

Draft RESJAC Testimony in Support of Bill 22-22; Drafted by Zola Shaw
Public Hearing Date: July 26, 2022
Proposed Committee Member to Read the Testimony: Zola Shaw
Read Time: Approximately 1 minute and 58 seconds (strict 2-minute limit)

Good afternoon, my name is Zola Shaw, and I am Chair of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee.

Our Committee strongly supports Bill 22-22 and advises the Council to urgently vote in favor of this legislation.

Since the expiration of the previous Bill 30-21, County renters have faced an increased risk of displacement. This risk is compounded by economic hardships resulting from COVID-19 impacts on income, health, and family obligations – further exacerbated by the increased costs of gas, food, and housing.

According to the Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement for the previous Bill 30-21 “households lacking access to affordable and safe housing, also known as secure housing, are at greater risk of experiencing evictions and homelessness. Many of these households, who are disproportionately Black and Latinx in Montgomery County, were at risk for evictions and homelessness before the pandemic.”

This is also backed by data:

- Among renter-burden households in 2019 -meaning spending 30 percent or more of their income on rent, was experienced among 66 percent of Latinx renters, and 60 percent of Black renters.¹
- Among families experiencing homelessness in 2020, 78 percent were Black.²

Our Committee also considered multiple lived experiences shared by County renters facing acute challenges of housing affordability and insecurity.

With fewer safeguards to shield our most marginalized communities, our Committee advises the County Council to urgently intervene; and continue to practice its commitment to advancing racial equity and social justice by voting in favor of Bill 22-22.

Thank you!

¹ Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement for Expediated Bill 30-21
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/resjis/2021/Bill30-21RESJ.pdf>

² Ibid.