Good morning, Commissioners and members of the Board. Thank you to Commissioner Edwards for reading my testimony, since I'm unable to attend.

I am writing to oppose the special exception requested in this case.

My husband, our eight-month-old son, our dog, and I live on Alaska Avenue, within walking distance of the proposed location. We chose Shepherd Park because it is a neighborhood for families, and we walk these blocks every day.

I'm not opposed to new businesses or more dining options in our neighborhood. My opposition is to this use, with these hours, at this location.

The stretch of Georgia and Alaska between Geranium and Kalmia already has a heavy concentration of late-night and high-turnover businesses. These include a 24-hour McDonald's, a KFC, a pizza restaurant, two gas stations, two liquor stores, two marijuana dispensaries, and several establishments open until 1 or 2 a.m., two of which serve alcohol. The same few blocks also hold a school, a library, a church, and a funeral home.

Our family already avoids walking in parts of this area at certain times of night because of the activity the existing late-night businesses generate: crowds, loitering, noise, double-parked cars, and litter. Each of these businesses may be reasonable on its own. The problem is the cumulative effect. Adding another establishment open until the early morning, directly across from others with similar hours, would extend and intensify that activity at the hours when residential streets should be quiet.

Litter is a daily reality for us. I appreciate that the applicant has committed to keeping its own premises clean. But food waste is already scattered along these blocks, and I regularly have to pull discarded chicken bones out of my dog's mouth on our walks. They are dangerous for dogs and attract rodents. A restaurant built around bone-in chicken wings, serving takeout late into the night, will add to that problem in ways no on-site cleanup commitment can control, because the food is eaten and discarded on the surrounding streets, not on the premises.

A special exception requires that the use not adversely affect neighboring properties, including through noise, traffic, and hours of operation. When this location is weighed in the context of what already surrounds it, rather than in isolation, I don't believe that standard is met. I'm also concerned that the applicant's traffic and parking commitments rely largely on third-party delivery platforms, which are outside its direct control.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Board to deny the application.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of the families who live here.

Leili Doerr Riegel

Submitted on 10/19/2026 by:
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Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21503
EXHIBIT NO. 26