

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF BEVERAGE RETAILERS



Testimony presented to Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee
January 24, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding SB 269, allowing tastings on the premises of a liquor store.

Although we have opposed specific tastings bills in the past, the Kansas Association of Beverage Retailers voted at our annual meeting in October to be neutral on the proposed bill, but may oppose the bill depending on how it is amended.

The promotion of in store liquor tasting is not a priority for our organization, especially in the context of the big box / grocery store / convenience store legislation that is on our doorstep yet again.

We have been approached in the past by some legislators who view tastings as a trade-off to benefit liquor stores that might make up for passing a strong beer bill or big box bill opposed by KABR. We want to be on record that this is not the case. Even the members of our group who would like to have tastings in their stores agree that pursuing such a law is not worth that risk. If the Legislature would like to see such a change in law as a marketing option for some liquor stores, we hope to be useful in providing information about how it would affect our licensees.

In 2009, KABR testified in opposition to SB 246 that would have set up a tasting license that could be purchased by liquor store owners from the ABC. Many states provide for consumer tastings, but do so under a wide variety of models. Since that time, we have held subcommittee meetings to discuss the options. We have reviewed other state laws to evaluate their models. At this time, there is not consensus among our members relating to the best regulatory model or format for tastings. There is consensus that we are neutral to the proposal before you.

While we will not be engaged in lobbying for this legislation, we hope to be able to provide input as to the impacts of the bill if it is to move forward and may oppose the legislation if negative amendments are included.

Stacey Harlow, President

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

For more information, contact KABR:
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Sn Fed & State
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