

**Marie Sylla-Dixon**  
**9709 Tusculum Way**  
**Bethesda, MD 20817**  
**mrsylladixon@gmail.com**  
**(202) 997-8025**

November 17, 2025

Lynn Robeson Hannan, Hearing Examiner  
Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings  
100 Maryland Avenue, Room 200  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

**Re: Support for Holton-Arms School Special Exception Request – Case No. CBA-1174-E**

Dear Hearing Examiner Hannan,

My name is Marie Sylla Dixon. I am a resident of Bethesda, Maryland, living just seven minutes from Holton-Arms School. I actually grew up in Montgomery County in Silver Spring. I am also the proud parent of a 14-year-old daughter, Laila, who currently attends Holton-Arms and previously attended the school's Creative Summer program. I am writing to express my full support for Holton's Special Exception request.

Holton-Arms is one of the few non-denominational independent girls' schools in Montgomery County. Its mission to empower and educate young women has been a cornerstone of this community for over six decades. The proposed request is not about unchecked growth—it's about sustainability, modernizing facilities, and increasing accessibility for students and families who want to be part of this transformative institution.

As a parent, I've seen firsthand how Holton-Arms has shaped my daughter into a confident, capable, and community-minded young woman. Holton is preparing future leaders, and we should be doing everything possible to support that mission, especially now.

Frankly, I am disappointed by the opposition's attempt to block a school from educating more girls, and even more disappointed by the involvement of my representatives, State Senator Sara Love and Delegates Korman, Wolek, and Woorman. In their original letter dated **November 4, 2025**, they admitted: *"As state legislators, we have no formal role in this process, nor a formal position on the expansion."* That should have been the end of it. Yet days later, on **November 6**, they amended their letter, toning down their earlier admission and weighing in more directly, despite acknowledging their lack of jurisdiction. That's not just confusing; it's inappropriate. Legislators should not use their titles to inject influence into a local administrative proceeding they have no authority over. It is an abuse of power.

This case is not just about zoning; it's about the values we claim to support, educational

opportunity, gender equity, and community progress. Holton's proposal includes modest enrollment increases, thoughtful traffic mitigation, and broader facility access that benefits the public. Girls' education deserves the same opportunity to thrive as comparable schools for boys. The disparity in how Holton is treated compared to other institutions is both unjust and outdated.

I am also disheartened by the entitlement mindset reflected in efforts to restrict access to public roads near the school. As a resident and taxpayer, I take offense to the idea that some streets should be off-limits to others simply because of proximity. That is not how public infrastructure works, and it is not how inclusive communities are built. The traffic challenges along this corridor are part of a broader, long-standing infrastructure issue that affects the entire County. Let's work together to address traffic, but Holton should not be unfairly blamed or handcuffed in the process.

Holton-Arms has long been a positive force in this county, serving students, families, and the broader community. It is time we support their effort to grow responsibly and continue fulfilling their vital mission.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marie Sylla-Dixon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marie" being the most prominent.

Marie Sylla-Dixon  
9709 Tusculum Way  
Bethesda, MD 20817  
mrsylladixon@gmail.com  
(202) 997-8025

cc: OZAH@montgomerycountymd.gov

bcc: Senator Sara Love, Delegate Marc Korman, Delegate Sarah Wolek, Delegate Teresa Woorman