

Dear Montgomery County Council,

My name is Gilma Reyes. I am a Montgomery County Resident and a single mother of two. My daughters and I were forced to move out of our home after our landlord increased our rent. I was recently divorced and felt the great impact of having to raise two girls and provide for them on my own.

Paying rent and bills as a new single mother was extremely difficult. There was no one I could turn to for help. My eldest daughter, seeing the situation we were in decided to work to help provide for our family even though she was still in school. This broke my heart knowing that if we moved out of Montgomery County, my daughters would have to be placed in a new school, work was going to be nearly impossible to keep and we would have nowhere to live. I was not able to keep up with the rent increase even with my daughter's salary and our landlord did not care about our situation. Their increases started from 4%, the highest being 7% before given the notice of eviction.

I am writing to ask for your support of Rent Stabilization Bill 16-23: The Housing Opportunity, Mobility, and Equity Act in MoCo. Tenants need to know that if their rent increases, it will be by a reasonable amount of money, no more than 3% of their current rent for the next 12 months.

Being an immigrant and single mother has been both a blessing and a curse. Landlords use their power to charge you an arm and a leg no matter your situation. It is unjust and inhumane. No tenant should have to suffer such high increases in rent only because the Landlord feels like it.

As a resident of the County, I believe that it is critical that we put people first. I am asking for a YES vote on the HOME Act, Bill 16-23.

No one deserves the angst our community if being forced to deal with!

Sincerely,

**Gilma Reyes**

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