

IN-STORE

## British retailers seek extended hours to boost revenue, employment

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Harrods store front

By STAFF REPORTS

Selfridges, Harrods and Fortnum & Mason are among the London retailers petitioning Parliament to extend closure times.

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The retailers are aiming to extend closure times from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., but need permission from the British government to do so. The retailers argue that in addition to generating jobs and revenue, it is a logical move as many working families are unable to shop during current store hours.

### Flex time

High-end department stores [Selfridges](#), [Harrods](#) and [Fortnum & Mason](#) and premium multi-brand retailer Fenwick and Harvey Nichols are among the brands to sign a letter addressed to Parliament. The retailers feel that the added flexibility in closure times would be beneficial to their bottom lines, employment and consumers' busy schedules.

As reported by [British Vogue](#), the letter states that "extending closing times from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. would create 2,000 more jobs and 260 million (approximately \$397 million) of extra sales in those areas alone." British Prime Minister David Cameron recently, despite opposition from the Labour party, said that it was "time to modernize our approach to give families more choice."

The retailers' letter continues saying, "Our biggest stores have their Sunday opening hours restricted and are forbidden from opening after 6 p.m. on that day. We are literally forcing visitors to choose between spending in our shops and visiting galleries, parks and museums. Surely we can give them the opportunity to do both?"

Currently voting on the bill is postponed to give ministers additional time to mull over the details.

In March, Harrods announce that it was extending its Monday through Saturday hours to 9 p.m., but Sundays have maintained a 6 p.m. closing time.

Harrods' online options offer shoppers 24-hour access to the store, but extending hours at the physical store location will grant larger nighttime options for working consumers. Shoppers may use online resources more often than visiting stores, but many purchases are still occurring within physical store locations ([see story](#)).

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