



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Michael S. Harrison
Police Commissioner

TO: The Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Senate Delegation

FROM: Michelle Wirzberger, Esq., Director of Government Affairs, Baltimore Police Dept.

RE: **House Bill 372 Baltimore City – Board of License Commissioners – Licensee Hours of Operation**

DATE: February 21, 2022

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman Crosby and members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore Police Department **supports** House Bill 372.

This bill is for the purpose of mandating that holders of class A, BD-7 and Adult Entertainment licenses within the area known as “The Block” close at 10:00 pm.

The Baltimore Police Department supports this bill with the recognition that it will provide one tool towards accomplishing our public safety goals. Partnership with businesses are critical to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and other Community Policing strategies — approaches that are incorporated throughout BPD’s crime plan. Research has shown that policies addressing certain business practices, such as the sale of alcohol or improving facades and camera coverage, can help to reduce crime. For that reason, BPD has previously supported legislation that would improve these types of business practices.

None of those bills were panaceas but we found them to be extremely helpful. Similarly, this bill will not address every or even most issues we as a Department faces. In fact, it won’t even address all of the issues we face on the Block. What it will do is reduce the opportunity for crime to occur by limiting the number of hours in which large amounts of people (some highly intoxicated) are spending in a very dense and congested area. Moreover, it will significantly reduce the amount of police resources that will be required on a daily basis to maintain a minimum amount of safety in that area.

The Central District has, for years, tried to work with the business owners of the Block to try to create safer conditions. Yet the deployment in this geography continues to be resource intensive. In addition to the disproportionate amount of resources that the Central District must dedicate to the area, often units from other parts of the city must be redeployed to the Block to ensure patrons’ safety as they are exiting the clubs.

For these reasons, the BPD respectfully requests a **favorable report** on HB 372. Thank you for allowing us to comment on this important piece of legislation. If you should have any questions, feel free to reach me at michelle.wirzberger@baltimorepolice.org or via telephone at 443-915-3155.