

Testimony in Opposition of Senate Bill N. 379

Greetings Chairman and members of the Committee, Our names are Greg and Rebecca Hunn. We are writing you on behalf of our Hunn Family Farm, On The Edge Vineyard and future On The Edge Winery. We own our family farm that has been in existence for over one hundred and twenty years, over four generations. We are writing in opposition to Senate Bill No 379.

This bill would mean a death sentence to farm wineries by doing away with the current 60% Kansas product requirement. All wine producers would have to get a MANUFACTURER'S license from the Kansas Alcoholic Beverage Control Division. A MANUFACTURER'S license is like a BREWERY license and a FARM WINERY license is like a MICRO BREWERY license. The latter two have latitude and perks meant to encourage Kansas agriculture. Which, by the way, are what Kansas needs in our current economic environment. Changing this requirement is no different than outsourcing Kansas jobs and destroying the entrepreneur spirit.

While reading an article in the Farm Bureau magazine a few years ago we discovered grape production as a potential new market for the Kansas farmer. With this we created a future vision for our farm, a vision which could make a one hundred and sixty acre farm not only self sustaining but maybe even profitable. A sad fact is that before prohibition Kansas was a force in the grape producer world, now we have a fraction of our former production. Our vision is to single handedly resurrect Kansas grape production. People laughed when they heard us talk about our vision but now with the amazing progress we have made in three short years, people are starting to believe. We already have three other small farms planting and growing grapes in southeast Kansas.

I am sure you are aware many areas in Kansas are economically depressed. We suffer from declining enrollment in our schools and a declining population in our small towns. Lately there is much talk from Topeka about developing Kansas Entrepreneurship. This is exactly what we are trying to accomplish here on our farm and in our community. With this we bring in tourism to our area, bring back jobs and increase the enrollment in our schools. This is the very reason we started a vineyard and hope to start a winery in Southeast Kansas. Our vision is "grand" on all levels but to accomplish our vision we must oppose Senate Bill 379.

Thank You Greg Hunn and Rebecca Hunn
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Future On the Edge Winery
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House Federal & State Affairs

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