



## **Montgomery County's Priorities for the 2016 Session**

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

Protect Montgomery County's ability to help support delivery of public services in Montgomery County by ensuring that:

1. State formula aid and State grants that support public K-16, transportation, health, public safety, economic development, and the environment are fully funded;
2. The County's local taxing and revenue generating authority is kept intact; and
3. Programs operated by County Government and supported solely by County taxpayers are not curtailed or preempted by State actions.

A proposal to fully privatize the County's Department of Liquor Control is particularly concerning. It ignores the loss of revenue that would result from privatization and harms the County's ability to fund priority programs and retain its credibility with bond rating agencies. It also ignores the reforms underway to improve the Department's business operations and a consensus proposal that takes a more targeted approach, by privatizing only the special order segment of the business. We hope our State Delegation will work as partners with County government and not reduce locally-generated revenues with no plan to restore them.

### **Capital Investments**

Protect the County's ability to deliver as the State's key economic engine by pursuing fair allocations of State capital funds that recognize need and return on investment.

1. Public School Construction – With the enrollment of another 3,000 new students again this year, managing school capacity issues remains a tremendous challenge that could be mitigated by increasing the annual Statewide funding allocation available for public school construction (now \$250 million) and increasing the amount allocated for the targeted supplemental grant program passed with strong support from the State Delegation during the 2015 Session (now \$20 million).
2. Transportation – Being a part of a region that has long been identified with the worst traffic congestion in the country, it is essential to protect the integrity of the State's Transportation Trust Fund and, therefore, the ability for the County's priority projects to move forward. Greater investment in the transportation infrastructure of the most economically viable county in the State is the necessary precursor for job creation, which is being held back by insufficient mobility in the region -- especially on State highways

and transit, which are State responsibilities. Specifically, both Montgomery and Fairfax Counties need their states to pursue improvements to the American Legion Bridge and the Beltway from the I-270 West Spur into Virginia. Expanded transit options and renewed effort to improve the safety of the WMATA system are also priorities. Replacing the existing Tri-State Oversight Committee with an empowered new State Safety Oversight Agency should be made a pressing issue this year by Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia.

Given the disproportionate need, any opening to negotiate to advance transportation projects and studies, improve the safety of the region's Metrorail operations, or increase State funding for the County's Ride On Bus system, should be aggressively pursued.

### 3. Other Projects

- Bethesda, Quince Orchard, and White Oak Libraries -- \$500,000 each
- Montgomery College Rockville Student Center -- \$13 million
- Avery Road Treatment Center -- \$1 million
- Montgomery County Revenue Authority, Poolesville Grape Crushing Facility and Event Center -- \$4 million
- Strathmore Music Center -- \$6 million
- Universities at Shady Grove Building IV -- \$73.5 million

### **Economic Development**

As part of the National Capital Region, Montgomery County is going through a major economic transition from a Federal-centered economy to one that will increasingly depend on private sector growth through entrepreneurship, global connections, and businesses selling to businesses and consumers. The County is taking bold steps to advance its economic interests by creating two new public-private partnerships—the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation and WorkSource Montgomery (for workforce development) to replace the Department of Economic Development. To support this effort, the County needs:

1. Business-friendly administrative processes;
2. Funding for public transit, innovation, and entrepreneurship; and
3. Business attraction and retention assistance to ensure Montgomery County can continue to deliver quality jobs and tax revenues for the State.

### **Health and Human Services**

Given the changing demographics of the one million residents Montgomery County serves through its Health and Human Services Department, it is increasingly important to partner with the State to bring in additional Federal revenue and together improve the County's ability to

provide better integrated and interoperable services to its vulnerable residents. The County is looking for the State to support proposals for:

1. A Medicaid Waiver on homelessness;
2. Obtaining a Medicaid match for County funds used to supplement wages paid to developmental disability providers serving County clients;
3. Including the Department's technology modernization program in the Advanced Planning Document that State Medicaid submits to draw down 90-10 Federal Fund Participation Rate eligibility dollars for this program; and
4. Payment solutions for patients who remain in hospitals because they are undocumented or homeless who could be placed in less expensive nursing or group homes.

### **Elections**

The Montgomery County Board of Elections has expressed concern to the State Board of Elections that the initial allocation of voting system equipment to Montgomery County for the 2016 election cycle is not sufficient to ensure reasonable wait times for County voters for the General Election next November. The State share of the costs associated with leasing the additional equipment (50%) is estimated to be about \$425,000.