



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 2I  
PRINCE GEORGE'S AND ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTIES

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

County Executive Angela Alsobrooks  
Office of County Executive  
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, Suite 4000  
1301 McCormick Drive, Largo, MD 20774

Dear County Executive Alsobrooks:

The Beltsville Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) has a long-standing relationship with the Prince George's County community. Opened in 1947, the BVFD is now a pillar of the ethnically diverse community of Beltsville and surrounding neighborhoods. They rely on it to keep their families safe.

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the Prince George's County Fire Department's proposal to relocate all career personnel from the Beltsville location to neighboring stations. Doing so would immediately and negatively impact thousands of residents and businesses.

We understand the proposal to relocate career personnel is based on concerns over unsafe working conditions, a problem that has been prevalent for years. Attached is documentation of BVFD's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) requests that went unanswered.

In 2018, there were serious concerns about the condition of the department's bunkroom, bathroom, and shower, which had water leaking into the engine bay. Although deemed "critical" by the station's president, a repair request went unanswered, and the bathroom became non-functional for both male and female personnel.

In 2023, issues about funding came to light after BVFD revealed that improvements to its heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system would require a major renovation for which the volunteer company did not have funding to initiate.

We agree that keeping career and volunteer firefighters in Beltsville protected must be a top priority, along with protecting the community. Relocating career personnel while a facilities assessment is developed, and repairs are made is unnecessary. Only a couple identified facility deficiencies raise immediate health concerns and these could, and should, be addressed immediately. Frankly, these critical repairs should have been completed already. Once these are addressed, there is no justification for removing staffing while other issues are evaluated and resolved.

Reassigning career personnel for an undetermined period ultimately leaves residents exposed and minimizes staff availability at the station. Eliminating paid staffing at BVFD will extend response times to emergency calls in this community.

The relocation of the federal Bureau of Printing and Engraving to Beltsville underscores the importance of maintaining a robust and professional fire department locally in Beltsville.

This addition of 1,286 full-time jobs, with at least 850 on-site workers operating in three shifts around the clock, will increase future demands on emergency services. The need for skilled and dedicated emergency responders will inevitably rise with the increased population and the continuous operations of this new facility, which is just two miles from BVFD.

We stand behind the Beltsville community and urge:

- Reconsideration of this decision to prioritize the safety of all firefighter personnel and residents.
- Keeping the career firefighters in BVFD during the evaluation of health and safety improvements, providing residential trailers for them if needed.
- Confirming that the county is committed to keeping BVFD open and working with BVFD to improve it; and
- Meeting again with Chief Green.

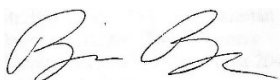
We look forward to hearing from you and working with your Administration to improve fire and EMS service in northern Prince George's County.

Sincerely,

Senator Jim Rosapepe



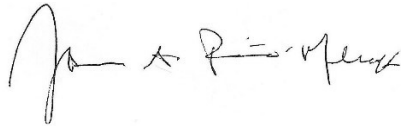
Delegate Ben Barnes



Delegate Mary Lehman

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Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk

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Councilmember Tom Dernoga

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