

Chairman Ralph Ostmeyer, Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee

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I am here in opposition to SB 298 for some very valid reasons. Last year one of the legislators asked if I had any research to indicate that the more locations would lead to more consumption. To briefly summarize:

Research from the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) from John Hopkins :

Regulating the number of physical locations in which alcoholic beverages are available for purchase in a geographic area, is an effective strategy for reducing excessive alcohol consumption and associated harms.

I understand that this bill contains a county option provision. However, what affects one county affects other counties because of the geographic closeness of such. We do not need more consumption! In 2012 there were 99 alcohol related traffic deaths in Kansas along with an unknown number of injuries. Can you imagine what would be taking place in Kansas if we had 100 deaths due to measles this past year! There was a cantaloupe scare a year or so ago and we were all afraid to buy cantaloupes. I remember the Tylenol scare – about 7 deaths nationwide as I recall. You could not buy Tylenol – the shelves were empty. Then why do we give a pass to the alcohol industry???

Making hard liquor available in grocery stores is hard for a recovering alcoholic to avoid. They realize they should not go in – or maybe even pass by – a liquor store but the grocery store can be a necessity. Youth will be harder to control in a big grocery store as opposed to a liquor store where they would obviously stand out.

I had a State Representative tell me that he thought it was a matter of equal playing fields to let grocery store sell hard liquor. He is forgetting that liquor is a regulated substance. You cannot sell just anything in a grocery store – try selling firecrackers!.

From the United Kingdom comes the information on the connection between alcohol and cancer. *“And it isn't just a risk for heavy drinkers; regularly drinking alcohol puts you at greater risk of seven different types of cancer, including breast and mouth cancer”* There are so many diseases that are effected by alcohol usage.

Selling alcohol is NOT like selling lettuce! Please keep in mind the research on more outlets means more consumption of this killer product! Put a stop to this by voting “NO” on SB 298,