

We at Howard Progressive Project are writing in support of CR144 and CR145 to allow the PILOT for Roslyn Rise to move forward.

We support this project because our organizational values embrace investment in infrastructure that supports the healthy growth and development of our people. Tenants of leased properties, and especially tenants of income-restricted and subsidized housing, often have very little political power to influence housing decisions in a way that meets their needs. Housing policies and decisions in jurisdictions across America have long been shaped by homeowners, landlords, and the politically connected. Often, this has come at the expense of the working class and poor, many of whom are renters, as they struggle to make stagnant wages stretch far enough to accommodate rising housing costs. And often, at decision-making time, their voices cannot be heard above the shouts of the more powerful.

We recognize that the additional market-rate units that this redevelopment project will bring into the neighborhood will bring more children into the schools. We cannot wave away concerns about school capacity. But we cannot settle the problem of school capacity on the backs of the working class and poor by keeping them in outdated, substandard, unhealthy housing. As such, we call upon the County Council and the Board of Education to work in cooperation toward addressing development and school capacity issues with long-term, fiscally-viable strategies that hold developers and those at the top tier of the income scale accountable for paying our fair share, rather than expecting our most vulnerable workers and schoolchildren to pay for our lack of political will.

Howard County is one of the wealthiest counties in the nation. We have the means to offer a helping hand to our struggling neighbors and build and maintain a world class school system for all. Let's work together to do just that.

Kelly Klinefelter Lee
President, Howard Progressive Project