

Montgomery County FY 2021 Operating Budget
Public Hearings, April 16, 2020

Testimony by the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County

Here are the areas of the budget that we are highlighting, with accompanying explanations:

- Elections: The administration of the election is a major responsibility of the state and county, and the additional costs resulting from the COVID-19 state of emergency are going to add to the already underfunded function. Because we will have polling sites as well as mail-in ballots, we are putting Election Judges and staff on the front line to meet the better goals of an election that remains available to all our citizens, and they should not pay the price in not having the needed administrative costs covered, nor in not recognizing their own personal health needs that should be recognized in the training and salary they receive for their efforts.
- Endorsing recent emergency legislation: Since our members strongly support government expenditures to help residents meet their basic human needs for food, housing, and health care, we applaud the emergency legislation that has already been passed - and recognize that it - and the ongoing COVID-19 health and economic challenges - will impact your decisions on the FY 21 Budget.
- In Education and Early Child Care, we continue to support funding: (1) to increase access to licensed child care in high need areas, (2) to expand pre-kindergarten, (3) for strategies to ensure access to experienced leadership and faculty in schools with high numbers of low income, minority students, and (4) for programs to prepare students not headed to college for careers in fields where there are jobs with potential for upward mobility. (5) In addition, the county's funding under health should include support for Linkages to Learning and other school-based health programs.
- In Agriculture, because of the particular current importance of quality food sources, the Office of Agriculture budget should not have been cut at all.

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