



November 27, 2023

Letter to the Montgomery County Council

Re: Bill 40-23, Tree Canopy and Roadside Tree Requirements - Fee Revisions

Dear Council Members:

The League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, Maryland, (LWVMC) would like to express **our support for Bill 40-23, Tree Canopy and Roadside Tree Requirements - Fee Revisions**. We support the bill's proposed rate increase for tree replacement fees paid to the Street Tree Planting Fund and to the Tree Canopy Conservation Account to reflect inflation.

These programs are important for the county's tree conservation efforts, to help maintain a healthy supply of trees and forests, and to meet Montgomery County's broader environmental goals. Trees are important not just aesthetically but to help fight climate change and create livable, healthy communities. The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that as citizens of the world, we must protect our planet from the physical, economic, and public health effects of climate change while also providing pathways to economic prosperity.

However, we do have a recommendation we hope the Council will consider before acting on this bill. **We propose that a statement be added to this legislation establishing a timetable for how often the tree replacement rate should be reviewed.** Considering this bill comes a decade after the original fee agreement was made, we believe including a timetable will ensure prompter reevaluations of the Street Tree Planting Fund and the Tree Canopy Conservation Account in the future.

Thank you for providing the public with this opportunity to give input on this bill and for using the tools of county enforcement programs to promote environmental sustainability.

Susan Albertaine
President