

Good Morning Council Members

Almost two weeks ago Dr. Stoddard appeared on WRC-TV and stated the County is working on a plan to extend the alcohol curfew to midnight. The indication was this would be happening as soon as an application was developed which would specifically state protocol restaurants would commit to and implement. What is the status of this plan? ABS officials have told us they can have the application done within 24 hours. With the weather turning cold restaurants are already seeing a reduction in outside dining. While I agree that maintaining the 50% capacity inside is appropriate, the combination of less outdoor opportunity and 10:00 pm curfew is going to put many locally owned, small restaurants at severe risk. The reduction in ABS purchases, reduced alcohol and food tax collection will have an increasingly negative effect on County revenue. Our neighbors in the District and Virginia allow alcohol sales until midnight. This encourages Montgomery County residents to drive a few miles to eat and drink. The 10:00pm curfew also encourages large house parties that are uncontrolled, ignore social distancing and masks and makes underage drinking easier.

I hope the Council Executive, Dr. Gayles and the Council to seriously look at extending the curfew to midnight with appropriate commitment by restaurants to safely extend the curfew.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eric Heckman  
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