

Instituting Restrictions without Setting an Arbitrary 25 person capacity On Facilities

This is to request that should the council adopt increased restrictions on particular facilities, i.e., bowling alleys, those restrictions allow the facility to operate at 25% of capacity instead of instituting an arbitrary limit of 25 persons maximum. As a patron of the Gaithersburg Bowl America bowling alley, that alley & other alleys are uniquely situated to safely accommodate 25% of capacity.

First, the physical configuration allows people to socially distance and prevent air particles from reaching others, the main way COVID is spread. The alley is large with high ceilings, the lanes are spread out and there are multiple fans. This disperses air particles so that the alley can accommodate at least 25% or 50 people, if not more.

Second, the alley has proven it can be a safe environment. Since reopening in September, the alley--through enforcing mandatory wearing of masks, scheduling bowlers at socially distanced spaces and increased sanitizing--has shown it is not a "hot spot" for the spread of COVID. Indeed, bowling alleys in general in other nearby jurisdictions 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. It has been categorized as a low risk sport by the Md. Commission on Sports Reopening. It does not require removal of masks for any purpose or the touching of anything other than 1 bowling ball. Reducing capacity to an arbitrary numeric number of 25 persons versus basing on 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.

I urge you to permit the bowling alleys in Montgomery County remain open at least at the 25% capacity level and not limit them to 25 persons maximum.

Thanks for your consideration.