

Montgomery County Council —

Residents and local government officials may think that a vaccine passport is a small price to pay for certain practical freedoms, but this is a dividing, discriminatory, and dangerous bargain eliminating freedom. Agreeing to the vaccine passport means that you have sold your freedom. Today it is COVID, but tomorrow it will be another illness, or something else driven by government or something else entirely. Freedom, once surrendered, must be fought for in order to get it back. I can't envision the community I love to take this dangerous direction.

I was born and raised in Montgomery County, and moved back 10 years ago to raise a family here. I want to live in a community that is free and promotes unification and inclusivity for all. Should vaccine passports become reality in MOCO, which is an unprecedented overstepping of government control, my family will no longer support local businesses that require proof of vaccination. We will take our business to other surrounding counties that are free, and it will expedite our move out of MOCO. Regardless of vaccination statues, I've heard the same feedback from friends, family members and neighbors...they will no longer support MOCO businesses requiring you to show your medical status based on their strong support of living in a free society.

Vaccine passports are a very troubling development for local businesses that have already faced the brunt of COVID restrictions, lockdowns and constant virus fearmongering. Challenges of the passports for local businesses that need to be closely evaluated include loss of sales/profitability, loss of staffing, enforcement requirements, outraged customers and increased stress.

The current vaccine is not preventing those who are vaccinated against COVID from transmitting the virus to others, therefore the introduction of vaccine passports can only be about government control. If you care about the safety and equality of ALL YOUR RESIDENTS you would acknowledge, **THAT ONE SIZE FITS ALL DOES NOT APPLY TO VACCINES.** Many of your residents have valid reasons for not taking the vaccine including natural immunity, medical exemptions, religious reasons, the fact that vaccinated people are still transmitting the virus, or the risk of vaccination being greater than getting COVID itself. You must also acknowledge the over 2.2 million adverse effects reported by the World Health Organization following vaccination against COVID in 2021, more in one year than ALL vaccine adverse effects put together that have been reported since the 1960s. You have residents that are cautious, therefore they will not pursue the vaccine until adverse effects go down significantly and it actually works.

Bottom line, I am strongly advocating for our county leadership to stand up for freedom, the inclusion of all residents without discrimination, and allowing our local business owners to operate without additional restrictions on their customers.

Thank you,
Heather Long