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**From:** Robert Bednarzik <bednarzr@georgetown.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 12, 2025 10:23 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support

**Flag Status:** Flagged

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I support passing both CR 233 and CB 69

Bob Bednarzik

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Thomas Nassau <nassaujt63@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 12, 2025 3:27 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support for CR 233 and CB 69

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I support both CR233 and CB69 to increase our supply of housing in Columbia's downtown. A new public library and hundreds of homes will be wonderful additions to our community and help to meet the great need we have for housing, particularly a chance to add affordable homes for young people and those in service positions that just don't pay very well even though these folks are crucial to our lives.

Judith Nassau  
6126 Waiting Spring  
Columbia, MD 21045

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**From:** larry Carson <karasov1@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 12, 2025 10:22 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Cr233 and CB 69

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HI, Larry Carson here. I support both these bills because they would help break the logjam on affordable housing in the New town district. I was a volunteer on the Age Friendly task force and housing was a very important part of the needs for seniors, especially limited income people. This library replacement would finally get the ball rolling on some significant additions of housing, so PLEASE support them! Thanks  
Larry Carson  
7168 Winter rose Path, Col. 21045

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**From:** Ruth Frost <ruthsfrost@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 12, 2025 10:36 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** More Affordable Homes in Columbia

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Dear council,

I support adding affordable housing to Howard County, especially for people who work in Howard County.

Thanks,  
Ruth

Resident of King's Contrivance village in Columbia

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Housing Affordability Coalition** <[admin@hocohac.org](mailto:admin@hocohac.org)>  
Date: Wed, Nov 12, 2025 at 10:16 AM  
Subject: Advocate Now for a New Library + More Affordable Homes in Columbia  
To: <[ruthsfrost@gmail.com](mailto:ruthsfrost@gmail.com)>

# **A New Library and New Affordable Homes: Let's Make Them Happen**

On Monday, Nov. 17, the County Council will hold a public hearing on two measures that would add over 400 mixed-income homes in Downtown Columbia – while delivering a modern, accessible Central Branch Library to the Columbia Lakefront.

On the agenda:

- [Council Resolution 233](#) – Authorizes the County to acquire a Lakefront parcel from the Howard Hughes Corporation for the new Central Branch Library.
- [Council Bill 69](#) – Releases budget funds for planning and design of the new Library.

After the new Library opens, the current Central Branch site will be redeveloped as new mixed-income housing. The transactions would also include the transfer of a Howard Hughes-owned Merriweather parcel to the Howard County Housing Commission, for development of additional homes.

Together, these actions keep the Rouse vision alive – an affordable, equitable, and diverse Columbia – and advance the County's commitment in 2017 to create 400+ affordable homes in Downtown.

### **How to Advocate**

1. Turn out for the hearing on Monday, Nov 17 at 7 pm
  - Location: Banneker Room of the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City
  - Wear your Coalition t-shirt to show visible support.
2. [Email the Council](#) expressing your support for CR 233 and CB 69.
3. Spread the word. Encourage involvement from neighbors and friends who care about housing, libraries, and a thriving, inclusive Downtown.

### **Quick Talking Points**

- **Yes to both library and housing.** This package ties a first-class public library to the creation of hundreds of additional homes in downtown – a win for learning, community, and affordability.
- **Delivers on commitments.** CR233 and CB69 create the implementation path to meet the County's 2017 commitment to add 400+ affordable homes in Downtown.

- **Efficient land swaps, smarter sequencing.** The Lakefront acquisition enables the new library; redevelopment of the current library site and transfer of the Merriweather parcel unlock land for additional homes.
- **We need more homes for a mix of incomes.** These actions support an inclusive, affordable Columbia – aligned with the Rouse vision.

Thank you.

Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition  
9770 Patuxent Woods Dr, Columbia, MD 21046  
443-920-5144

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter/X](#)

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Sent via [ActionNetwork.org](#). To update your email address, change your name or address, or to stop receiving emails from Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition, please [click here](#).

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**From:** Lillian Bauder <l.bauder@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 13, 2025 1:58 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Letter of Support

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November 13, 2025

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for the Central Library at the Lakefront in the Downtown Columbia Plan (CR223-2025 and CB69-2025). I believe the addition of a central library in downtown Columbia will provide many benefits including encouraging residents to utilize the library more readily and frequently in their daily lives. It will provide much needed spaces for children, teens and adults to learn and connect in an impactful way. A new central library will have a positive economic impact and will be a catalyst for greater economic growth. Our county becomes a more appealing community to live and work when we expand county services, programs and facilities.

