

Montgomery County Council

Public Hearing on Bill 4-25

Surveillance Technology - Acquisition and Use by the County

March 18, 2025

Testimony of Aaron Droller

Silver Spring, Maryland

Good afternoon Council President Stewart and members of the Montgomery County Council. My name is Aaron Droller and I am a resident of Silver Spring. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Bill 4-25, the Surveillance Technology Transparency and Civil Liberties Act.

I testify in support of the proposed legislation, and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Councilmembers Mink and Stewart for its introduction. As surveillance technologies and artificial intelligence become ever more present in our daily lives, I have become concerned that our civil liberties may come under threat without legal guardrails in place. This bill creates essential safeguards and transparency in this rapidly evolving area. I believe the bill will increase both the trust of Montgomery County residents in its government as well as transparency in the procurement process for advanced technologies.

I acknowledge that surveillance technology will have an important and expanding role in Montgomery County moving forward. I was initially wary of the drone as first responder program because it is a technology that can so easily be misused. However, the program appears to have been successful and is now an important tool for law enforcement. As surveillance capabilities become ever more omnipresent and powerful, it is now an ideal time for the Council to create essential guardrails in law to protect our civil liberties and civil rights. To ease administrative burden, I would recommend that the bill apply to technology acquired prospectively, rather than retroactively back to 2020. I support the legislation and urge its approval.