

# BUFFALO BULLETIN

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## Two extremes in Buffalo bar fight

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Earlier this year, the Buffalo Bulletin took a shot at liquor establishments after a training program to teach bartenders how to spot underage drinkers apparently failed to make an impression on an employee of the establishment that hosted the training. A week later, after being told that the Buffalo Police Department would escort a minor throughout town to do compliance checks, the bartender actually sold the underage drinker a drink.

Up until now, the offender was fined, but the liquor establishment owner suffered no serious consequence.

Now, the city of Buffalo is looking at more serious penalties that would be levied on liquor establishment owners.

The first reading of the document suggested that owners have taken notice. City Hall was filled with liquor establishment business people last week who complained that the city had gone overboard.

Some residents, under the guise of anonymity, posted remarks on the Buffalo Bulletin website claiming that City Council members were taking the first step to make Johnson County dry.

Perhaps everyone has gone overboard. The City Council promised to take another look at the ordinance to make sure that it wasn't unfair.

Let's hope they don't go too far in the opposite direction and leave the liquor establishment owners free of culpability if they continue to hire bartenders who either don't care if they serve underage drinkers, or aren't bright enough to know the difference.

The Buffalo Bulletin believes that there's a middle ground that is pro-business, and something short of puritanical.

We'd like to see an ordinance that sends the message that residents in Buffalo do not condone underage drinking, and liquor establishment owners must take a role in preventing such activities. Penalties for allowing employees to break the law should sting a little.

Meanwhile, the last time we checked the U.S. Constitution, it was still legal to drink alcohol in Wyoming, and most other places in the country.

While dangerous behavior can still be associated with legal alcohol consumption, the majority of drinkers here in Buffalo and throughout the country, continue to drink responsibly.

In the libertarian tradition that overturned prohibition, we see a place for businesses that serve alcohol in this community.

We just don't want alcohol served to minors.

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