

November 9, 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing, as a concerned resident and employee of the restaurant industry who works and resides in Montgomery County Maryland.

I have been closely following the Montgomery County COVID-19 Dashboard, cases throughout the state of Maryland and virtually attended the Council's previous meeting held last week on November 5<sup>th</sup> regarding the Executive Order 122-20. The amended order notes that restaurants will only allow a capacity of 25% for indoor dining due to the recent uptick of cases within our area. I am asking that the Council respectfully does not approve the order, and instead request the proper government officials consider the mandate of increased safety protocols within the restaurant industry rather than a reduction in capacity.

While I understand that there has been a recent uptick in cases within our area, it also seems like it has not fully been disclosed or discovered if the uptick is due in fact to indoor eating at restaurants. They may be caused by large family gatherings, sports, shopping in department stores and various other methods that were discussed at last weeks Council Meeting. With the colder weather months upon the horizon, residents will no longer be able to eat outdoors, and there will be a substantial cost to businesses to be able to implement heating devices to continue outdoor dining. I am concerned for our businesses and the employment of many residents who work within the food service industry.

I have worked with my company from January 2017 – present day as a full-time employee. During the pandemic, I was furloughed from March 2020 – June 2020 and when provided the opportunity to return to work, it has only been on a part-time basis. While restaurants are working hard to bring their employees back to work, the reduction in capacity and lack of interest from our community to dine indoors has decreased restaurant sales throughout the county. I have seen a substantial decrease in my income and am working to support my family of three. My employer was only able to offer me the option to return to work on a part-time basis, once restaurants were able to have the capacity for indoor dining and I am concerned that with the approval of this order, allowing for a decrease in capacity for restaurants, that many employees may be furloughed again this winter, which will present a different type of hardship to not only our families, but our community as a whole.

My company has implemented stringent health screenings for employees, and protocols for ensuring that our restaurant is being thoroughly cleaned, sanitized and disinfected throughout the day, so that our customers are able to enjoy a slight peace of mind when dining at our establishment. I agree that the late-night alcohol sales should be halted and documentation of customers coming in for indoor dining will provide support in contact tracing and would even suggest that health screenings may be implemented for customers who enjoy indoor dining as a whole – if we are able to remain at the 50 percent capacity for indoor dining.

I respectfully ask, that you do not approve Executive Order No. 122-20, and do not implement a reduction in capacity to 25 percent, but rather increase health, safety and procedural guidelines for restaurants to be able to allow for the continuation of indoor dining, ensure longevity of restaurants and secure employment for thousands of food service employees throughout the county.

I appreciate your help in quickly resolving this matter and thank you for your time and consideration to my testimony noted above.

Sincerely,

Alan Fann  
301.919.7004  
alanfann83@gmail.com