

We strongly object to this bill. Its logic defies reason. An exemption for landscapers who do much/most of the work in our neighborhood/County clearing leaves and trimming lawns with noisy and polluting gas-powered equipment makes no sense to us. The ban on the use of this equipment was hard fought, long in coming, and the right decision for human health and the environment. Montgomery County was at the forefront of advancing the rights of workers and residents to work and live in an environment free of this unnecessary and toxic noise and pollution. Now some Council members have found a reason to exempt landscapers, apparently for economic reasons—when those same landscapers have already had 2 years' notice of the ban. Why give them even longer to pollute our environment and harm our health and that of their workers? Was their lobbying effort so successful that the Council would take this unprincipled step to meet their demands? Does money once again take precedence over health?

We are particularly concerned that our district member, Marilyn Balcombe, is a co-sponsor of the bill. We voted for her, and expected better.

We strongly encourage the Council to vote this bill down, hold to your word, and maintain your commitment to your constituents' health and a cleaner environment--which is what the original ban represents. Your constituents sought the ban, and the Council approved it by a vote of 10 to 1. The reasons for the ban have not changed, and if anything, our air and noise pollution has only gotten worse. So why have you suddenly reversed course? We profoundly disagree with this action.