



Montgomery County Council

*From the Office of Councilmembers Steve Silverman,
George Leventhal, Tom Perez, and Nancy Floreen*

For Immediate Release

July 13, 2004

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Councilmembers Propose Establishing a Local Small Business "Reserve"

Council President Steve Silverman and Councilmembers George Leventhal, Tom Perez, and Nancy Floreen today introduced legislation that will require County departments for the first time to reserve 10 percent of their procurement opportunities for Montgomery County small businesses. It will also require that individual County departments post informal procurement opportunities on the internet.

"Small businesses are the backbone of this County," said Council President Silverman. "They deserve a fair chance to do business with County government."

By awarding 10 percent of all procurement opportunities to the best bids submitted by Montgomery County small businesses, the legislation seeks to enhance competition by broadening the pool of vendors doing business with the County and will ensure that more Montgomery County residents benefit from these opportunities. The Maryland General Assembly earlier this year passed similar legislation creating a state small business "reserve."

"It will help to level the playing field for small businesses," said Councilmember Perez. "They deserve an equal opportunity to compete."

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“It is only fair and reasonable that small business owners get a fair shake,” said Councilmember Leventhal. “The little guy should be able to play.”

County Department heads directly make more than 4,500 purchases for goods and services under \$25,000. These informal procurement opportunities totaled \$14 million in fiscal year 2003. This legislation will require posting these opportunities on the County website, giving small businesses that may have been previously unknown to the Department head the opportunity to provide their best bid.

“County small businesses are key players in our growing economy,” said Councilmember Floreen. “They and their thousands of employees should get fair consideration in the County’s contracting process.”

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