

Written Testimony in Support of Montgomery Parks Funding

Dear Montgomery County Council,

My name is Sky, and I am a teacher living in Montgomery County. As an educator, I see firsthand the impact that public spaces like Montgomery Parks have on our students, families, and the broader community. Parks are not just green spaces; they are vital places of learning, exploration, and connection.

For many of my students, parks are where they develop a love for nature, engage in physical activity, strengthen their curiosity, and build social skills outside of the classroom. In an age where screen time often replaces outdoor play and meaningful social interactions, these parks provide a safe and accessible space for children to run, imagine, and grow. Beyond my students, I personally rely on these spaces for my well-being. Whether it's a mindful walk with my dogs, an afternoon spent unwinding in nature, or a weekend gathering with my friends, Montgomery Parks plays a crucial role in my mental and physical health. It was part of the foundation of my childhood which helped me become the person I am today.

I am deeply concerned about the proposed budget cuts, which threaten the maintenance, programs, and staffing that make these parks so valuable. Reducing funding will not only impact the quality of our parks but will also limit access to the very services that many residents depend on, especially those in underserved communities who may not have access to private recreational options.

I urge the County Council to fully restore the requested funding for Montgomery Parks. Investing in our parks is an investment in education, public health, and community strength. Please do not let these vital spaces fall into neglect due to insufficient funding.

Thank you for your time and for considering the voices of residents who cherish and rely on Montgomery Parks.

Sincerely,

Sky

Montgomery County Resident & Educator