

# Montgomery County youth curfew unlikely to pass

By: [Rachel Baye](#) | 11/22/11 8:05 PM

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Most Montgomery County Council members say they do not support the youth curfew County Executive Ike Leggett has pushed since July, despite a flash mob robbery at a 7-Eleven in Silver Spring last weekend.

Though the council was scheduled to vote on the bill Dec. 6, that vote has been canceled, said Councilman Roger Berliner, D-Bethesda, who is set to take over as council president next month. No new vote has been scheduled.

Proposed in response to a stabbing in Silver Spring on the July Fourth weekend, the curfew bill prohibits anyone under the age of 18 from being in a public place after 11 p.m. Sunday to Thursday or after midnight Friday and Saturday.

The bill has raised a slew of concerns, ranging from racial profiling and infringement on youths' civil liberties to the fact that most youth crime does not occur during proposed curfew hours.

The cancellation of the vote comes after a mass theft at a 7-Eleven at 12257 Tech Road in the Calverton area of Silver Spring on Saturday night, when a group of about 50 teenagers and young adults ransacked the store. A similar incident at a 7-Eleven in Germantown in August has been repeatedly cited as support for the proposed curfew.

However, the Silver Spring flash mob began at about 11:20 p.m. Saturday night -- before the proposed curfew hours -- and was over within five minutes, said Montgomery County police spokesman Capt. Paul Starks.

"It would have happened whether there was a curfew or not," said Berliner, who also sits on the council's Public Safety Committee.

Still, curfew proponents argue that had the measure been in place, Saturday night's thievery might not have occurred.

"It's a continuation of the trend that I saw earlier," Leggett said.

The curfew can make youths think twice before staying out at night, said Councilman Craig Rice, D-Germantown.

Regardless of the time the crime occurred, the curfew is the wrong approach to fighting crime, said Councilman Phil Andrews, D-Gaithersburg/Rockville.

"There's no reason to think that youth who would commit a crime like this would be deterred by a curfew."