

Saanvi Lanke, 7th Grade Student

Testimony in Favor of Supplemental Appropriation #25-70 to FY25 Operating Budget

Hello Montgomery County Council,

My name is Saanvi Lanke, and I am a Montgomery County Public School student. I'm writing in strong support of Supplemental Appropriation #25-70 to the FY25 operating budget, which allocates funding to the School Safety Grant Program. This grant plays a crucial role in protecting students throughout the school day and providing a sense of security in our classrooms and communities.

In the face of recent events, it is more important than ever to ensure students feel safe while receiving an education. By improving school safety and emergency preparedness, we take essential steps toward making schools a secure and supportive environment for all. This grant helps address existing safety gaps through better technology, enhanced staff training, and stronger community engagement. The funding will also support upgrades to closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems, which are vital for both preventing incidents and responding to them effectively.

As a middle school student, I've heard about many unsafe situations, especially in high schools. One reason I'm advocating for this appropriation is because of issues I've seen around emergency preparedness. In my experience, many students don't take emergency drills seriously, treating them as unlikely or unrealistic scenarios. I've heard classmates say some drills felt confusing or ineffective. This shows that we need clearer communication and more impactful training so that students and staff feel confident in how to respond during an actual emergency. I encourage the Council to ensure part of this grant is dedicated to strengthening that preparedness.

By incorporating this grant into the FY25 operating budget, we support the broader goals of MCPS and help create safer, more responsive schools. Advancing our safety infrastructure—including technology and training—ensures that when a crisis

arises, there are capable people and systems in place to protect us. Let's make sure our safety measures evolve along with the world around us.

I respectfully urge the Council to approve this supplemental appropriation to support school safety upgrades in MCPS. Every student deserves to feel safe at school, and investments in modern security systems, like updated cameras, make a real difference. Thank you again for listening to student voices and for your continued commitment to keeping our schools safe.

Thanks for your time,

Saanvi Lanke