

Tipsy's Wine and Spirits  
6840 Johnson Drive  
Mission, KS 66202

---

Phone: 913-262-9898

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee  
Tastings in Liquor Stores – SB 269

Thank you for the chance to talk to you today about my business. As a retail liquor store owner, I am always interested in new ways to reach out to our customers. Offering consumer tastings would be a good option in my region. However, we are neutral on the bill today.

The current attack on the Kansas owned retail liquor stores by out of state big box companies makes it impossible for me to come to Topeka and request that the Legislature do anything that might influence that bigger issue. The best thing the Kansas Legislature can do for my business is to reject the bills that deregulate our industry and allow me to continue to operate my store within Kansas law.

If you do choose to work on a tastings bill, we would appreciate it if that proposal would include the adjacent business spaces and party shops that exist today. These are separate businesses, sometimes co-owned and sometimes unrelated to the store.

Background:

In 2008, the ABC told licensees that they could host tastings on any unlicensed premises – including the party shops - as long as the product was legally purchased and taxes paid, and there were no tastings in the liquor store itself. Likewise, we could continue to host wine clubs or other events by invitation away from our stores just as any other person might host a private party or event.

This news was unexpected and welcomed by some retailers. It had not been requested by our organization and we were surprised by the new interpretation of longstanding law.

We are aware of several businesses who built party shops adjacent to their stores designed to host wine tastings and wine classes based on the advice of representatives of the ABC at that time.

Then, in 2010, the ABC reversed itself with a policy stating that the statutory prohibition on consumption “in, on or about” the licensed premises precluded such activities in party shops, in parking lots, and even in separate business spaces next door, upstairs or downstairs.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Kelly Jennings, Owner