



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT

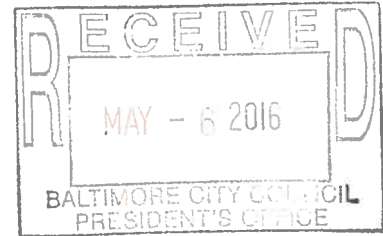


Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

Kevin Davis
Police Commissioner

May 10, 2016

Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202



Attention: Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

Re: City Council Bill No. 16-0639 Late-Night Commercial Operations – Extended Scope

Dear Council President Young and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD or the Department) has reviewed Council Bill 16-0639. This bill is for the purpose of extending the licensing, regulation, and related requirements governing late-night commercial operations to the B-3 Business Zoning District. BPD supports this legislation.

Under the current Baltimore City Code, businesses that are located in any Residence Zoning District, Office-Resident Zoning District, B-1, or B-2 must obtain a license in order to be open to the public any time between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. CB 16-0639 extends the scope of the late-night commercial operation license to the B-3 zoning areas.

The City's Late-Night Commercial Operations ordinance authorizes the Department to issue citations to businesses that are operating after-hours without the proper license. In addition to operating after-hours in violation of the City's ordinance, some of these businesses present other public safety issues as well. These businesses are often associated with various types of illegal activity, including narcotics dealing, prostitution, general disorderly conduct, and in some cases, violent crime. These types of issues create a public safety risk and a nuisance to our communities. This ordinance provides an enforcement mechanism for the Department to address these types of issues.

In some cases, these problem businesses are located in B-3 zoning areas, meaning they are not subject to the late-night commercial operations license requirement. This bill addresses that gap and therefore creates an enforcement tool for dealing with problem businesses in B-3 areas. For this reason, the Department supports CB 16-0639. However, the Department does caution that expanding the scope of this ordinance creates an increased amount of enforcement responsibility without an accompanying increase in enforcement resources. Therefore, while the Department will have a limited ability to conduct additional proactive enforcement, the Department will be able to respond to community complaints about problem businesses in these areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The Department looks forward to working with the City Council on this matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew G. Vetter
Director of Government Affairs

c/o 242 West 29th Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21211-2908