

Hello, my name is Rich Biedrzycki. I am a member of Strong Towns, but I am not commenting on this ZTA as a representative of Strong Towns. I am speaking as a resident of downtown Bethesda.

I am speaking out in opposition to the proposed amendment. I can respect my fellow residents and their opposition to the use of cannabis; the odor is very unpleasant and disruptive and can be harmful to one's health. Despite these valid concerns, I do not believe they should be used to prevent this business from being established. Alcohol stores are allowed to be near residential, and alcohol is debatably *more* harmful to health than cannabis. I live right across the street from a store that sells alcohol, and it is not an issue at all, even with the nearby school bus stop. I see no reason why a cannabis dispensary would not be the same way.

As it is now, I see no excessive harm in allowing for a cannabis dispensary to open up in the stated area. This would simply be yet another unnecessary regulation making it more difficult for businesses to establish themselves in Montgomery County. I humbly request the Council to vote down this amendment.