



Alcohol License Review Committee
Madison Common Council
Room 103
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd
Madison, WI 53703

RE: License Application LICOPR-2022-00663

24 September 2022

Dear Members of the Alcohol License Review Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of Kristen Fretschel and her operator's license application (LICOPR-2022-00663). I have been the general manager at Vintage Brewing Co. – Capitol East since it's opening in January 2019.

I hired Ms. Fretschel in July 2020. I was unaware of her background at the time of hire since I do not typically ask about criminal history and I believe in second chances. I am grateful to have been free of the burden of knowing those facts—which could have unfairly colored my judgement at the time—now knowing what I do of her excellent performance and dedication.

Ms. Fretschel very early in her tenure was candid with me about her past. Some of the details were shocking—not necessarily because of what happened—but because it is hard to imagine her as that person anymore. During her time Vintage, Ms. Fretschel has been on time or early, has never missed a scheduled shift, routinely picks up shifts, has been warm and friendly, and has built many positive relationships with our staff and customers alike.

Approximately six months after she was hired, we gave Ms. Fretschel a raise due to her exceptional customer service and work ethic. I promoted Ms. Fretschel to hourly manager began training Ms. Fretschel as an hourly manager starting in November 2021. Ms. Fretschel advocated for herself when a salary manager position opened around that time. We interviewed her along with several other candidates over the next couple months.

Ultimately, we promoted Ms. Fretschel into the open salary front of house manager in January 2022. The other candidates we interviewed all had previous managerial experience. When, on

the whole, their experience was weighed against the positive qualities we already know her to possess, we decided she was the best fit. Not only does she know our staff, product and procedures, but she has proven her steadfast commitment to growing and improving professionally and personally. Several of the guests she turned into regulars while bartending were happy for her promotion, but upset that their favorite bartender would no longer directly take care of them during their visits. As a manager, she has helped maintain those regular relationships.

Ms. Fretschel is tasked with running the restaurant in my absence, including making appropriate decisions for our staff and guests. She also accounts for many thousands of dollars in cash every day she works. Silly mistakes happen from time to time, but Ms. Fretschel is the first to hold their self accountable and to take to heart the lessons learned for the future. I have the utmost faith and trust in her to perform her duties, including both serving alcohol and managing the 35-40 bartenders and servers we employ who serve alcohol to our guests.

Ms. Fretschel once confided in me about the some of the anxiety she felt in her current life worrying that others—including me as her manager—judge or mistrust her due to her past. I was able to tell her unequivocally that I absolutely do not think of her as a criminal or drug addict because she bears no likeness to the person she once was.

While I understand the Committee's reservations in granting licenses to individuals with criminal and drug-related histories, I can confidently say it would be a severe misjudgment to overlook the leaps and bounds by which Ms. Fretschel's improvements to her personal and professional life can be measured. The Committee can be assured it will make no mistake in granting this license without reservation or prejudice.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giles X. Hietpas III', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Giles X. Hietpas III
General Manager