

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND  
Legislative Session 2013, Legislative Day No. 16  
Resolution No. 100-13

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Councilmembers Quirk, Marks, Huff & Oliver

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By the County Council, October 7, 2013

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A RESOLUTION of the Baltimore County Council requesting the Planning Board to study and recommend options for regulating establishments known as hookah lounges.

WHEREAS, hookah bars or hookah lounges are growing in popularity in the country, and several such establishments have been permitted to open and operate in the County; and

WHEREAS, a hookah lounge or bar is an establishment where patrons smoke flavored tobacco from a communal water pipe (hookah) placed at a table; and

WHEREAS, a hookah lounge is not a defined use in the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations; and

WHEREAS, some lounges also offer recorded entertainment, offer tobacco and food for sale, and permit patrons to bring alcohol onto the premises; and

WHEREAS, State and County laws prohibit smoking in public places, with limited exceptions, but neither State nor County law is clear regarding the treatment of a facility that offers entertainment, sells food and tobacco, permits smoking on the premises, and permits patrons to bring alcohol on the premises; and

WHEREAS, although alcohol is permitted to be brought onto the premises, these establishments are neither licensed nor subject to regulation under the State alcoholic beverages law; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare, the County Council deems it necessary to develop consistent, cohesive, and objective land use and regulatory standards applicable to hookah lounges or bars, as distinguished from tobacco shops, cafes, coffee shops, nightclubs, or other similar establishments by any other name; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the Baltimore County Planning Board is requested to recommend the most effective options for defining and regulating hookah lounges in a manner consistent with the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Baltimore County.