

KANSANS FOR ADDICTION PREVENTION

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SUBJECT: House Bill 2532

There has been significant erosion of controls of alcohol over the past few years. There has also been a major jump in the number of alcohol related traffic fatalities. Alcohol is the number one drug problem in America. You have expanded access which always increases consumption. House Bill 2532 however is not just an erosion of control; it is a radical shift in policy. This bill should be defeated.

PREVENTION: is our primary focus, and a proliferation of places that sell alcohol would mean that more people would drink. Prevention of access by youth means that fewer persons will become addicted to alcohol. Numerous studies throughout the world have linked expanded number of sales outlets and/or expanded hours to increased consumption and the resulting harmful effects. In Great Britain, the sale of reduced price alcohol in grocery stores is blamed for a dramatic increase in harm done by alcohol. Alcohol takes a terrible economic toll in America. Each one of us spends \$746 to support the **economic loss** due to alcohol use and abuse. I resent the fact that the infrastructure of our state requires me to pay out the \$746 although I am among the 40% of Kansans who totally abstain from alcohol. Now a recovering alcoholic can avoid being tempted by their favorite brand of booze. Most of us go to grocery stores, so their **desire for alcohol would be triggered** by the display in the grocery store that they could not avoid.

ENFORCEMENT: Under this bill, enforcement would need to be quadrupled. It needs to be vastly increased because you would be adding two to three thousand outlets for stronger alcohol. Would a large national corporation train their staff to the same standard that liquor stores now maintain? I have ridden with ABC officers, and in my opinion it would be very difficult to monitor underage purchases at a grocery store as compared to a current liquor store.

In order to fund the vastly increased enforcement effort needed, it would be important to raise the tax on alcohol significantly. KAP has already proposed tax increases on alcohol in order to solve some of our budget problems, but much more funding would be needed under this bill for the expanded enforcement efforts.

The penalties for sales to minors need to be level. If an infraction would close a liquor store, an equal infraction should close an entire grocery store. It would seem that a well run grocery store would be unwilling to take the risk of improperly selling alcohol because of the potential for severe penalties.

Garry Winget, KAP President

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The following article is a re-print on an article sent out in one of our informational bulletins, but it provides specific research on the issue in this bill.

Adolescents who live within walking distance of a liquor store or other alcohol outlet are more likely to engage in binge drinking or drive drunk, according to researchers from the Pardee RAND Graduate School in Santa Monica, Calif.

The Los Angeles Times reported that drinking rates were higher among 12- to 17-year-olds who lived within a half-mile of an alcohol outlet, and that minority neighborhoods tended to have a higher density of alcohol outlets than predominantly white communities.

(How do alcohol outlets affect communities?)

"Our study suggests that living in close proximity to alcohol outlets is a risk factor for youth," according to the researchers. "In California, retail licenses are not typically approved within 100 feet of a residence or within 600 feet of schools, public playgrounds and nonprofit youth facilities, but proximity by itself is not sufficient to deny a license ... More attention on the proximity rule is needed and environmental interventions need to curb opportunities for youth to get alcohol from commercial sources."

The research was published online ahead of publication in the American Journal of Public Health.

We have also provided you with similar information in our regular bulletins.