Boston City Council
ED FLYNN
Councilor - District 2

June 30, 2026

Mayor Michelle Wu
1 City Hall Square, Suite 550
Boston, MA 02201

Chairwoman Kathleen Joyce
1 City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Lack of Community Engagement & Public Safety Considerations for 3 a.m. Last Call

Dear Mayor Wu and Chairwoman Joyce,

I'm writing concerning the lack of community engagement and public process on Boston's adoption of the Massachusetts law extending the last call to 3 a.m. and allowing "outdoor drinking zones" until July 31, 2026. These actions were taken at both the state and local level with a top-down approach that left no opportunity for feedback from the local, taxpaying residents impacted. Although not required at this time, moving forward, I'm asking city officials to provide an opportunity for residents to be heard and respected at a community meeting before decisions are made at the Licensing Board.

While Boston has welcomed thousands of visitors across the globe for the World Cup that are supporting many of our establishments, hotels and small businesses, residents in Downtown Boston, Chinatown, the Theater District, Back Bay and Bay Village continue to raise serious concerns on public safety and quality of life issues regarding last call until 3 a.m., as well as the new outdoor drinking zones.

Moreover, the Boston Police Department has longstanding issues of understaffing, overstretched resources, forced overtime and looming retirements. Boston Police officers have worked 16 hour days for years. They privately expressed to me that they are overwhelmed with the recent rise in violent crime. Just last night around 11 p.m., there was a triple shooting outside of The Tam in the Theater District, steps away from the Emerson College campus, the Boston Common, and several hotels. In the last couple of weeks alone, there have been shootings in Mattapan, last night's shootings in both the Theater District and South Boston, and a children's lemonade stand was robbed at gunpoint.

We have to acknowledge that while we need to focus significantly on the retention and recruitment of hundreds of police officers every year, and at the same time we want to host international events, there are unintended consequences and ripple effects for public safety with these decisions. Our neighbors and first responders both deserve a say in public safety and what takes place in their communities.

Sincerely,

Ed Flynn

Ed Flynn
Boston City Councilor, U.S. Navy (Retired)