

Larry Platt, Montgomery County FY26 Budget Hearing – April 7, 2025

My name is Larry Platt. I am a 47-year-old African American man currently residing at the Progress Place Homeless Shelter in Silver Spring, Maryland. I have been a client since May of last year. Prior to that, I was a resident of Montgomery County for over ten years.

I am writing to urge Montgomery County to fund:

- 1) \$50 million to cover all 4,723 estimated households that need rental assistance, with each household receiving an average grant of \$10,581.
- 2) \$9.5 million to cover the costs of sheltering and housing an estimated 642 current clients and 200 new clients in 2026 through the Rapid Rehousing program — ensuring that everyone has an exit out of homelessness.
- 3) \$13,735,903 to support both current and new clients with the most difficult housing needs through the Permanent Supportive Housing program.

Due to deteriorating health issues I experienced over the past two years, I spent an extended time in the hospital. As a result, I lost both my apartment and my car. Before that, I had been a stable, working resident — employed for over 11 years by my previous employer.

Experiencing homelessness for the first time has been jarring and debilitating — not just financially, but mentally and spiritually. During my time at the shelter, I've spent much of my energy searching for employment. I've also tried to make extra income by donating plasma.

But the combination of being homeless and looking for work has made it incredibly difficult to stay positive and motivated. Every day feels like an uphill battle, especially when you're someone who's used to being independent.

Having access to emergency rental assistance would be the first step to regaining that independence. It would allow me to focus on finding a suitable job and rebuilding my life.

Respectfully, I ask the Council to vote in favor of allocating the following:

- 1) \$50 million for eviction prevention rental assistance.
- 2) \$9.5 million to fully fund Rapid Rehousing for all current and future clients.
- 3) \$13.8 million to support Permanent Supportive Housing.

Thank you.