

I write today in strong support of Bill 3-24, "Late Night Establishments – Hours of Operation," a legislation crucial for the restoration of safety, peace, and the very character of our neighborhoods. These core aspects of our community have been increasingly compromised by the unchecked operations of late-night establishments, notably hookah bars, leading to a precipitous rise in unsafe and raucous activities.

The implications of this situation have become personal and profound for my family and me. We find ourselves less inclined to frequent establishments in downtown Silver Spring, a direct result of the unsafe atmosphere fostered by the current policies. The presence of hookah bars operating into the early hours has not only marred the tranquility of our nights but also attracted criminal activities, heightening unease and anxiety among residents. This laissez-faire approach to the operation of these venues directly undermines the fabric of our community, eroding the sense of security that every citizen rightfully deserves.

Having moved from the Capitol Hill neighborhood in D.C., where the regulation of late-night establishments has shown tangible benefits, I was surprised to find a lack of similar measures in Montgomery County. The success stories from other cities and counties serve as a testament to the effectiveness of such regulations, raising the question: Why should our community be deprived of the peace and protection these measures can provide?

Bill 3-24 offers more than just noise reduction and crime prevention; it is a commitment to preserving the character of our neighborhoods, promoting responsible business practices, and fostering a sense of well-being among residents. It speaks to our collective aspiration for a community where safety and tranquility are not merely ideals, but lived realities.

Therefore, I urge our elected representatives to stand with the community by supporting Bill 3-24. By doing so, you take a principled stand for the safety, peace, and prosperity of our neighborhoods. Let us not delay in adopting proven measures that prioritize the well-being of our citizens and ensure our community remains a beacon of safety and tranquility.

In closing, I express my sincere hope that you will act swiftly and decisively in favor of Bill 3-24, thereby reaffirming your unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of our community. Let's shape a future for Montgomery County where every resident feels secure and valued, a future we can all look forward to with confidence.

Sincerely,

Mercina Tillemann