

To: Montgomery County Council Members

I am writing to strongly support a vaccination and booster s requirements to enter bars, restaurants, recreation centers, and other covered establishments. At a moment in which the COVID-19 epidemic wave related to the omicron variant is still in full swing this provision (together with the indoor mask mandate) will allow for the containment of further spread, facilitate economic recovery, and give some protection against further community transmission, especially to vulnerable individuals and unvaccinated young children. While omicron is likely to be less lethal than previous variants it has proven to be highly infectious, and the sheer volume of infections has led to the highest rates of hospitalization and increasing death rates in environments in which these measures have not been adopted. As a long-time resident of Montgomery County, I strongly support the implementation of this measure to protect the community, the individuals and to allow our businesses to recover. It is the very least we can do, together with an indoor mask mandate, to address this critical moment in the expansion of the epidemic and to limit future waves of infections. Personally, and speaking for my extended family, I will not patronize businesses that do not implement this policy. Lastly, a vaccine passport would facilitate the implementation of this policy with minimal burden on businesses and to individual freedom.