

Montgomery County Council

Testimony on behalf of County Executive Marc Elrich on Bill 26-22 Landlord-Tenant Relations – Radon Testing and Mitigation - Required

October 18, 2022

1:30 p.m.

Good afternoon, Council President Alborno and Councilmembers, my name is Aseem Nigam, Director of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs. I am here on behalf of the County Executive in support of Bill 26-22, which prioritizes tenant safety and health by reducing exposure to high radon levels in the rental housing market.

Radon is an odorless invisible radioactive gas that occurs from the decay of uranium and can easily enter homes and buildings through cracks, openings in the foundation and other pathways. The primary health risk associated with chronic indoor radon exposure is an increased lifetime risk of lung cancer. According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, long term exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer and the number one cause among non-smokers. In addition, U.S. EPA studies have identified Montgomery County as a Zone 1 - meaning that it has the highest potential indoor radon levels at or above the EPA's 4.0 action level.

The County Executive supports Bill 26-22 as it prioritizes the health and well-being of Montgomery County tenants, which make up approximately 40% of our community, and provides a reasonable, focused approach to addressing a critically important environmental health issue. The Executive looks forward to working with the sponsor and the Committee on any amendments.

Thank you.