I have long been a supporter of the Howard County Library System by providing endowments that reach adults, teens and children. Recently, the East Columbia Branch held the Bauder Book Talk, an author event which facilitated a conversation with 2 authors of "Blackout" and county teens. Endowing programs like this helps ensures a robust library system in the future.

I have committed to supporting these types of programs because of their value to our community. I hope you will join me in supporting the Central Library at the Lakefront in the Downtown Columbia Plan.

Sincerely,

Lillian Bauder

Howard County Resident, District 4

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**From:** Bob Leker <bobleker@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 15, 2025 4:40 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Please Support CR 233 and CB 69

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## **WARNING!!!**

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Affordable housing is a critical need in Howard County. We need to supply reasonable housing for government workers, young people, and others. Please Support CR 233 and CB 69:

- **The package links community amenities and housing:** A state-of-the-art Lakefront library and hundreds of new homes – both essential to a vibrant, equitable Downtown.
- **It fulfills overdue commitments:** These actions directly advance the County's 2017 commitment to create more than 400 affordable homes in Downtown Columbia.
- **It's a smart and efficient plan:** The land acquisition and transfer will unlock precious buildable sites.
- **It supports affordability and diversity:** More homes for a range of incomes strengthen the Rouse vision and the future of Columbia.

Thank you,  
Bob Leker  
9566 Fallen Stone  
Columbia, MD 21045

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**From:** Fran LoPresti <fflopresti@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 15, 2025 11:09 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Testimony for bills CB 69 and CR 223  
**Attachments:** Downtown library swap CR 223.docx

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Hello,

I regret that I cannot attend the public meeting in person. Please accept my written testimony as a replacement. Thank you.

--

Fran LoPresti

Fran LoPresti  
6985 Deep Cup  
Columbia, MD 21045  
[fflopresti@gmail.com](mailto:fflopresti@gmail.com)

Hello Council members,

During the work session held on the 2026 Capital Budget last April, the Council was clear that the logjam surrounding the new Central library had to be resolved as it was holding up a significant number of affordable housing plans in Downtown Columbia. The deadline was September 15, 2025. The county administration could not meet this date but now has a path to clear the logjam. Please vote in favor of CB 69 which removes the date deadline.

The need for affordable housing (MIHU and LIHU) in Howard County is only getting worse. CR 223 sets the series of steps that must be taken to move forward with the hundreds of units that the Howard County Housing Commission will need to build. It involves the purchase of the Lakefront site by Howard County. The Howard Research Development Corp will sell the Merriweather site to the county for zero dollars allowing the Commission to move forward with that development. Once the library is built, the central library site will also end up in the Housing Commission's portfolio. This represents something like 300 units of rental housing for our citizens.

The budget for the Central library (capital budget L0020) has 10 million in grants which should go a long way in the purchase price for this land which was appraised at 14 million.

We will then have four years to accumulate the funds for this library. I suggest that we look for grants and that the library start a capital campaign. This library will hold more than books – it will be a 21<sup>st</sup> century library with experiences, opportunities to utilize space and equipment for things like broadcasting, cooking, and community assembly.

I urge you to pass both bills.

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**From:** Jen Blondo <jenblondo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 15, 2025 1:27 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support of CR 233 and CB 69

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Hello, I am a Howard County resident in District 4. I am writing in support of CR 233 and CB 69. I would love to see Howard County add the lakefront library as community space, capable of holding 1,000+ people. We need more meeting space, especially no-cost meeting space, for both large and small groups. This would be especially beneficial for small groups, or income-constrained individuals and families who are looking to have a gathering space such as for a birthday party or family gathering. I would love to see the library offer cooking classes, a DIY center, and other opportunities for personal and community development similar to what our current libraries already offer, but at a larger scale because of it being a bigger facility. I also love the idea of being able to attract important speakers or authors and be able to accommodate the number of guests who want to hear them (because of having a larger space).

