

*Bill Croke: Co-owner Boundary Stone Public House Bloomingdale  
Moreland's Tavern, 16<sup>th</sup> St Heights  
All Purpose, Shaw*

*Thank you, Chairman Mendelson and Committee Members for the opportunity to discuss my views on why I believe that Initiative 77 should be repealed; being bad for DC as a Tourist and Business destination, bad our Hospitality industry, but most importantly, bad for the Food & Beverage Service community; those same positions which many, many of us held at one time or another, while making our way thru' our careers!*

*My name is Bill Croke and I have worked continuously in Hospitality for nearly 55 years. My sons are active day-to-day owner/ operators of four Pubs/ Restaurants in DC.*

*They created and opened Boundary Stone in Bloomingdale in 2011, in Councilman McDuffie's ward. Together with the owners of our neighboring restaurant, The Red Hen, one of our sons created and opened All Purpose in Shaw, Councilman Allen's ward. Last year, they added All Purpose Waterfront, sticking with Councilman Allen, while our other son opened Moreland's Tavern, in 16<sup>th</sup> St Heights, Councilman Todd's ward. These businesses are successful, thankfully, based on the ethos of offering great food and great service; service that is rewarded with well above minimum take-home pay for our servers.*

*Our country's tipping culture, which #77 is seeking to dismantle, offers terrific rewards to those servers who hustle to satisfy their guest's needs. Both of our boys worked the bar trade in DC after leaving college and those earned tips helped them buy homes in the District, settle down and start families and now start their own businesses; that same opportunity that they're now offering to their wait-staff and bartenders, who will not have the same chance if #77 goes thru'!*

*Should we lose this appeal and Initiative 77 is implemented, there can be no doubt that there will be a change in the way pub/ restaurants, such as ours, are operated.....there will have to be, for us to remain viable businesses. The most likely first option will be a loss of jobs on the service side. In 1971/72, I was a waiter in Zurich, Switzerland, during the time that a government-mandated service-charge was imposed nationwide, replacing the prior custom of tipping. Guest complaints soared in the months following the change. Service levels dropped at our particular restaurant, which prior to the service-charge had a team of seven waiters per meal, cut to four, and then to three waitstaff with the addition of buffet service for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as the owners fought to find the correct service formula to stay profitable. The main losers were initially the wait-staff, but with the drop in business came cuts in the kitchen and support staff also. Ultimately the restaurant closed within a few years.*

*Potentially, this downward spiral could happen in DC, starting as soon as next month, if #77 goes thru'.*

*Speaking as an owner, I fully support the periodic increase in minimum wage already published by the council, as*

- a) it is only correct that everyone should get a regular cost-of-living increase and*

- b) it maintains the commercial basis of how all of us involved can continue to grow the business and continue to offer both work and growth opportunities to our team.*

*Our business thrives on great service staff and they're the ones that are going to be impacted first and impacted hardest by this proposed change*

*On all of our behalves, I ask all Council Members for your support and your vote in repealing this initiative.*

*Thank you for your time.*