



Email: admin@ypforprogress.org

Website: ypforprogress.org

Socials: [@ypforprogress](https://www.instagram.com/ypforprogress)

Dear Honorable Council Members,

I am writing on behalf of the members of Young People for Progress to express our opposition to the proposed Council [Bill 14-23, "Police – Late Night Business Safety Plan"](#) that would require restaurants and bars in certain neighborhoods like downtown Silver Spring to obtain police approval to stay open past 12 am midnight.

As an organization that represents the interests of young people in our community, we are deeply concerned about the potential impact of this bill on the economic opportunities and livelihoods of young workers and business owners, and on workers and business owners of color, about the potential for police discretion and bias in approval, and about the further marginalization and surveillance of young people and people of color, as well as the businesses that serve them.

This bill would create unnecessary barriers to entry for businesses that operate during late-night hours, particularly those owned, operated, and frequented by young people. We believe that this bill would also have a disproportionate impact on communities of color and low-income neighborhoods, where businesses may already face significant barriers to obtaining the necessary permits and approvals. By imposing additional requirements on these businesses, this bill would exacerbate existing inequalities and limit economic opportunities for young people in these communities.

Additionally, we would like to highlight that the proposed bill would not only impact the businesses themselves, but also the patrons who frequent these establishments during late-night hours. Many young people and young adults rely on businesses that operate during these hours as geographically accessible and affordable spaces to socialize and connect. The added burden of obtaining police approval for these businesses could limit access to these important community spaces and further marginalize young people and young adults in these communities.

Furthermore, we are concerned about the potential for police discretion and bias in the approval process. This bill would give the police department significant power to determine which businesses can operate during late-night hours, which could lead to discriminatory practices and unequal treatment.

We would also like to express our concern about the potential civil rights implications of this bill. Requiring businesses to obtain police approval for their safety plans raises significant issues about police surveillance and potential violations of privacy and civil liberties.

The bill would give law enforcement officials significant power over businesses and could lead to targeted surveillance of businesses in certain neighborhoods, particularly those owned and operated by people of color and other marginalized groups. This could further perpetuate systemic inequalities and undermine the trust between law enforcement and the community.

In conclusion, we strongly oppose the proposed bill. We urge the council to reconsider this proposal and work collaboratively with businesses, community organizations, and residents to develop more equitable and effective strategies for promoting public safety and community well-being.

Sincerely,

Danielle Blocker, Executive Director
Young People for Progress