaurant in Montgomery County.

Science has proven that vaccines do NOT prevent the spread of covid—all they do is minimize personal risk. They do this well—I think the majority of adults *should* get the vaccine to prevent hospitalization or death, but vaccines do not keep us from getting the illness and passing it on to others.

It is wrong to force businesses in MoCo to accept only vaccinated patrons. Let the businesses choose for themselves if they want to check vaccine cards at the door. Montgomery County is not New York City, or Hawaii. We are *not* a top-notch tourist destination who can still attract plenty of vaccinated-only tourists. We are a suburb of Washington, DC, and our restaurants and other businesses that are owned by MoCo families will take a hit if you force them to turn away customers.

I promise you that many other families of vaccinated adults and unvaccinated children feel this way. **We will take our business elsewhere, and MoCo businesses will unfortunately suffer.**

Thank you,
Amanda Henderson