

## Reinstating Restrictions for COVID--

This is to request the council not adopt increased restrictions, such as restricting patrons to 25, on particular facilities, i.e., bowling alleys. As a patron of the Gaithersburg Bowl America bowling alley, that alley & other alleys are uniquely situated to safely have more than 25 people for several reasons.

First, the physical size and configuration allows people to socially distance and prevent air particles from reaching others, the main way COVID is spread. The alley is large and lanes spread out with high ceilings, as high as in grocery stores, and with multiple fans. This disperses air particles and prevents persons coming into contact with air particles from others, the main way COVID is spread. This configuration allows it to accommodate at least 50, the current number, if not more, safely because people using lanes are not in contact with others.

Second, the alley has proven it can be a safe environment at its current levels. Since reopening in September, the alley through enforcing mandatory wearing of masks, scheduling bowlers at socially distanced spaces and increased sanitizing, has shown that it is a place where with these current precautions in place, will not be a place to spawn the spread of COVID cases. Workers have sanitized and maintained mandatory mask wearing, banning those who do not comply strictly. This ensures that patrons can enjoy exercise and a recreational outlet for citizens safely. Indeed, alleys throughout Virginia have been open since July and have not been the cause of a spike in COVID cases.

Third, the bowling alley allows individuals to exercise and enjoy a recreational outlet safely. While it involves exercise, it is not an activity that requires the removal of masks, such as eating, the touching of anything other than 1 bowling ball, such as items in a grocery store do, or causes excessive breathing that would spawn the spread of COVID. At the same time, with winter months approaching there will be an increased need for people to enjoy an indoor recreational outlet because they can no longer be outdoors. Reducing capacity when there is no proven safety threat will do nothing but restrict the number of people that can enjoy some recreational outlet and threaten the business. Permitting the alley to remain open with its current restrictions will allow patrons and the public to enjoy at least some semblance of normalcy.

I urge you to permit the bowling alleys in Montgomery County remain open at least at the level they are now.

Thanks for your consideration.