

Kuether-Steele, Molly

From: Celella, Jessica
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 8:54 AM
To: Kuether-Steele, Molly
Cc: Byrd, Yashica
Subject: FW: Arts Center Ordinance

Please add

From: Kovac, Nik
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2019 8:50 AM
To: Celella, Jessica; Byrd, Yashica
Subject: FW: Arts Center Ordinance

Please add to file

Amanda (Williams) Cervantes
Legislative Assistant
Alderman Nik Kovac, 3rd District
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Milwaukee, WI 53202
414.286.3447 / aide3@milwaukee.gov

From: Freespace Mke [<mailto:freespace.mke@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2019 8:42 AM
To: Kovac, Nik
Subject: Arts Center Ordinance

Good morning Ald. Kovac,

I am writing you in regards to the common council's opportunity to expand the "arts center" venue designation that will be considered this afternoon. I urge you to approve the expansion of all-ages spaces as a matter of socio-cultural health in Milwaukee.

We expect so much from our youth. They are a reflection of ourselves, aren't they - a reflection of the society we have built? We want them to be respectable, hard-working, and educated; we want them to be honest, compassionate, and pure. And with this guiding vision, we let our youth enter our world, and yet, we deny them spaces to engage in culture. We let them question and express, but never give them agency.

This licensing hearing is very much a question of socio-cultural rights - of completely integrating Milwaukee's youth into Milwaukee's music culture. The lack of all-ages venues negatively affects the safety and retention of area youth. They too deserve cultural opportunity and a sense of place in our ever-changing city.

Expanding the "arts center" designation may seem like a small change, but this expanded license recognizes the inherent benefits of allowing all-ages venues. Spaces of safety and accountability for our youth can - and will - bring about a huge increase in focus on local music and our regional cultural

industries. The “arts center” designation will grow the spaces where musical talent is developed, where artists mingle with fans, and where music itself is created, shared, and recorded. It will ignite intergenerational resource- and power-sharing

As a cofounder of FREESPACE and The New State, I’m acutely aware of Milwaukee youth’s struggle for music spaces they can not only be part of, but that they feel safe and heard in. For the past five years as a leader (and a lifetime ago as a teen myself) I have witnessed and experienced this socio-cultural isolation and its destructive effects on not only the music scene but also on the mental and emotional health of our youth. Throughout this struggle, the young people in Milwaukee never cease to create, support, and inspire each other. It is our duty as authorities and adults to rise to this occasion, to hear and act upon their calls, and to set our community up for success.

Today, I ask that you, Alderman Kovac, and the rest of the common council, approve the arts center designation. With this approval, we can begin to reshape Milwaukee’s culture - to finally show respect and make space for the contributions that young people make to our socio-cultural fabric.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing a thoughtful decision being made by the council.

Best,
Janice Vogt

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