

Testimony of Sandi Wilber

House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

March 8 2012

Senate Bill 269

Ice & Olives is a specialty food store, delicatessen and coffee shop located at 3627 SE 29th Street in Topeka. I, Sandi Wilber, am the sole owner of Ice & Olives, a single member LLC. My husband is the sole owner of a Kansas Liquor store, Lakeside Wine and Spirits. These two businesses are totally separate.

Last year, I attempted to acquire an on premise liquor license that would allow me to upscale my dinner menu and offer a "bistro" type atmosphere, which would serve wine and imported beers. This new addition to my business would bring a much needed revenue stream to Ice & Olives, and would also generate additional taxes at both the state and local level. It will result in hiring new employees, purchasing new equipment, and providing a much needed dining venue in southeast Topeka. These are all good for Kansas and the local economy!

According to Kansas law, however, the spouse of a liquor store owner is not allowed an on premise license.

It doesn't seem fair that, solely based on the fact that I am married, the State of Kansas can dictate what I can and cannot do in my business. Other identical businesses in Topeka and throughout the state do have on premise licenses. This seems very discriminatory!

It is my understanding that this law has been on the books for a long time -- long before couples living together without marriage was common place. The reality is I could file for divorce, continue my existing relationship with my husband, and have an on premise license in 60 days. This is NOT what I want to do. I believe in marriage and would prefer to stay married.

That is why I am requesting a statutory change in the Kansas liquor law to allow me, Sandi Wilber, sole owner of Ice & Olives, to acquire an on premise license without having to divorce my husband in order to save my business.

I respectfully submit this testimony in high hopes that you will change this discriminatory law and allow my business to compete on a level playing field.

Sandi Wilber
Proprietor
Ice & Olives LLC

House Federal & State Affairs

Date: 3-08-12

Attachment # 8