

**Testimony in favor of Special Appropriation #25-42 to the FY25 Operating Budget**

Hearing Date: December 10, 2024

**TO:** Montgomery County Council

**FROM:** Patricia Twomey

Dear Council Members, I address each of you.

I am a mother and a woman who resides at a co-ed homeless shelter. I am a member of Housing Justice Montgomery. I am writing to URGE Montgomery County to allocate \$3.6 million additional dollars in Emergency Housing Programs. I am a 58 year old woman who has had a career for 20 years as a Revenue Protection Specialist at the Internal Revenue Service in the past when I lived in New York. I know for me and my two boys who are now amazing men of society, rent was my top priority. Most months without a problem but reality is, life happens, the car breaks, and the dog/cat gets sick. I had to move from New York since I was assaulted and trafficked, and sought help from my family in Maryland.

I have been stuck in the shelter system for 11 months. You pulled all the programs in May 2024. Why? I know for a fact that each and every person struggles to pay rent and or their mortgage. It is simply the way the economy is! I have been unable to get a job because I have too much experience. The trauma I have endured at the shelter and the instability of our Montgomery County is making me lose hope. I know that safe, stable, and realistic housing is the basis of having a good life. Housing stability can relieve mental, emotional, and physical stress, enable a person to look for employment and go to college.

The question I have to council members: how much more of this do I at 58 years old have to continue to be abused? Since being an alchemist I know that emergency rental assistance would help me and my family would allow me to pay my rent each month. I have no criminal history as my career for 20 years would not allow that. I am a law abiding citizen in the shelter and in society. Respectfully I ask the Council before Christmas to let me and my family be together once again. Me, my son here in Maryland, and my son in New York are suffering. My one wish for me and my family to celebrate Christmas in our own home (you see I always called our apartment home). My boys felt safe at one point. All I want is to feel safe once again.

Please vote in favor of \$3.67 million dollars for the homeless people in Montgomery County.

Love you!

Patricia Twomey

Progress Place