

Montgomery County 2023 Federal Priorities

Biotech and Life Sciences Economy

Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H). In partnership with our Congressional delegation, Montgomery County will continue to work toward securing the permanent headquarters for this newly created federal biomedical and health research agency.

Transportation

Bus infrastructure investment. Urge Congress to appropriate in fiscal year (FY) 2024 authorized levels of transit funding (e.g., Capital Investment Grants Program, Low or No Emission Vehicle Program, Bus and Bus Facilities Program, etc.) that are critical to advancing transit projects across the County and reflect prioritizing climate change, resilience, equity, and safety goals under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Federal discretionary grant requests for transportation improvement projects. Request support from our Congressional delegation for certain highly competitive grants through the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) including:

- Veirs Mill Road Flash BRT project for funding through the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program – Small Starts
- MD 355 Flash BRT project for funding through the CIG program – New Starts
- Upgrades for the Brookeville Depot through the Buses and Bus Facilities Program (§ 5339(b))
- Solar Microgrid installation at the Maintenance Transit Operations Center through the Low or No Emission Vehicle Program (§ 5339(c))

Zero emission vehicles (ZEVs). Urge Congress to approve FY 2024 appropriations accelerating the use of ZEVs (including zero emissions charging and alternative refueling networks). Funding should include an equity focus to ensure that low- and moderate-income households benefit from new technologies through enhanced federal tax credits and other incentives, as well as supporting federal tax credit and rebate programs for micromobility devices (i.e., electric bikes).

Fund transit operations and community connections to achieve equity. Request Delegation support for competitive funding opportunities open to local governments to reconfigure existing transit networks and explore transit pilot programs using transit as important equity promotion tools.

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program. Support increased funding for USDOT's RAISE Grant program providing

capital investment funding for surface transportation projects with significant local and regional impact.

Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program. Request Delegation support for Montgomery County's grant application for the Randolph Road/CSX Grade Separation.

Prioritize safety. Urge Congress to direct USDOT to complete its rulemaking for the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) defining standards for installation and maintenance of traffic control devices on public roadways. Request Delegation support FY 2024 transportation appropriations for the Safe Streets for All competitive grant program and the Complete Streets initiative.

Invest in Transportation Demand Management (TDM). Urge Congress to push USDOT to complete the rulemaking requiring suballocation of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program funds to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) or county and municipal governments. Request Delegation support to reinstate the bicycle benefit within federal qualified transportation fringe benefits, and include micromobility projects (i. e., bikeshare, e-scooters) under federal transit funds eligibility.

Affordable Housing

Expand opportunities to create and preserve affordable housing. Urge Delegation to advocate for innovative federal tax abatement policies that can incentivize housing preservation. Urge Congress to increase annual appropriations in FY 2024 for housing programs that include the HOME Investment Partnership Program, the Housing Choice Vouchers program, and the Emergency Solution Grant program.

Modify Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Support efforts to expand and strengthen the LIHTC program which is recognized as the primary federal policy tool for encouraging the development and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.

Child Care and Early Childhood Development

Accessing affordable, high-quality, and safe child care. Urge Delegation to increase FY 2024 appropriations under the mandatory and discretionary titles of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program used to advance the County's ability to invest in child care infrastructure, boost supply, and serve more eligible families.

Mental and Behavioral Health

Mental health treatment and counseling services. Support FY 2024 appropriations for critical direct mental health delivery programs including funding for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Integration of primary care and behavioral health services. Urge Congressional support for federal grant and state Medicaid funding expansion through the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model that integrates primary care services with mental health and substance use disorder services using clinical, financial, and administrative strategies with the goal of improving overall health outcomes.

Nutrition Programs and the Farm Bill Reauthorization

Reauthorization of the 2023 Farm Bill. Urge Delegation to advance legislation fully funding all 12 titles of the Farm Bill- specifically nutrition programs under Title IV. Support increased access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Reauthorization of FAA

Reauthorization of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Advance multi-year reauthorization including new federal discretionary grant funding opportunities for airport modernization projects and planning, as well as progressive environmental policies promoting the use of unleaded aviation fuel. Urge Delegation's support for the Montgomery County Airpark to be designated as one of the first general aviation airports equipped with infrastructure offering unleaded fuel for eligible aircraft.

Higher Education

Expand access to postsecondary training and degrees. Urge Delegation to support enhanced eligibility for Pell grants including for short-term training programs.

Strengthen Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Basic Education Federal workforce education programs. Urge Congress to approve FY 2024 appropriations for basic skills programs authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Advance immigration reform for Dreamers and DACA recipients. Urge Congress to advance legislation improving the tools that make education accessible for students with diverse immigration statuses.

Legalization of Recreational Cannabis

Financial services for legalized commercial cannabis businesses. Urge Congress to adopt the Safe Banking Act which would provide legal cannabis businesses with access to deposit accounts, insurance and other financial services.