January 17, 2022

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I earned a Ph.D. in Virology and Immunology and was a postdoctoral researcher at the Vaccine Research Center of the National Institutes of Health, and I am a Montgomery County Resident.

I strongly oppose the Vaccine Requirements Resolution and vaccine mandates or passports.

Evidence for vaccine-induced adverse events, limited vaccine efficacy, and broader protection from SARS-CoV-2 natural immunity than vaccines call for personal and individual risk assessment in the medical decision for an individual to be vaccinated. Bypassing informed consent, a standard principle of medical care and clinical research, the proposed resolution establishes a punitive system which uses vaccine passports in exchange for basic rights and access to basic needs. It is not ethical to coerce individuals to make a medical decision that may not be in their own best health interest, which would best be assessed using all available medical data.

My concerns with the vaccine requirement are:

1) Serious adverse events have been described for SARS-CoV-2 vaccines, including myocarditis; thrombosis; neurodegeneration; autoimmunity; and death.\(^1\) As some scientists have indicated, this calls for rethinking of vaccine risk-benefit analysis.

2) Natural immunity to SARS-CoV-2 is protective against viral variants and in some cases, even more so than vaccine-induced immunity. There is indication that vaccination after SARS-CoV-2 infection can lead to reduced immunity against SARS-CoV-2 variants.

3) SARS-CoV-2 vaccination does not prevent virus spread. SARS-CoV-2 variants are transmitted both by vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals (for example, reported in this study) and breakthrough infections with the Omicron variant are common, therefore the proposed vaccine requirement does not “prevent the spread of COVID-19”, as stated as the resolution’s goal.

4) Long-term effects of the SARS-CoV-2 vaccines are not known, and clinical trials are ongoing.

\(^1\)This analysis found, “reporting rate for deaths following COVID-19 vaccines is 30 times higher than the reporting rate for all vaccines combined from 2010-2020.” [https://downloads.regulations.gov/CDC-2021-0089-0024/attachment_2.pdf]
I strongly urge you to vote against this resolution.

Sincerely,

Shannon Murray, Ph.D.