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For immediate release

Contact:

Christine Barnhart, GCAAR VP, strategic communications | 301.590.8764 or cbarnhart@gcaar.com

GCAAR statement on Montgomery County Council's passage of rent control legislation

ROCKVILLE, Md. – The Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS® (GCAAR) released the following statement in response to the Montgomery County Council's passage of rent control legislation this week.

“In passing rent control yesterday, seven Montgomery County councilmembers have pushed the county farther from our housing goals in favor of short-term policy goals and expedient political gains. We face a deficit of over 30,000 housing units across the economic spectrum, and this Council has sent a clear message to the very professionals that build and maintain that housing: an investment in our community is worth less here than it is across the river or in a neighboring Maryland locality.

“Bill 15-23, as introduced, was a compromise brokered by a majority of the councilmembers to remove rent gouging from the marketplace while cutting off the worst consequences of price fixing that comes from rent stabilization policy. The shadow of that measure that was passed yesterday was made possible by multiple councilmembers – in particular, Councilmember Fani-González and Councilmember Katz - who have broken promises to their constituents, to the community and to the ideals they espoused when they ran for office.

“Councilmembers have repeatedly intimated that a booming economic future is something that can simply be unlocked. That we just need to tell our story and success will follow. There is ample evidence, however, that should – repeatedly – dissuade them of this notion. New business creation has taken a nosedive over the last few years and Montgomery County currently sees a negative business establishment rate.

“County revenues are down and continue to fall. This Council has increased impact taxes, recordation taxes and property taxes - despite sky-high interest rates and the continued rise of single-family housing prices. Legislatively mandated expenses from both the state and county legislatures continue to materialize. They continue to push housing affordability and the chance to build generational wealth further to the brink, ignoring calls for meaningful action that would spur housing development to fix our woeful inventory deficit.

“The local economy is powered by the housing marketplace. It directly funds our schools, our county facilities and many of the important social safety net programs that help our most vulnerable residents. With their actions yesterday, the Montgomery County Council has threatened what is fundamental to our jurisdiction's financial stability.

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“GCAAR will continue to fight for a Montgomery County that teems with smart growth and business development and that fulfills its promise as a vibrant and diverse community.”

About GCAAR

The Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS®, one of the largest local REALTOR® associations in the U.S., is the voice for REALTORS® in Washington, D.C. and Montgomery County, Maryland. Representing more than 12,000 real estate professionals in the greater capital area, GCAAR provides services vital to its members' daily business needs and works with lawmakers to ensure public policy that encourages homeownership and supports the real estate industry. For more information, visit www.GCAAR.com.

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