

**TESTIMONY to the Montgomery County Council**  
**Zoning Text Amendment 19-01, Accessory Residential Uses – Accessory Apartments**  
**POSITION: Support**  
**Date: February 26, 2019**

For more than 50 years, the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County has supported comprehensive efforts by the County to maintain and increase the supply of affordable housing. In recent years, accessory apartments or accessory dwelling units (ADUs) -- as they are currently known, -- have become an important but limited element in the County's programs to provide this housing.

The League supports accessory dwelling units and supports measures to increase their feasibility and use -- as we believe ZTA 19-01 does.

There is a need for this amendment. We understand that only about 30 ADUs have been produced annually since 2013 when most such units no longer required a special exception. This is an improvement over the 10 units produced each year in prior years, but still a very low number in a county of this size.

The benefits of these units to both the homeowner and the ADU resident are many: the homeowner benefits through extra income, perhaps assistance with household and yard chores, and companionship if both parties desire it, and a comfortable, convenient affordable place to live benefits the resident.

ZTA 19-01 should increase the ability of homeowners to create these units. The League is particularly pleased that the draft text amendment removes the requirement that ADUs can be located only in housing that is at least five years old. The other proposed changes also appear to further the goal of more affordable housing.

We would support even greater flexibility in the regulations, specifically permitting this use in townhouses with appropriate controls.

Our members are concerned about an overconcentration, however, and would support a maximum percentage of ADUs in a neighborhood. The parking requirements and the need to notify neighbors may be sufficient to prevent this issue, but we ask you to consider it as you address this amendment. We urge passage of ZTA 19-01.

Submitted by –  
Nancy Bliss, president  
Sally Roman, housing committee co-chair