

From: [Courtney Byelich](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: written comments: Agenda Item 4. 83626 Approval of Parking Special Event Rates
Date: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 3:24:43 PM

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Dear Transportation Commission,

My name is Courtney Byelich and I am a resident of Madison in District 15 (Sommers Avenue).

I have worked in the performing arts in Madison in various capacities for 15 years.

Regarding Item 4. 83626 Approval of Parking Special Event Rates; I believe raising the special events rate in the designated garages from \$8 to \$15 is too much of a jump for the public to absorb.

The public perception of being able to attend arts and cultural events downtown via car is already a significant obstacle to overcome when trying to attract patrons to partake in the many amazing arts events our city offers (and cherishes!). Where to park or how to get to a venue is a huge topic when considering event attendance. At each of my former roles at performance venues on campus and in the city, I would field calls (often from elderly patrons) at least once a week asking how a patron could park at our venue, what the rates were and if construction impacted their route.

I believe raising the rates in these garages so significantly could be the final nail in the coffin of many smaller arts venues and their ability to have a sustainable audience. While I know that places like the Kohl Center and the Sylvee often have higher ticket priced events; smaller venues like the new Gamma Ray Bar, Arts and Literature Lab have their sights set on being more accessible to a wide array of Madisonians. Those smaller venues would be collateral damage on nights when the 'special events' rate designations are set for those garages (a recent listing for a performance at Gamma Ray Bar states a \$10 ticket price; listings for Art and Lit Lab events boast free admission).

I am also aware that a rate increase like this would incentivize public transportation, which is a good thing, generally speaking. However, our bus options have done little to accommodate trips home after 11:30pm (arts events are by definition late night and weekend events!); and often make things hard for riders with disabilities or parents with small children and strollers. Which means making these garages continue to be accessible should be a priority for the city if they'd like to accommodate nightlife and cultural events.

Thanks for the consideration,

Courtney Byelich