I also support adding more affordable housing, and mixed-use spaces. I trust we as a county will continue to focus on infrastructure and sustainable growth as well.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope we can move forward with this initiative.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Blondo  
7625 Browns Bridge Road  
Highland MD 20777  
202-567-1098

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**From:** Paul Revelle <paul.revelle@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 15, 2025 10:57 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** I support affordable housing at the library

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This bill is long overdue but nonetheless welcome. I was a member of the Full Spectrum housing group that advocated for affordable housing in Downtown. We met with members of the then Council who were reluctant to support an affordable housing requirement beyond the library, fire station and transit sites. They were confident that these sites, because they were on land owned by the County, would be easier to redevelop and, together with the funding stream proposed by GGP, would suffice. Well, it hasn't been easy but passage of this bill is the start we need.

Paul Revelle

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**From:** Randee Gordon <randee.l.gordon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 15, 2025 4:27 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Please Support CR 233 and CB 69

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Please Support CR 233 and CB 69:

- **The package links community amenities and housing:** A state-of-the-art Lakefront library and hundreds of new homes – both essential to a vibrant, equitable Downtown.
- **It fulfills overdue commitments:** These actions directly advance the County's 2017 commitment to create more than 400 affordable homes in Downtown Columbia.
- **It's a smart and efficient plan:** The land acquisition and transfer will unlock precious buildable sites.
- **It supports affordability and diversity:** More homes for a range of incomes strengthen the Rouse vision and the future of Columbia.

Randee Gordon  
9566 Fallen Stone  
Columbia, MD 21045

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**From:** Laura Salganik <lsalganik@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 16, 2025 9:20 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Council Resolutions 233 and 69

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing in support of Council Resolutions 233 and 69, allowing the County to acquire the Lakefront parcel needed for the new library and releasing design and planning funds that move the project from concept to construction.

The Lakefront is a wonderful community gathering place for Columbia and for the whole County. Creating a Library there – which in today's world is also a place for many community activities – will make it even more attractive and indeed enhance the value of our County as a place to live.

Further, this helps move us in the direction of a significant number of mixed-income homes in the Merriweather District. This is long overdue.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Laura Salganik  
10386 Eclipse Way

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**From:** James Connolly <james.connolly.law@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 17, 2025 9:54 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Vote in favor of CR 233 and CB 69

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As a resident of District 1 and a member of St. John the Evangelist RC Church in Columbia, I write to request your support of CR 233 and CB 69 which are before the Council tonight. The Resolution and Bill will pave the way for additional affordable housing in the County as well as a new library with significant amenities on the shore of New Town's Lake.

Thanking you in advance for your attention to this matter, and with warm regards, I am

Sincerely

Jim  
James M. Connolly  
5220 Talbots Lndg, Ellicott City, MD 21043  
410.788.6481 -- home | 443.636.7967 -- cell

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**From:** Katie Collins-Ihrke <kcollinsihrk@archoward.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 17, 2025 8:23 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Cc:** admin@hocohac.org  
**Subject:** Testimony to the Howard County Council In Support of CR 233 and CB 69  
**Attachments:** CB233 C69 Testimony from The Arc HC.pdf

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Good morning,  
Please find my testimony attached for this evening's hearing. I will be unable to make it to testify in person.  
Thank you!  
Katie

--

Katie Collins-Ihrke (she/her/hers)  
Executive Director  
The Arc of Howard County  
(240) 213-6697



Achieving full community life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities- one person at a time.

Note: The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.



Testimony on CR 233-2025 and CB 69-2025

Submitted by: The Arc of Howard County

Regarding: Authorizing the County to acquire a Lakefront parcel from the Howard Hughes Corporation for the new Central Branch Library and releasing budget funds for planning and design of the new Library.

Chairperson and Members of the Howard County Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of CR 233-2025 and CB 69-2025. I offer these remarks on behalf of The Arc of Howard County, a provider of community-based supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Howard County.

This package matters because it treats learning, housing, and community vitality as linked goals rather than competing interests. By advancing a new, first-rate public library while also creating the framework for hundreds of new homes downtown, the legislation moves us toward a more inclusive and functional Columbia. The County committed in 2017 to adding more than 400 affordable homes in the Downtown area. CR 233 and CB 69 finally give us an implementation path that turns that commitment from an aspiration into something measurable and deliverable.

