

February 6, 2023

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2363

My name is Connie Boreson, my husband, son, daughter and I own the Busted Knuckle Brewery in Williston North Dakota. We opened January 10, 2020 and operate under the state's Taproom License.

After two years of business in Williston I can assure you, our business has been impacted by not allowing people under 21 into our Brewery. The demographic for breweries, as attested by the Brewers Association, is just exactly the demographic in Williston North Dakota; male, 28-39 years old and employed. What doesn't mesh is that many of the workers who are in Williston are now married with children.

Our brewery is structured like most breweries nationwide. We only serve the craft beer that we manufacture, we close at 10pm, we encourage guests to interact with each other to the extent that we do not have TV's in the brewery but instead have a cupboard full of games and a weekly Trivia night. We lease out part of our building to Pit105 BBQ and allow food to be brought into the brewery. We have seating for 197, large windows and creative lighting. I say all this to paint a picture, one that would certainly be inclusive of someone under 21.

Notably, we have missed business with the age restriction in company parties. Many of the hard working people in our area are under 21 and if they are not, their wife or significant other is. When the company calls to ask about availability for a party, then I check to see if all are over 21 years, never once has a company chosen our brewery for their event over their staff who is under 21. I applaud that choice, but it makes a difference in our revenue.

Williston is also a perfect town for tournaments. Many great hotels and restaurants. And now Williston even has a brewery! We are conveniently located just .5 miles from the Raymond Center which hosts statewide tournaments for hockey, wrestling and basketball and right next to the Raymond Center is Aafedt Stadium which hosted the Babe Ruth World Series last summer. While we might have been able to serve people who are in Williston to watch their children play competitive sports, we found that families were not coming to the brewery because their children are not allowed in. The convenience of location, the draw of Pit 105 BBQ were both overshadowed by the fact that the children would not be able to come into the brewery. Again, a huge impact to our bottom line.

I appreciate the efforts to make a change at the state level that will allow people under 21 in the brewery. The continued support of small businesses is one reason we chose to open the brewery in North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Connie Boreson

Busted Knuckle Brewery Williston

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