



March 28, 2023

The Honorable Evan Glass
Council President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear President Glass and Councilmembers:

Re: Rent Control Legislation

On behalf of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the two rent control-related bills, *Bill 16-23 -- Landlord-Tenant Relations – Rent Stabilization (The HOME Act)* and *Bill 15-23 -- Landlord-Tenant Relations-Anti Rent Gouging Protections*. Bill 16-23 proposes a draconian form of rent control, and the Chamber strongly opposes its passage. The other proposal, Bill 15-23, is also opposed by MCCC, but we commend the efforts of the sponsor and co-sponsors to offer a solution that seeks to address unacceptable rental price gouging in a thoughtful way that acknowledges the County’s housing supply scarcity and affordability challenges.

Rent control policy proposals are inconsistent with the need for more housing in Montgomery County, particularly missing middle housing. MCCC opposes rent control due to its adverse effects on the availability of additional housing which Montgomery County needs to be competitive. The County cannot compete for workforce talent without growing its stock of affordable housing for workers who will otherwise have no choice but to live in neighboring jurisdictions that offer better and more abundant and attractive housing options. Rent control, especially as proposed by Bill 16-23, will freeze the County’s market for housing, which already is already challenged with too much demand and too little supply.

The Chamber applauds the Council’s understanding that the dearth of affordable and abundant housing needs to be addressed and policies that seek to address rental gouging are a good faith effort to make a difference. However, stringent rent control measures are ineffective policy that will worsen housing problems in the future. Instead, this debate offers a great opportunity for this Council to continue their efforts to address the County’s housing shortage in other, more productive ways that seek to increase the supply of housing.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Godwin".

Georgette “Gigi” Godwin
President & CEO
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce