

April 27, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of the Charles County Charitable Trust.

My name is Dr. Kathleen Ruben and I represent Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington. Catholic Charities is a non-profit organization that is one of the most comprehensive providers of social services in the region. We have served the Charles County community for over 30 years. We offer a number of supportive services to Charles County residents such as food assistance through our Southern Maryland Food Bank, and rent/mortgage/utility assistance through our Parish Partners program.

Catholic Charities also offers several homeless and housing services in Charles County. I am the Senior Program Manager for Catholic Charities' Southern Maryland Homeless and Housing Programs including Angel's Watch Homeless Shelter, St. Sebastian's Townhomes, and the Fortitude Program. These programs assist homeless families, and individuals with disabilities, and offer resources to help residents take the steps to obtain jobs and permanent housing.

Angel's Watch Homeless Shelter, provides safe, dignified emergency shelter for single women and families experiencing homelessness. The shelter is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and operates at an undisclosed location in Charles County to protect our client's safety. In addition to emergency shelter, we provide food, clothing, and other necessities. We also offer case management and comprehensive supportive services for an increasing number of homeless individuals. In addition, we must provide a greater array of services to accommodate various vulnerable populations.

Angel's Watch has received grant funding from the Charles County Charitable Trust for over five years; these grants provide critical support for our program, ensuring we have the capacity to empower clients to secure permanent housing and achieve long-term stability. Catholic Charities relies on partners such as the Charles County Charitable Trust to help us provide high-quality services that are accessible, culturally responsive, evidence-based, and outcomes-oriented. We are honored to speak on their behalf, and we look forward to our continued collaboration in serving the Charles County community for many years to come.

Thank You,

Kathleen Ruben