

March 12, 2009

Commissioners -

I'm not able to make it to the EOC meeting tonight, at which you'll discuss the proposed changes to Madison's curfew for young people, so I want to share my thoughts via this message.

I understand that the Police Department believes that having a youth curfew is a useful tool. I understand that "youth-related" crime is on the rise. However, I am not convinced that an earlier curfew is the appropriate solution. Here are my concerns:

- 1) Consistency. We should at least look at what the surrounding municipalities do.
  - 2) Discouragement. I worry that a curfew, especially an earlier curfew, discourages young people from engaging in productive evening activities. I would hate for a young person to miss out on a job, sports event, school club, cultural activity, etc. because they were worried about getting home before curfew. I'm particularly concerned about my young constituents who are transit dependent and for whom the bus ride home can be an hour or more.
  - 3) Criminalization of youth. I am troubled by creating violations that are based on a state of being - age - rather than actions. I would much rather put our collective energies into strengthening families, supporting parents, providing jobs training and jobs for youth, encouraging positive recreational activities and connecting youth to academic support and opportunities.
- Thanks for your time.

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