

*Eileen Robertson's Testimony Monday, May 18, 2015*

Hello my name is Eileen Robertson I am a member of PATH Children Health/ Wellness Policy Team! I am a resident of Maple Lawn in Fulton Maryland. I have three children - one in middle school and two in elementary school. I'm here tonight in support of County Bill 17-2015. Three years ago I moved back to Maryland from Southern California after my husband passed away. I chose Howard County because of the progressive and innovative way the county supports its residents. A huge part of my decision was seeing the clear commitment Howard County has to the health, well-being, and education of our children. I don't underestimate how challenging it is for people to change their habits EVEN when there is indisputable evidence that making unhealthy eating choices has a detrimental effect on our health. It is no less difficult than it was for people to stop smoking in the 70's when evidence clearly made the case that smoking was dangerous. But just because something is challenging and difficult doesn't mean we shouldn't do it.

As a mother of three children, I want to live in an environment that makes it clear and EASY for my children to make healthy choices. When we use one of the amazing resources our county provides and MY tax dollars support - like a recreational center or library and they are hungry, **it is impossible for them to make a healthy choice. There are no healthy options for sale! I want my children to be presented with choices that are good for them.** I want to live in a county that is leading the transformation of health and well being for our children and my neighbors - Not a county that is afraid to make a difficult change!