

Dear Council President Glass and Councilmembers,

My name is Dean Cooper and I am a long-time resident of County Council District 4. I live in Silver Spring. I am a retired attorney and am currently on the Board of Directors of Shepherd's Table. In addition to my role as a Board member of Shepherd's Table, I frequently volunteer there and work and talk with the meal clients and other homeless people at Shepherd's Table. I have witnessed firsthand the impact of mental health and housing challenges that those citizens face and the related impact on the community if their issues of homelessness and mental health are not dealt with.

I believe that everyone deserves a safe, affordable and stable place to call home. In order to make progress in ending homelessness, there are some key programs that need increased funding to add more services: these include **Permanent Supportive Housing**, the **Housing Initiative Program**, and the **Rapid Rehousing Program**.

In addition, investing more in **affordable housing** for the deeply low income is vital to reverse the shortage that affects our community.

I also support increased funding for **Emergency Rental Assistance** as a safety net for families.

I also support increased funding for the **Crisis Center** so that it can be staffed 24/7 for all three sites, in Rockville, Germantown and Silver Spring. Mental health emergencies require trained behavioral health experts county-wide 24/7.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Council,

Dean S. Cooper

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