

The residents of Montgomery County are being devastated by the ever-increasing tax burden of our state and local officials. The Committee to Control Montgomery County Spending (Control MoCo Spending) was formed to limit the spending increase that any County Executive and County Council can legislate to the prior year's Consumer Price Index (CPI). We plan to roll out the petition in the middle of April.

While others like Robin Ficker have attempted to control tax hikes by instituting limits on property tax increases, the Maryland General Assembly chose to allow counties to evade their charter limits on property tax increases for the purpose of steering more funds to schools. Then Senator Rich Madaleno, now the county's chief administrative officer under Marc Elrich, crafted the loophole.

The "Madaleno clause" allows any money raised under the guise of supporting schools to be "fungible" and swept into the County's general fund, effectively bypassing limits on property tax increases. The County Executive and County Council continue to use this loophole to increase taxes framing the increase as supporting schools.

If the County Executive and County Council were really serious about additional funding for schools, they would implement a "lockbox" that would insure that money raised for schools is actually used for schools and not swept into the general fund.

But that would be the fox watching the hen house.

Financial discipline must be imposed on the County Executive and County Council. At some point hard choices must be made and spending trimmed to provide the best return on our tax investment.

Since we know that the County Executive and County Council don't want to give up this loophole, we must put guardrails on spending.

The Committee to Control Montgomery County Spending seeks to get a question on the ballot that will limit the spending of the County Executive and County Council to the prior year's CPI.

By Authority Committee to Control MoCo Spending – Victoria Birkett Treasurer