

Council Member Roger Berliner's February 11, 2011 email on Bill MC/PG 112-11:

This legislation was requested by the Montgomery County Delegation Chair on behalf of County Executive Leggett. Often when the state is considering major pieces of legislation affecting Montgomery County, the Council will take a position – and we will be doing just that regarding MC/PG 112-11 on February 14.

*This legislation was presented to the Council by the County Executive as “enabling legislation” that would simply allow for a future consolidation of Park Police and Montgomery County Police, **IF** that is what the Council deems to be in the public interest. As you may know, the Organizational Reform Commission, which I sponsored, has recommended such a merger. Nonetheless, at this moment in time, I, along with my colleagues on the Public Safety Committee, am still carefully considering the merits of such a merger, which we will act on in the context of our budget deliberations later this spring.*

It now appears, however, as though the state legislation put forth by our County Executive is “more” than just enabling legislation. Accordingly, we have asked our Council attorneys to advise us as to what portions of this legislation is purely enabling and what portions are more than that. While I could support enabling legislation that totally preserves, without any prejudice, our Council's ability to act on this matter in the months ahead, I, for one, will not support any legislation that independently modifies the Park tax rate or is prejudicial to our Parks system prior to a debate on the merits of merging the police forces.