The land-use sequencing is efficient. The Lakefront acquisition makes the new library possible. Redevelopment of the current library site, combined with transferring the Merriweather parcel, opens up land that can actually support mixed-income housing at the scale this community needs. At a time when vacancy rates remain low and household formation outpaces our housing supply, policies that expand options for a range of incomes are necessary if we want Columbia to stay attainable for people with disabilities, teachers, Direct Support Professionals, first responders, young adults, and older residents.

This is fully consistent with the original Rouse vision: a community where people of different backgrounds and income levels can live, learn, and participate together. Passing CR 233 and CB 69 keeps Columbia moving in that direction.

I encourage approval of both measures and continued public transparency as the implementation proceeds. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Collins-Ihrke, MBA, MS  
Executive Director  
The Arc of Howard County  
(240) 213-6697

**THE ARC OF HOWARD COUNTY**  
11735 Homewood Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
[www.archoward.org](http://www.archoward.org)  
410-730-0638

*For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities*

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**From:** Kike Fisher <kikefish@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 17, 2025 1:52 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Housing bills

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I support cr bill 233 and cb 69 for improving housing opportunities in Howard County MD

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

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**From:** Marcy Leonard <marcy.leonard@hclibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 20, 2025 12:04 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** testimony from 11.19.25  
**Attachments:** County Council Testimony re Central Library at the Lakefront November 19 2025.pdf

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County Council members,

Please find attached a written copy of my testimony from the November 19, 2025 hearing. Many thanks for your thoughtful attention throughout the hearing and best of luck with your decision making.

Best,  
Marcy Leonard

**Marcy Leonard** • Chief Operating Officer - Public Services  
[Howard County Library System](#) • Administrative Branch  
410-313-7796 office  
410-294-4210 cell

[Facebook](#) • [Instagram](#) • [YouTube](#) • [Flickr](#) • [LinkedIn](#) • [Blog](#)

It's time for our next chapter: visit the redesigned [HCLibrary.org](#) to learn, grow, and connect online.

**County Council Testimony re: Central Library at the Lakefront**

**Marcy Leonard**

**November 19, 2025**

Chair Walsh, Vice Chair Jones, and Members of the Howard County Council, my name is Marcy Leonard, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you this evening about the Central Branch of Howard County Library System, specifically CB69-2025 and CR223-2025.

I have lived within walking distance of the Central Branch since its opening in 1981, and I am a resident of Columbia

As an elementary school student, my most cherished memories are of visiting the library on Friday afternoons with my Mom and sister to get lost in the stacks, ask the children's librarians for recommendations, and then head to the mall for dinner (shout out to Jade Palace and Bun Penny).

As a middle and high school student, Central library was the place I did homework, studied for the SATs, and first used a computer to look up colleges.

As a social studies teacher at Wilde Lake High School, Central library was the first place where I directed students looking for research resources for class assignments.

As Principal at Wilde Lake and Atholton High Schools, Central library was our trusted partner to provide academic and technology resources for families who don't have consistent access to wifi or computers at home. Central library welcomes Wilde Lake's Multilingual Learners each year for a field trip to see all the resources available to students. Central library visits the Teen Parenting program at Wilde Lake monthly to share early childhood literacy strategies with our teen moms and provide board books to take home, so the children of children will be prepared for the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

Sadly, Central library no longer meets the needs of our community.

We cannot claim that Central is an accessible building because the frequency of elevator malfunctions means that community members with mobility issues cannot get to the resources on the second floor.

Spaces and amenities that our community takes for granted at our other branches, as they should, are non-existent at the Central branch, including no private study rooms, only a single meeting room for groups larger than 30 people, no dedicated teen center, no Makerspace, no STEM classrooms, no entrepreneurship incubator, no cafe' seating area, and a dearth of electric plugs and internet ports for individual laptop use.

Despite the brightness and cheer of the most dedicated and amazing staff members at Central, the building's furnishings, carpeting, HVAC, bathroom fixtures, and concrete walls are worn past their ability to be remedied. Central library lacks exterior windows to bring the light in and has no dedicated outside spaces for learning and play.

In my new role working with Howard County Library System, I have learned that the Central libraries in most library systems are the exemplars for learning, growth, and connection for their community. They provide multiple opportunities for literacy, entrepreneurship, connection, and access. We cannot begin to say that about our present Central library building.

