



Contact:
Cynthia Marshall, *Lead Organizer*
cynthia@actioninmontgomery.org | 443-433-8054

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 4, 2020

AIM Organizes 400 Leaders to Hold Electeds' Accountable for Promises on Equity in Education, Immigration, and Affordable Housing

County Executive Elrich, Councilmembers Alborno, Glass, Jawando, Katz, and Riemer, and HOC Director Stacy Spann confirmed to be in attendance

WHEN: 7pm on Thursday, March 5, 2020

WHERE: The People's Community Baptist Church (31 Norwood Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20905)

Silver Spring, MD—On Thursday, March 5, Action in Montgomery (AIM) will convene a public action meeting at The People's Community Baptist Church to demand answers from County Executive Elrich, members of County Council, and Housing Opportunities Commission Director Stacy Spann on promises they have previously made to Montgomery County residents. The action meeting will focus on areas highlighted in AIM's "People's Agenda" on equity in transportation, affordable housing, and immigration that was developed after listening to over 3,000 Montgomery County residents in 30 congregations and schools.

"Montgomery County officials frequently speak out about equity and support for our immigrant sisters and brothers. They stood in front of 1200+ Action In Montgomery (AIM) leaders and committed to act on real solutions. Right now in Montgomery County, residents live in *county-funded* substandard housing, the school achievement gap is widening, and our immigrant neighbors live with the threat of deportation," said Rev. Dr. Michael Armstrong of Colesville United Methodist Church. "On Thursday night we will find out if the Housing Opportunities Commission and our elected officials will act or just spout soundbites that don't move the needle toward equity or real solutions."

The event will feature residents of Cider Mills Apartments, where residents mugging is frequent, bedbugs and mice are a regular occurrence, half of the washers and dryers do not work, and management is consistently disrespectful to residents. The county provided \$15 Million for the Housing Opportunities Commission to purchase the property over a year ago. When it was purchased, HOC Director Stacy Spann promised to improve lighting, fix the laundry machines, and ensure responsive management. On March 5 AIM leaders will hold Director Spann accountable to his promises.

AIM will also ask the Executive and Council to continue expansion of the Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary program which the Office of Legislative Oversight has recommended to address the achievement gap in the county at the elementary level. "Pronouncements on equity mean nothing to the black and brown students of our county if we do not provide real opportunities. The future success of our children and our community is at stake," said Diana Bird of The People's Community Baptist Church.

AIM will address affordable housing and launch a listening campaign focused on the new "trickle up" economy that rarely offers worker benefits and compromises steady work and income. AIM will identify leaders and issues to address this central issue of our time.

###

Action In Montgomery (AIM) is an affiliate of the [Industrial Areas Foundation](#). Since 2000, AIM's 28 member congregations, schools, and nonprofits have won over \$725 Million for affordable housing, \$30 Million to renovate community centers in historically African-American neighborhoods, and quality after-school programming for 1,200 students in 10 high-poverty schools. AIM leaders were key to passing the Maryland Dream Act.