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Testimony in Opposition to SB379

I am a former Kansas winery owner, former Chairman of the Governor's Grape and Wine Advisory Council, and a proud Kansas grape grower.

Regarding SB379, the changes to the Farm Winery law being proposed under this bill can only be described as imbecilic. This is a legal proposal that demonstrates a total lack of critical thinking, developed and derived with no regard for ethical behavior.

K.S.A. 2010 Supp. 41-308a(c) requires a farm winery to use 60 percent Kansas ingredient. Before a change is made to this statute one should understand why this law was enacted. One simply has to look at the growth of the vineyard and wine industry in Kansas, an anti alcohol state, to understand the positive impact it's had. Since the enactment of this bill Kansas has gone from one to more than 25 wineries. Grape acres go up every year and have once again reached into the thousands.

Let's use some critical thought. Why would we want a Farm Winery law that doesn not require and encourage the establishment and maintenance of a farm? The people promoting this bill want to be able to bring in junk juice from out of state, touch it up and turn into what they will label as KANSAS WINE. Kansas has a wine manufacturer license that enables the holder to bring in as much out of state product as they want to and re-bottle it. If they want to have a retail outlet and be able to produce wine (if you want to call it wine) then they need to change the wine manufacturer statute to enable a retail outlet. Don't go after farmers.

This is bill is just wrong and will hurt the pioneers of the wine industry of this great state for the benefit of some lazy manufacturers that want the title of Farm Winery.

Did they staff this bill with the vineyards and wineries in the state? NO!!!

Does it hurt the Farmers? YES!

Thank you for what you do.

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House Federal & State Affairs

Date: 3-29-12

Attachment # 36