What weighs heaviest on my heart about the present status of the Central branch is that it is not the first place that our young people think of when they are seeking third spaces outside of home and school. We know that the challenges our youth face are significant, and the library is the perfect place for them to find every resource they are seeking, at no cost to them. The fact that 3 young people lost their lives to gun violence just ½ mile away in the last 18 months is heartbreaking. Those are our kids; those were my kids. They deserve a space that is welcoming, accessible, and where they are not required to engage in a retail transaction in order to be in the space. They deserve a space to learn, grow, and connect.

Our next generation of Howard County community members deserve a Central library that meets the needs of the next 45 years, that will drive economic growth, and that they can come home to, with their children and grandchildren. Thank you for your support.

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**From:** Jung, Debra  
**Sent:** Friday, December 5, 2025 12:44 PM  
**To:** Anderson, Isaiah  
**Subject:** FW: One last word

**Flag Status:** Flagged  
**Expires:** Saturday, May 30, 2026 12:00 AM

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**From:** jeanmoon@verizon.net <jeanmoon@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 1, 2025 6:24 PM  
**To:** Jung, Debra <djung@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Cc:** Williams, China <ccwilliams@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** One last word

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Deb: I was thinking about you today and remembering when you were “co-chairwoman” of the first arts gala in Howard County in 1996. That’s the first time I met you, and I have seen you ever since as a community leader who supports the cultural life of the community. Perhaps the greatest evidence of a community’s cultural life is a library. As a Columbian living on the “west side,” you know that the Central Library has not kept pace with the growth of our community, nor with Columbia’s original aspirations to be exceptional. It is undistinguished, it is not beautiful, it is not inspirational. YOU want it to be exceptional. That’s why you support the arts and artists because you know they make a community special. **I think it will say volumes to the community if you vote tonight to support a cultural institution with aspirations to be great.** Call upon its planners and designers to meet that promise of greatness in everything they do. Hold them accountable to create an institution worthy of its location... at the Lakefront of Columbia, the city in a garden. I am counting on you. Jean

P.S. I am writing as a private citizen living in your District.

Jean F. Moon  
Jean Moon & Associates  
410-730-0316  
[jeanmoon@verizon.net](mailto:jeanmoon@verizon.net)

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**From:** Owusu-Nkwantabisa, Nana <nowusunkwantabisa@howardcc.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 1, 2025 5:01 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail; CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov; Yungmann, David  
**Subject:** Individual testimony in support of CB 69 & CB 223: Libraries as economic drivers  
  
**Importance:** High  
  
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### **Honorable Council Members,**

Please accept this testimony in strong support of your efforts to advance the construction of the Central Library at the Lakefront. I am writing in support of **CB 69 and CB 223**, which represent a critical investment in the future of Howard County. While this is an individual testimony, I proudly acknowledge my membership in the Friends and Foundation of the Howard County Library.

**Libraries are the heart of a thriving community.** This is not a cliché; it is a proven truth. Communities with strong libraries demonstrate values that attract families, businesses, and talent. They signal that this is a place where children can thrive, where families can learn, and where businesses can grow. Quality libraries correlate directly with economic vitality and quality of life. Howard County libraries already deliver on these fronts, and the Lakefront Central Branch will amplify these benefits.

Here is the message this project sends:

- **To families:** Your children will have access to world-class educational resources.
- **To businesses:** This is a community that invests in knowledge and innovation.
- **To the region:** Howard County remains a leader in quality of life and economic opportunity.

This is why Howard County consistently ranks among the best places to live in the United States. The Lakefront Central Branch will strengthen that reputation and ensure we remain competitive for decades to come. Most importantly, this project complements the ongoing developments that make Downtown Columbia a family- and business-friendly destination.

As a member of the Friends and Foundation of the Library, I have witnessed firsthand the passion of families at events such as the Scripps Spelling Bee and the Battle of the Books. These programs inspire pride, engagement, and investment in our community. The library serves every demographic. Programs such as *Project Literacy* and *Beyond Words*, which cater to new Americans and the deaf community, respectively, foster inclusion and belonging. Families who value their libraries invest in

real estate, support local businesses, and contribute to a vibrant economy. An investment in the Lakefront Central Library will attract the families and businesses who will sustain the educational, social, and economic initiatives of the county.

Thank you for your support of CB 69 and CB 223. The Lakefront Library is an investment in education, economic growth, and the future of Howard County. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to this vision.

Sincerely,

Nana Owusu-Nkwantabisa

1.