



“Representing the Agricultural Producers of Montgomery County”

February 20, 2026

The Honorable Fani-Gonzalez, President

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Subject: Testimony on ZTA 26-01 – Commercial Uses: Data Centers

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez,

Montgomery Agricultural Producers supports ZTA 26-01 as written. Establishing clear zoning standards for future data centers is essential to prevent the challenges experienced in other Maryland and Virginia jurisdictions. This proposal is a solid step toward avoiding those issues.

However, we remain concerned about the broader impacts on our agricultural community and the Agricultural Reserve. Rising energy costs—partly driven by growing infrastructure demands to support data centers—place added strain on ag producers and consumers alike. We urge the Council to examine this issue further at the committee level.

We also emphasize the need to preserve the Agricultural Reserve from future commercial encroachment. Protecting farmland remains our top priority to ensure a sustainable future for agriculture in Montgomery County.

With these considerations, we respectfully request a favorable report on ZTA 26-01.

Sincerely,

Bob Cissel

Director, Montgomery Agricultural Producers, Inc.
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