



**Testimony**  
**Victoria Baldassano**  
**Director, Montgomery College Part-Time Faculty Union, SEIU Local 500**  
**Montgomery County Council**  
**FY25 Operating Budget Hearing**  
**April 7, 2025, at 7 p.m.**

Good evening. My name is Victoria Baldassano. I am the Director of the Part-Time Faculty Union at Montgomery College under SEIU Local 500. In 2007 I organized a grassroots campaign that led to the creation of our union for part-time faculty in 2010. Since then I have played various leadership roles in the union. This fall semester will mark my 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of teaching English at the Takoma Park / Silver Spring Campus of MC.

Last year, when I testified before this council, political conditions were quite different. This year, as you know, higher education institutions are literally under attack from powerful forces at the federal level.

Takoma Park/Silver Spring is the most diverse of MC's three campuses and is located just seven miles from the White House. A majority of our students are immigrants from countries all over the world.

For the first time in my 20 years of teaching, a fear has crept over the campus community.

For the first time, my fellow professors are discussing what to do if ICE shows up on campus, and the College has responded by issuing helpful guidance.

Montgomery College President Jermaine Williams has issued a statement legally defending the College's mission and its underlying commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, a commitment that in the recent past was celebrated and needed no defense.

Like our full-time colleagues, part-time faculty are concerned as to how changes in federal funding might negatively affect our students, many of whom rely on federal loans or Pell grants.

More than ever, Montgomery College is relying on the County Council to support our educational mission and the students we serve, which include historically underserved communities.

I urge the Montgomery County Council to fully fund Montgomery College's Fiscal Year 2026 budget request. Thank you so much for hearing my testimony.