

STATEMENT IN OPPOSITION TO EB-19-25
Submitted in connection with
A Public Hearing of the Montgomery County Council
July 15, 2025

Chair Stewart and Members of the Montgomery County Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in connection with this public hearing.

As a longtime resident and homeowner in Montgomery County, I am submitting this statement to register my strong opposition to EB-19-25 and to urge the Council to reject this misguided last-minute legislation.

Montgomery County did the right thing in October 2023 when it banned the sale and use of gas-powered leaf blowers. The ban helps protect lawn service workers from harmful noise and toxic substance exposures caused by the use of gas-powered leaf blowers. The ban helps protect our environment from excessive noise and gas pollution and improves the quality of life for residents of Montgomery County who will no longer be subjected to annoying and harmful gas fumes and excessive noise.

In passing the ban, Montgomery County joined other leading jurisdictions across the country, including our neighboring District of Columbia, which have successfully implemented bans.

The Council provided a generous phase-in period for the ban - almost two years – meaning that residents and contractors have had plenty of time to prepare for this change. It is my understanding that financial subsidies have been offered to assist businesses with the conversion to electric-powered leaf blowers.

There is no excuse or justification for giving lawn service contractors an out at this late date, after the ban has finally taken effect. To do so rewards bad behavior by contractors that dragged their feet and is unfair to the contractors that have taken steps to comply with the new law.

The purported "limitations" on the exemption for lawn service companies are the proverbial loophole that you can drive a truck through. The exemption covers the fall - the period of heaviest use of leaf blowers, meaning that workers will be exposed to noise and fumes during the busiest season, as will Montgomery County residents. Limiting the "exemption" to weekdays is meaningless – workers will continue to be exposed, and many residents work from home or are retired and will be subjected to the pollution and noise that the Council voted to ban back in 2023.

As someone who is regularly subjected to noise and fumes that prevent me from working in my home office or using my outdoor patio when my neighbors' lawn service fires up their gas-powered leaf blowers, I am vehemently opposed to this misguided proposal. Please protect the workers and residents of Montgomery County, reject this last-minute exemption, and preserve the action you took in October 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rhinehart

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