

# Testimony of Michael DeLong Before the Montgomery County Council In Support of Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 25-02-Workforce Housing Development Standards

March 9th, 2025

President Stewart, Vice President Jawando, Councilmembers:

Thank you for hearing my testimony. My name is Michael DeLong and I'm a 35 year old resident of Silver Spring who is active in local politics and advocacy. I strongly support Zoning Text Amendment 25-02, regarding workforce housing development standards, and urge the Council to pass it as quickly as possible. This amendment will build more housing that Montgomery County badly needs, encourage better housing in areas where it will be helpful, and lower rents and mortgages.

Montgomery County is currently facing a housing crisis, with homes being unaffordable for many people. Working families are being priced out of the county and if they work here, they often have to commute from other countries. The average cost of a single family home is over \$1 million and 49% of renters are housing burdened. Unaffordable housing affects everyone except the super wealthy—our county needs a strong workforce and to be welcoming to middle class families.

This amendment aims to fix that crisis and promote more homes in certain areas. It will accelerate the construction of housing in certain zones, along major roads that have at least three total travel lanes and that are wider than 100 feet—basically boulevards and downtown streets. The kinds of homes that can be constructed include duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings, and the height limit is 40 feet. They will be built along places like Georgia Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, Colesville Road, New Hampshire Avenue, and University Boulevard.

This proposal is very welcome—in fact, I wish it went further. When I was looking for a house three years ago, I realized that I could not afford a townhouse or single family home because prices were too high. Lots of people are in the same boat. Before that when I was a renter, I lived for several years in a basement with several other housemates, because none of us could afford an apartment on our own. I grew up in the Bay Area near San Francisco and have fond memories of that community, but their failure to build housing has meant that everyone but the very wealthy are struggling to live there.

I believe Montgomery County should be a place where upper, middle, and working class people can live, and building more housing is essential for this to happen. The County Council should adopt this amendment and strongly encourage the construction of townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, and other housing to bring down rents. In the future, I hope that the County will adopt further amendments enabling denser and more abundant homes, including larger apartment

buildings near Metro stations, important bus routes, and the Purple Line. We need more housing now.

Thank you for your work and please contact me at [michaeldelong94@gmail.com](mailto:michaeldelong94@gmail.com) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael DeLong

