

In Support of the Montgomery County Trust Act

Dear Montgomery County Councilmembers:

My name is Aly Rodriguez, and I live in Silver Spring, MD. I'm writing to express my strong support for the Montgomery County Trust Act.

My neighborhood, Downtown Silver Spring, is one of the most diverse and vibrant neighborhoods in the DMV region. On any given day, you can hear half a dozen languages, see neighbors and business owners from every background, and feel the energy of a community that thrives because of its diversity.

The Trust Act strengthens that tradition by ensuring that all residents—regardless of immigration status—can safely access county services, report crimes, and participate fully in community life. This is not only a matter of fairness; it is a matter of public safety and good governance.

As a U.S. citizen and a neighbor, I want to live in a county where everyone feels safe. When people fear that a routine interaction with county agencies could lead to immigration consequences, it makes it harder for schools to support families and erodes trust in local institutions and law enforcement.

The Trust Act helps address this by clearly limiting county involvement in federal civil immigration enforcement unless required by law. This approach allows our local law enforcement and county agencies to focus on their core responsibilities—protecting residents, supporting families, and strengthening community trust. It also ensures that local tax dollars are used for local priorities, not diverted into federal enforcement activities.

In my neighborhood, I've seen firsthand how fear shapes people's decisions. This fear doesn't come from rumor; it comes from lived experience and uncertainty about how information might be used against them or their families.

When people don't trust law enforcement, **public safety breaks down**. Crimes go unreported. Witnesses stay silent. Victims suffer alone. And the entire community—citizens and non-citizens alike—becomes less safe. This is not theoretical. It's something I've watched unfold in Downtown Silver Spring, where so many of us rely on each other to keep our streets safe and our community strong.

The Trust Act is a necessary step toward rebuilding that trust. By clearly limiting county involvement in federal civil immigration enforcement, the Act sends a message that Montgomery County's priority is the safety and well-being of its residents—not acting as an extension of federal immigration authorities. It ensures that people can call 911, report domestic violence, or cooperate with investigations without fearing that a routine interaction could lead to devastating consequences.

This legislation also protects the integrity of our local institutions. When county agencies are perceived as tied to immigration enforcement, it undermines their ability to serve the public effectively. The Trust Act helps restore confidence by drawing a clear line between local public safety work and federal immigration actions.

The Trust Act strengthens that foundation of trust. It codifies long-standing practices, protects vulnerable residents, and ultimately makes our neighborhoods safer for everyone.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to pass the Montgomery County Trust Act.
Thank you for your time and for your commitment to our community.