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Subject: Support for Bennett's
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I am writing to voice my strong support for maintaining the alcohol license of Bennett's Meadowood Country Club.

I recently read that you were considering revoking the alcohol license of Bennett's Meadowood Country Club due to a January event that involved consenting adults removing their clothes. Considering this happened in a purely adult environment, where no children were present, it seems a little strange to revoke the license of a decades old establishment, located in a part of town where there are exactly zero places for adult residents to gather in a convivial way. There is one restaurant in the Allied neighborhood, maybe 3 restaurants in the Orchard Ridge neighborhood, and another 2 in Meadowood. None of these restaurants serves the purpose of a friendly gathering space for adults of these neighborhoods. Removing the alcohol license would effectively shut the one place adult residents of these neighborhoods can WALK to, so they may gather in a welcoming atmosphere to enjoy some delicious food and adult beverages.

My parents moved to Madison when I was 3, and I am now 50. Over the course of that time, I have lived in all parts of town, and been in dozens of drinking establishments. In all that time, I have never been in an establishment that is as racially diverse as Bennett's. Most evenings when I have gone there, the patrons are a pretty equal split between African Americans and whites. This is an incredibly rare pleasure to experience in Madison, where African American adults have nowhere to gather, but every bar is filled with white people. I feel your focus on Bennett's, for merely having consenting adult performers in a space that caters to adults, is troubling. In my decades here, I have seen all of the venues that cater to African American adults shut down very quickly for infractions that continue to happen, with a disturbing frequency, at establishments all around town that cater to mostly whites. That really seems like the definition of structural racism to me.

Unlike the majority of Madison, the south west side is woefully under served with any resources for food or entertainment. There are no festivals on this side of town. There are incredibly few eating establishments, even fewer adult gathering spaces and zero opportunities for shopping or entertainment within walking distance of where most people live. Taking into account the demographic composition of the Allied drive and Meadowood neighborhoods, the complete lack of support the city offers south west Madison seems more than a little racist, and classist, to me.

Where are people supposed to go if they have no options? Do you really want people driving all over town looking for a place to gather as adults, where they also feel welcomed, when they could simply walk a few blocks to a decent establishment where they feel safe? Don't the hard working adults of every neighborhood deserve at least one place to gather? Do you really think another business is going to occupy that space?

Why would you remove one of the few places in Madison where a racially diverse crowd of adults gathers without incident the majority of the time, while at the same time allowing bars to stay open with high numbers of police calls, that just happen to be frequented by whites?

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will make the correct decision to allow Bennett's to continue to serve the hard-working, loyal, and racially diverse, adults of the Meadowood, Orchard Ridge and Allied neighborhoods. Just like the rest of town, we deserve a place to have fun too.

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