



ROBERT BROOKS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 60TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Hearing Testimony
Assembly Committee on State Affairs
August 30, 2017

Chairman Swearingen and members of the Assembly Committee on State Affairs thank you for affording me with the opportunity to testify on behalf of Assembly Bill 450 relating to liquor licenses at the Ozaukee County Fairgrounds. This narrowly tailored bill is meant to affirm current practices for liquor licenses on the Ozaukee County fairgrounds.

Beginning in 2012, the Ozaukee County Board received approval from the Department of Revenue to permit licensed vendors to sell liquor on the premises of the Ozaukee County Fairground for special events. The Department of Revenue made their decision to issue "Class B" permits to concessionaires based on the "airport provision" in state statute, which reads:

The department shall issue a "Class B" permit to a concessionaire that holds a valid certificate issued under s.73.03(50) and that conducts business in an operating airport or public facility, if the county or municipality which owns the airport or public facility has, by resolution of its governing body, annually applied to the department for the permit. The permit authorizes the sale of intoxicating liquor for consumption by the glass and not in the original pack or container on the premises (S.125.51(5)(b)2).

The county designated and approved concessionaires under this statute and they proceeded to obtain the necessary permits. Ozaukee County has operated under



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these permits since 2012 with no reported problems or complaints. In fact, the fairground exposition center provided much needed facilities to the public. Unfortunately, the Department of Revenue has recently interpreted Chapter 125: Alcoholic Beverages differently and informed the Ozaukee County Board that vendors will not be approved to sell liquor and wine in the exposition buildings on the Ozaukee County fairgrounds. This decision will have a negative effect on the groups and events that are held in Ozaukee County.

Assembly Bill 450 simply continues current practice to permit the Ozaukee County Board to approve licensed vendors to sell liquor and wine at the Ozaukee County Fairground buildings.

I encourage your support of Assembly Bill 450 and this time, I would be happy to answer any questions from committee members. Thank you for your time and consideration.



DUEY STROEBEL

STATE SENATOR • 20TH DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 450

Chairman Swearingen and committee members thank you for holding a hearing today on Assembly Bill 450. This bill seeks to improve a problem within Chapter 125 that forces the temporary vendors for Ozaukee County Fair Park events to obtain permanent alcohol licenses. Under the current scenario, these authorized caterers for weddings, banquets, and other events would take an alcohol license from established businesses in Cedarburg. Currently, there is a single liquor license left in the city of Cedarburg.

Previously, the fair park was allowed to share a single liquor license with the temporary vendors. The Department of Revenue notified the county that each individual vendor would have to pull their own permanent license. In each of these cases, a year-round restaurant would be prevented from holding the license.

Government should not be hindering the growth of small businesses. There are many reforms within Chapter 125 that are being discussed this session. While this bill is not one of them, this bill has a significant impact on the ability for the Ozaukee County Fair Park to host events and for businesses in Cedarburg to establish and grow.

Thank you for considering this narrow bill to allow the Ozaukee County Fair Park to continue to host numerous events while ensuring local small businesses may start and thrive in our community.