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## **Dane County Coalition to Reduce Alcohol Abuse Position Statement on Agenda Item 19**

The Dane County Coalition to Reduce Alcohol Abuse strongly opposes the Goodman Community Center alcohol license application, which is subject to a hearing before the ALRC this evening, December 21, 2011. The Coalition believes granting an alcohol license to this community center would be misguided and set a precedent for type's establishments which are granted licenses.

In Alder Rummel's letter of support, she states that there were only 7 neighborhood residents who showed up for a neighborhood meeting on the issue. Although it is always hoped that citizens will be actively engaged in decisions and changes that affect their community, it is also often the case that meetings are scheduled at times difficult for attendance, or are not well-publicized with enough advance notice. It would be more beneficial to focus on the fact that a majority of those residents who did attend expressed concerns about this application.

We would hope that the process of granting alcohol licenses always considers the nature of the establishment and its mission and goals. The mission of the Goodman Community Center includes the concepts of "facilitating a community atmosphere," "identifying and responding to community needs," "providing opportunities for social activities" and "space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and celebrate." The public perception of this community center is that it is primarily to serve the healthy development of children, youth, families, and seniors of the area. That it opens its doors for private social events is an opportunity for the greater Madison area community to enjoy its space. But "space to meet and celebrate" does not equate with being the provider of alcohol. Those wishing to rent space for their celebrations have and can continue to use caterers who are responsible for both provision and service. That is as it should be.

It has been suggested that there have been problems in the past with irresponsible caterers and negative consequences as a result. If that is the case, the Center should have the right to refuse entry to those caterers, and should establish clear expectations for behavior and performance of all who use the facility. An experience with irresponsible catering should not serve as the reason for the Center itself to purchase, store, and serve alcohol.

It should not be presumed the Coalition's opposition to this license implies concern that the Goodman Center would be irresponsible operator of the license. It most likely would not be. The issue at hand is about the necessity for any community center to possess an alcohol license. This would set an extremely dangerous precedent for neighborhood centers and all other establishments, which are not designed to be purveyors of alcohol, but are intended to promote the health and wellness of the community. The Coalition asks the ALRC to respect the community's opposition to this license and support the denial.

Thank you for your time.