

**Craig, Sondra**

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**From:** Olivia Prendergast <orp1015@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2024 9:38 AM  
**To:** ZZ Council Members  
**Subject:** Statement of Support for Rezoning the LaCrosse REACH center

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Hello City Council Members,

I am a Community Health Worker and Doula working in LaCrosse and surrounding areas. I am contacting you all to share my support for the petition to rezone the REACH center so they are able to provide dental services to folks covered by Badgercare.

Dental services for low income families are highly needed in our area. I see it in my work and my personal life. I myself qualify for state insurance and can personally attest that the current number and location of dental care providers who accept Badgercare make it darn near prohibitive to access any dental care. In fact, because the Cashton clinic has the wait list it does, the closest provider who is taking new clients, that I am aware of, is in Madison. This is a two hour drive away. Families in need do not have the time or financial resources for a journey like this to acquire basic care. When care providers instruct my clients about their general health, dental care is considered a must. However, my clients currently have extremely limited options. If we are talking about improving the health and resiliency of the greater community, rezoning this building so Scenic Bluffs can provide dental care is a must.

The REACH Center is a keystone in providing equitable access to health care for underserved populations in LaCrosse and surrounding areas. If neighbors in this area want to see fewer of the troubled, low income folks in their neighborhood, it is absolutely imperative that they take the steps to ensure that facilities and resources working to improve access and health outcomes are available. Therefore, rezoning this facility would greatly benefit the community I serve as a worker, as well as my family, and my local community outside of LaCrosse proper.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Olivia Prendergast