

(Attachment C.)

**Criss, Jeremy**

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**From:** Criss, Jeremy  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 06, 2011 2:05 PM  
**To:** Criss, Jeremy; 'David Weitzer'; 'Willard, Billy'; 'Fred Lechliden'; 'bastabler@aol.com'; 'rdraver@aol.com'; 'lonnie.luther@gmail.com'; 'butlerbery@msn.com'; 'Thelecksfarm@aol.com'; 'Pam Saul'; 'kjam415@starpower.net'; 'pvfgrain@aol.com'; 'BCISSEL@aol.com'; 'Ben Allnutt'; 'Gene Walker'  
**Cc:** Zawitoski, John; 'Charles Schuster'; 'Doug Tregoning'  
**Subject:** RE: Future staffing plan for the University of Maryland Extension UME in Montgomery County

Hello everyone,

Thank you for helping us during the meeting to further improve the letter regarding the UME-AED Plan.

Today we made all of the changes to the letter that we discussed during our meeting last night.

We have also made a few stylistic and word changes to improve some transition between certain points.

We believe the letter is now final and we are sending it to Dean Wei today.

We are now working on the cover letter from David Weitzer addressed to the Montgomery County Delegation, the President of the University of Maryland the Provost, The County Executive and members of the Montgomery County Council.

This cover letter will reference the letter to the Dean and it will be attached as well.

We will also send this letter to you once it is finalized.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks Jeremy

Jeremy V. Criss  
Agricultural Services Manager  
Department of Economic Development  
Agricultural Services Division  
18410 Muncaster Road  
Derwood, Maryland 20855  
301-590-2830  
301-590-2839 (Fax)  
[jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov)  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices>



(Attachment C.)

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 5, 2011

Dr. Cheng-I Wei, Dean and Director  
College of Agricultural and Natural Sciences  
University of Maryland Extension  
1296 Symons Hall  
College Park, MD 20742-5551

Dear Dr. Wei:

This letter is a follow up to the meeting you attended on September 20, 2011 with agricultural representatives where you presented the UME-AED Cluster Plan and discussed how it will impact Montgomery County.

It is widely believed by the agricultural community that the effectiveness of Extension in Montgomery County is in jeopardy due to this proposed plan and we are concerned regarding the direction Extension is going under your leadership. We are concerned how the administrative and organizational model that Extension was founded upon is now being changed without sensitivity to its organizational culture and history. We believe the basic principles of Extension will no longer be in place.

We do not believe that a UME-Area Director for Montgomery, Howard, and Frederick Counties will be in the best interest of Montgomery County. We are opposed to this Plan because we believe the administrative change from the County Extension Director to an Area Director will dilute the effectiveness of Extension in our County. We understand how organizations must change and adapt to their environment, especially in difficult fiscal times. We believe the proposed AED Cluster Plan is now being implemented too quickly for the counties within the central region of the state including Montgomery County.

We are aware of your letter dated September 23, 2010 addressed to the Montgomery County Executive where you stated the following: "We have valued the strong partnership between our organizations for over 40 years, but feel that partnership is now in jeopardy."

We are also aware of the County Executive's response letter dated October 25, 2010 which referenced the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County Government, UME and the obligations of the County as well as the University. The Terms of Agreement under this 2007 MOU state under number 2. "The MCE office located in Montgomery County

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will be managed on a daily basis by the County Extension Director. County personnel report to the DED Director and MCE personnel report to the MCE County Extension Director.”

The proposed UME-Area Extension Director is not consistent with the Terms of Agreement outlined in the 2007 MOU and it represents an administrative change that we do not support nor would we recommend to the County Government that they approve.

We are both concerned and disappointed regarding how the UME is not following its own purpose or intentions of the Strategic Staffing Plan effective July 1, 2011 that states “No transfers or reassignments of faculty will occur and additional positions will be filled based on strategic analysis of the needs in the various regions of the state.” The central region of the state, including Montgomery County, does not have an Agronomy Extension Educator position. We believe this agronomy position represents a critical area of need in our central region of the state that should be filled. However, we are encouraged to know the UME is moving forward to fill the 4-H Program Assistant in Montgomery County that will assist with our growing 4-H Youth and Development programs in both enrollment (945 youth) and number of clubs (39 clubs). The 4-H Program Assistant has been vacant for over 2.5 years and we are concerned as to how long we must wait until the Agronomy position is filled.

Several leaders of the Montgomery County agricultural community met with the County Executive last December to identify alternate private funding to help sustain the partnership between UME and the County Government. Our meeting with the County Executive was conducted to demonstrate our role in addressing your above stated concern that this partnership is now in jeopardy. Private funding from the Montgomery County Farm Bureau was provided to retain and fill a County administrative position assigned to UME in accordance with the above referenced MOU. The leadership of the Montgomery County agricultural community is very strong, very effective, and very interested in addressing the needs of Montgomery County Extension. We are committed to making sure Extension in Montgomery County continues to support all residents of the county. We can only accomplish this goal by maintaining a cooperative partnership and positive working relationship.

Please keep us informed regarding the proposed UME-AED Cluster Plan and the status of federal funding allocated to UME. We would like to remind you of our previous request for the copies of the survey and responses that UME presented to Extension staff and AED's in measuring the effectiveness of the AED Cluster Plan. You should know that we have reached out to other individuals from around the state where the UME-AED has been implemented. From this we have learned that this plan has not been universally supported which appears to contradict what your staff reported to us during our September 20, 2011 meeting. We are concerned that the conclusions drawn from this data may be flawed. As a concerned Extension partner, we believe our request to review and substantiate the conclusions drawn from the data is a reasonable request.

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We appreciate the time you spent with us during the September 20, 2011 meeting. We sincerely hope that you will consider our position regarding the future effectiveness of Extension in Montgomery County.

Respectfully submitted by the members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Work Group representing the groups and organizations listed on the next page.

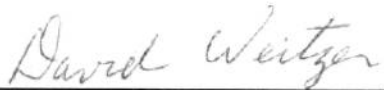
Cc: The Honorable Isiah Leggett,  
Montgomery County Executive

Jeremy V. Criss,  
Agricultural Services Manager

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Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Work Group,



David Weitzer  
David Weitzer, Chairman  
Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee

George Lechlider, Chair  
MSCD Board of Supervisors

Lonnie Luther, President  
Montgomery County Farm Bureau

Bill Anderson, Montgomery  
County Farm Bureau

Gene Walker, Secretary, Upper  
Montgomery County Farmers Club

Billy Willard, Montgomery  
County Ag Fair Board, APAB

W. Drew Stabler, Maryland Grain  
Producers Utilization Board, AAC

Bob Stabler, Maryland Ag  
Commission, MSCD

Robert Raver, Montgomery Weed  
Control Board of Directors

Wade Butler, Treasurer  
MSCD Board of Supervisors

Pam Saul, MSCD Board of  
Supervisors

Bob Cissel, Agricultural Preservation  
Advisory Board

Ben Allnutt, Agricultural  
Advisory Committee