

Dear Council President Stewart and Council Members,

My name is Elizabeth Benefiel. I have lived at [REDACTED] in Kensington (now in District 6) for almost 50 years.

I am asking you to support full funding for library operations in the proposed FY2026 budget. We need to increase digital services to keep up with reader preferences and especially to expand the world language collections. As a former Foreign Service spouse, I know how important it is to welcome and reach out to our diverse neighbors.

My family and I have always been devoted library patrons! I have taken my children and grandchildren to story times and programs at Kensington Park, Noyes, and Brigadier General. I have helped grandchildren find books at Connie Morella and use the computers and browse Friends of the Library selections at Wheaton.

When I taught pre-school, I always found library books to support my lesson plans. I tutored middle school math students at Potomac. I've tracked down volumes for a favorite series or a bookclub choice at Twinbrook, Aspen Hill, Olney, and Davis. I've enjoyed musical performances at Kensington Park, and picked up family Covid tests at Little Falls. I've used Montgomery County libraries while waiting through soccer practices or as meet-up points during out-of-town family visits.

Montgomery County libraries are simply a part of my everyday life.

I know there are conflicting demands on all of our community resources, but our libraries are at the heart of our neighborhoods. They bring us together, providing information, social connections and emotional support through difficult times.

Please do your best to keep our libraries going strong!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Benefiel

[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]