

**From:** [Bruce Wasserstrom](#)  
**To:** [licensing](#); [Verbick, Jim](#)  
**Cc:** [board@madisonbluessociety.org](#); [MBS Membership Coordinator](#); [Shari Davis](#); [Tim Payne](#)  
**Subject:** Writing in Support of Renewing the Alcohol License for the Red Rooster Nightclub  
**Date:** Thursday, May 29, 2025 5:12:55 PM

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To the City of Madison Alcohol Licensing Review Committee (ALRC):

I recently learned that the Red Rooster nightclub is being reviewed by the Madison ALRC under a recommendation to not renew the Red Rooster's license. As a professional musician and a frequent patron of the Red Rooster bar & restaurant, **I'm deeply concerned about this possible non-renewal of their license, and I want to state my support of the Red Rooster and its owner, Tim Payne.**

In my many interactions with the Red Rooster over its three year history, **I have been consistently impressed by the establishment's professionalism, as well as by the respect and friendliness of the Red Rooster staff.** I have enjoyed attending music shows and having dinner at the Red Rooster, and I have performed music there, as well. **I have never felt threatened or worried about staff or customers' behavior because of alcohol impairment.** In addition, I recall an occasion when the Red Rooster door man (who is also a friend of mine) politely but firmly denied me admission to a popular music performance because the venue had reached its safe, legal limit for audience size.

The Red Rooster is known for the excellence of the music they bring to Madison, especially but not exclusively, Blues music. **The Red Rooster is recognized as an important part of the Madison-area music scene, and it would be a major loss to the community to close this live-music venue.**

I do not claim to know the details of the fatal traffic accident caused by the former manager of the Red Rooster on his way home from the establishment following after-hours drinking; I have only learned of this tragedy second-hand. Personally, I only drink alcohol in modest amounts, and I am vehemently opposed to drunk driving.

I can understand why the Madison ALRC is reviewing the Red Rooster's license given the gravity of the former manager's actions, but **I hope that any discipline the ALRC may impose would be in the nature of stricter oversight rather than a loss of license.**

I have known Tim Payne as a musician for many years, and **my experience with Tim as the Red Rooster's owner has always been positive and professional.** I believe Tim Payne is a responsible person, and I trust that the former manager's behavior was not part of any wider pattern amongst the Red Rooster staff.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bruce Wasserstrom

cc: Tim Payne (Red Rooster)  
Madison Blues Society Board of Directors & Leadership

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**Bruce Wasserstrom**  
cell phone / text: 608-333-7060  
Bruce's email: [gibson54fender57@gmail.com](mailto:gibson54fender57@gmail.com)  
family email: [wassers@charter.net](mailto:wassers@charter.net)

also found on:    Facebook, LinkedIn, Broadjam, YouTube

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