

Greetings to the Montgomery County Council, my name is Lilian Bernal Caceres. I am a resident of Montgomery County, in the city of Germantown. Thank you for taking your time to listen to my testimony. Today, I am writing to you to request assistance from authorities and organizations to support the Vision Zero Youth Ambassadors program, coordinated by the Department of Transportation, (MCDOT). This program teaches teens leadership skills, outreach skills, and engagement tools to address road safety needs in our community of Germantown.

As a resident of the City of Germantown, and mother of a teenager: I perceive the constant responsibility of pedestrians in my neighborhood, especially teenagers when walking, riding bikes, scooters, skateboarding. Many people drive recklessly without noticing pedestrian paths, safety signs, and overall being distracted by their phones and leaving aside the importance of safety in the streets.

This program trains youth ambassadors and teaches teens leadership skills, outreach skills and engagement tools to address road safety needs in their community and most important eliminates serious traffic related injuries and deaths.

These types of programs help teenagers during their free time in our community, encouraging them to develop leadership skills, assertive communication and motivate their creativity and teamwork. These are extracurricular activities that help their emotional and physical wellbeing. Also, when the students participate in these types of programs, they can discover what they like, new abilities and they can also leave behind bad habits.

Investigating and consulting with reliable sources, I found that the programs offered by the County are diverse and very attractive to young people. It would be very interesting to support those types of programs. In this case, I am focusing on the need that my neighborhood teens need. I hope the future leaders of our county of Germantown participate in this program Vision Zero, despite of the fact that the program began on November of this year, I am motivated by how interesting it is for young people and that they are allowed to continue participating in the program.

This program is important for teens because during their free time they learn how to be active pedestrians, motivate their creativity because this is an extracurricular activity that helps them physically and emotionally. With the program, kids can find out what they like to do, discover new skills, and leave the bad habit of walking up and down the streets.

The fear that we live as parents of our children is that they might fall into the horrible world of drugs. It is there that the community and parents take an important role in supporting the kids with activities that promote their leadership, awareness and responsibilities in the streets.

My goal for this testimony is to support all working families who due to circumstances must be absent from our home for several hours and cannot take care of our teenagers all the time.

Finally, I attach some updated data on pedestrian accidents.

# Pedestrian Involved Crashes

**65 pedestrian involved crashes through February 2025. Preliminary 2025 pedestrian involved crashes are below last year and the 4-year average.**

Highest Injury Level	2025 Jan-Feb	2024 Jan-Feb	2021-2024 Avg. Jan-Feb	2016-2019 Avg. Jan-Feb	% Change from 2024	% Change from 4-yr. Avg.	% Change from pre-COVID Avg.
No Injury	6	7	4	3	-14%	+50%	+100%
Minor Injury	47	61	54	74	-23%	-13%	-36%
Serious Injury	12	11	9	11	+9%	+33%	+9%
Fatal	0	1	2	1	-100%	-100%	-100%
<b>Total Crashes</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>-19%</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>-27%</b>

**NOTES:**

- **Red Text** = The number is preliminary and subject to change. Data as of 03/20/25.
- Includes reports from MCPD, RCPD, GCPD, M-NCPPC Police, and TPPD.