

**Statement from Councilmember Nancy Floreen on the Introduction of
an Excise Tax on Videos, Video Games, and Videodiscs**

Nobody likes taxes, and I am no exception. What I like even less, though, are overcrowded classrooms for our children and teachers. We are getting more and more students and fewer and fewer resources to serve them. School enrollment is projected to reach nearly 141,000 students next year – an all-time high in this County. This is an unfortunate time to be forced to slow the pace of school construction.

Only two years ago, Montgomery County received \$51 million from the State to construct new or modernize older schools. This year the County's proposed budget assumes \$18.5 million, but, unfortunately, we may get as little as \$7 million. This means that we not only have to say no to much-needed projects, but we may have to delay some of what we already promised.

That is why I am proposing a 50 cent excise tax on the sale and rental of videos, DVDs, and video games, and I want the funds collected from this tax to go directly toward school construction. It won't solve our problem, but every little bit helps when faced with this critical shortfall in school construction funding. If half the households in the County rent just one video per month, we would gain close to \$1 million a year for our schools.