



COMMISSION ON AGING

January 10, 2024

Andrew Friedson, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 4th floor
Rockville MD 20850

RE: Bill 45-23

Dear Council President Friedson:

I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging (CoA) to support your proposed legislation, "Bill 45-23, Property Tax Credit –Individuals 65 and Above, Retired Military Service Members, and Disabled Military Service Members." The CoA is authorized by the Older Americans Act, P.L. 116-131, and was established by Montgomery County in 1974 to advise the county government on the needs, interests, and issues of older adult residents, and to advocate on their behalf at the local, state, and national levels. The Commission identifies issues where its voice on the needs of older adults can make a difference. Therefore, we are pleased that you have introduced a Bill to amend the senior property tax credit program in Montgomery County. We commend your interest in this issue of importance to older adults.

The CoA is pleased that the proposed amendments alter the amount of the credit based on income. We have two recommendations for your consideration that we believe would enhance the progressive nature of the Bill:

1. Under *(d) Amount and duration of credit*: Peg the income tiers to the homeowners' annual income as a percentage of Area Median Income (AMI) rather than on salary. For example, instead of "if the annual income of the applicant is equal to or less than \$90,000," the qualification for the smallest 20% tax credit would read, "if the annual income of the applicant is equal to or greater than 60% of Montgomery County AMI but no greater than 75% of AMI..." The next tier would be 40-60% AMI, etc. Pegging the credit to AMI would help ensure that the benefits continue to accrue to the intended Montgomery County homeowners despite changes in median income for the County.
2. Add a fourth tier that would eliminate property tax for homeowners earning less than 20% of AMI.

Your proposed legislation is timely, given the increase in property values in Montgomery

Department of Health and Human Services

401 Hungerford Drive, 4th Floor, Rockville, Maryland, 20850 240-777-1120, FAX 240-777-1436

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hhs

County and the desire of many older residents to remain in their homes. As you know, the number of older Marylanders is increasing. In Montgomery County, residents who are 60 years of age and older now make up 21 percent of the county's total population and this number is projected to increase substantially over time.

The CoA appreciates your concern for older adults and we look forward to working with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

David Engel

David Engel, Chair