

To: Alcohol Licensing Review Committee, City of Madison

From: John D. Bayless, 1310 Woodgrove Way, Sun Prairie, 608-318-2314

RE: renewal of alcohol license for Red Rooster, 2513 Seiferth Rd., Madison, WI 53716

This letter is in support of the renewal of the alcohol license for the Red Rooster Tavern. It is my understanding that a recommendation of non-renewal has been made because of an event in which a former employee used alcohol, both after-hours and against regulations subsequently caused a tragic, fatal accident.

Despite this terrible circumstance, I write in support that the Alcohol Licensing Review Committee allow the Red Rooster to continue operation. My reasons for doing so include:

1. The Red Rooster continues a historic tradition that has been recognized in a proclamation by the mayor of the city of Madison.
2. The Red Rooster occupies a special place in the musical culture of the Madison area.
3. The Red Rooster has always made special efforts to ensure diversity and inclusion, and to provide a welcoming atmosphere.

The Red Rooster continues a history of supporting local music. It is the continuing home of Tate's Blues Jam. Mr. James Earl Tate is an African-American blues artist who was associated with the legendary Luther Allison, and his blues jam has been in existence for over 30 years. It provides a critical avenue for traditional music, and is renowned for its openness and acceptance to all aspiring musicians ranging from seasoned professionals to musical novices. Both the jam session and Mr. Tate were recognized in a mayoral proclamation a number of years ago.

The Red Rooster is the only Madison-area club that is dedicated primarily to blues music that developed from a previous club, the Knuckle down Saloon, and that did not survive the pandemic. Many people in the community, myself included, were heartsick at the

closure. In order to carry on the tradition of blues music, the building was purchased by a UW physician and musician, and owned by a dedicated group of blues musicians, one of whom is the current owner, Mr. Tim Payne.

I am a retired professor, neuropsychologist, and an amateur musician. I have performed regularly at the Red Rooster. All performers at the club are required to abide by the Red Rooster Performance Agreement & Advance, a signed agreement that is unique to that venue, with clear behavioral expectations for acceptance and inclusion. It specifically states, and performers must agree to the following conditions:

“The artist/band and those people connected with the artist/band will at all times conduct themselves in a manner acceptable to the venue, organizers and other participants in the event. We do not tolerate speech that discriminates against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, medical condition (including genetic characteristics), sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, linguistic characteristics (such as accent or limited English proficiency, where not substantially job-related), or marital status. 4. That the artist/band and those people connected with the artist/band will follow the Venue managers’ instructions regarding security, safety, emergency procedures, police liaison and crowd control measures.”

I appreciate fully the gravity of the incident described above, but also must emphasize that I have never witnessed problematic behaviors while at the Red Rooster. I respectfully request that the

ALRC consider the above points, and make the determination that the alcohol license be maintained for this important and unique entertainment center for Madison and the wider community.

Thank you for the committee's consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bayless

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John D. Bayless, Ph.D. (he, his)

Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine

200 Hawkins Drive

Iowa City IA 52242

(319)351-5947