

Testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 390 to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Submitted by Lori Henderson, Crooked Post Vineyard, Valley Falls.
Member KVFWA, Kansas Viticulture and Farm Winery Association.

Good morning Senator & Chair, Pete Brungardt and members of the Committee. My name is Lori Henderson and my husband Kevin and I have a 5 acre vineyard consisting of 3,000 vines located between Valley Falls and Ozawkie Kansas near Lake Perry in Jefferson County. We began planting in 2006 and intend to plant another 1,200-1,800 more vines in the next two years. We supply high quality, hand- picked wine grapes to Kansas wineries near our location.

The current bills in the House and Senate are very concerning to us as our lively-hood is dependent upon Kansas wineries appreciating what we are growing and paying us for what they are worth. We have a substantial amount of capitol involved in our operation; just as much as any start up winery would. When a Kansas winery says that they will only pay the same as they can get grapes for in Missouri, that tells me they are not concerned about the Kansas content but are only concerned about their bottom line - that scares me and that has recently happened to us. Both Missouri and Iowa have decreased their required amount of state fruit in their wine and are losing growers due to the lower prices being paid to them. If all the wineries in Kansas begin doing business this way then my existence would be futile. If SB390 passes, these same wineries would be actually manufacturing out of state juice and still be able to hold Farm Winery Licenses, representing agriculture, when in fact no ties to agriculture would even be taking place.

If current and future Kansas wineries wish to create wine from products obtained out of state then they should hold a Manufacturing License. Manufacturing brings income and growth into the state and that is very important. For those Kansas wineries that wish to remain at least 60%, if not higher in content, than they should be able to use the Farm Winery License with the benefits of sampling, selling, self-distributing and farmers markets.

In recent years there has been a huge movement across the country to buy local, not only in the Midwest, but all over the United States. Program such as 'Simply Kansas' has become a leader in our state to further that movement. By letting wineries manufacture out of state juice or grapes under the umbrella of a Farm Winery License and Kansas Agriculture, we are misrepresenting ourselves. What fun would that be for customers to travel to their Kansas winery only to learn that what is in the bottle they just bought and sampled came from somewhere else other than Kansas and that the vines in front of the building are just for show? Anyone can go to the liquor store and get a \$10 bottle of wine from California but we need something unique here to attract tourism and revenue in this state. We need to develop our own niche that is unique and celebrate the varieties we are able to raise here and do so well with.

Thank you,

Lori Henderson
Crooked Post Vineyard
10251 130th St.
Valley Falls, KS 66088
785-945-3952