

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORT
2015 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CB-16-2015
Draft No.: 2
Committee: Health, Education and Human Services
Date: July 20, 2015
Action: FAV(A)

REPORT:

Committee Vote: Favorable with amendments, 4-1 (In favor: Council Members Toles, Davis, Glaros and Franklin. Opposed: Council Member Patterson).

The legislation which included the previously referenced amendments was voted out of the Committee 4 - 1.

The bill sponsor gave an overview of amendments made at the June 11, 2015 worksession. After agency input and public testimony, additional amendments were made; Section 5-189.03 to specify “license” application, to require the Food Truck Hub application to include two new items: a letter from the property owner stating that parking is available for Food Truck Hub patrons and the number of mobile units on a given day. Amendments were made to page 4, line 1 by adding “Ensure that” before “Food Truck Hub signage...” and page 4, line 7 by inserting “public safety,” after “physical activity.” Amendments were made to page 5, line 12 by inserting “per recommendation of the Food Truck Hub Oversight Committee to the County Council.” after “County”. Amendments were made to page 5, line 15 by inserting “Licenses shall not be allocated within one quarter mile of the entrance of metro stations at Largo Town Center, Prince George’s Plaza, and West Hyattsville.”

After the proposed amendments Council Members Taveras and Davis requested to be added as Co-Sponsors.

Held

June 11, 2015

This legislation was held in Committee on June 11, 2015 to allow time for the sponsors to receive and review additional recommendations.

Staff provided a summary of the resolution and written referral comments that were received. CB-16-2015 adds sections 5—189.01 through 5-289.04 and amends Section 5-190 and 5-193.01 of the County Code. CB-16 provides for certain limited exemptions to County licensing and health requirements for Food Truck Hubs. It further defines Food Truck Hubs, Coordinator, defines the license period and provides for an application process and license revocation.

The Bill sponsor informed the committee that these bills together will permit the County, with municipal support, to establish appropriate locations where food trucks are permitted to operate, and establishes licensing and health requirements for the operation of food trucks.

A Council Member raised the question of signs and hours of operations of the Food Truck hubs. The trucks will not be allowed to stay overnight or in neighborhoods and the hours of operation are 6am to 9pm. One major portable size sign will be allowed.

The question was raised as to how many hubs will be allowed. Twelve (12) hubs will be allowed the first year.

Prior to the committee process, impacted agencies and citizens worked cooperatively together with the Bill sponsors to promote policies that will allow the food-truck industry to flourish while also protecting public health and safety.

Representatives from the Office of the County Executive, Health Department and Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE), provided testimony in support of the Bill and answered questions from the Committee. The County Executive representative expressed the need to have enough revenue to cover the administration of the program, business license for the vendor, a fee structure for purposes of quality control. The one (1) remaining condition was creation of legislation to provide a regulatory framework for the licensing of a Special Food Service Facility – Mobile Unit. The County Executive representative expressed concern with preventing illegal activity with truck vendors as in the past.

Public testimony was considered to include citizens, municipalities, associations, and vendors. The DPIE representative addressed the concerns of citizens pertaining to increased criminal activity during the weekend. The representative stated that the Health Department and DIPI do not inspect on the weekends.

Some of the comments in opposition to the Food Truck hubs dealt with criminal activity, trash and debris, conflicts with the recommendations of the Largo Town Center Sector Plan and competition with stand-alone restaurants.

Some of the comments in support of the Food Truck hubs were that it would bring healthier food options to the underserved areas, economic growth and entrepreneurship.

The Fire Department would enforce regulations pertaining to propane tanks and portable grills.

The office of Audits and Investigation determined that CB-16-2015 should not have an adverse fiscal impact on the County if enacted.