

**House Federal and State Affairs Committee Hearing
Kansas Homebrew Bill (HB 2223 & SB 112)
Testimony of Dr. Stephen Cook on February 8, 2013**

Home Brew Club Background: President Jimmy Carter legalized limited production of home brewed beer without requiring registration or taxation on October 14, 1978 (H.R. 1337). Since that time many local "home brew clubs" have been organized to discuss brewing techniques, share recipes and critique fellow members' home brewed beer. Local clubs are typically affiliated members of the American Homebrewers Association. www.homebrewersassociation.org.

I am the President of the Kansas City Bier Meisters homebrew club (KCBM). Our club has been meeting at various locations in Johnson County, KS for over 30 years. We have approximately 80 members from both sides of the state line. www.kcbiermeisters.org.

I am also here today representing several other KS Homebrew Clubs:

Lawrence Brewers Guild

www.lawrencebrewers.org

Little Apple Brew Club (Manhattan)

www.facebook.com/LABrewCrew

Wichita Homebrewers Organization

www.wichitahomebrewers.org

Topeka Hall of Foamers

www.halloffoamers.com

Salina Brewers Guild

www.salinabrewersguild.com

Homebrew Competitions:

In many states homebrew competitions are held as part of the state fair. Judging is similar to the way grandma had her prize pickles or preserves judged! Participants typically ship their beers to the competition site, which is illegal under current law in KS. Judges come from all over the country to participate in the contests. There is a national homebrew judging association called the Beer Judge Certification Program, www.bjcp.org, which trains, tests and certifies beer judges. The judges evaluate the entrant's beer and provide them with written feedback on the quality of their beer and provide suggestions on how to improve their product. They also determine the contest winning beers.

There are typically 5 or 6 homebrew competitions around the state of KS annually. The Bier Meisters host the region's largest homebrew competition every February. Additionally, this year the Bier Meisters will be one of eleven preliminary sites for the American Homebrew Association's National Homebrew Competition (NHC). I am the Midwest site director for that competition. www.ahaconference.org The NHC is the largest homebrew competition in the United States. None of these competitions may take place this year in Kansas if the current statute is enforced!

Economic Impact:

The Bier Meisters' February competition typically draws around 50 out of town judges and guests for the weekend. We have typically held our KCBM competition at local Kansas winery. All of the out of town participants stay at local hotels for the weekend and many club members stay at the local hotels as well. As a result of potential enforcement consequences, we now have moved this competition to Missouri.

The NHC competition in April will be at least twice as large and held over a 3 day weekend. We anticipate drawing between 90 and 120 out of town guests. Normally, these folks would be spending their food and lodging money in Johnson County, Kansas, but now, as a result of potential enforcement, we are holding this competition in Kansas City Missouri!

KS ABC Enforcement Action:

In May 2012 our local homebrew shop owner Alberta Rager, of Baccus & Barleycorn, Ltd., in Shawnee, Kansas (www.bacchus-barleycorn.com) was contacted by Doug Jorgensen of the Kansas ABC and was advised that it was illegal to ship or receive homebrew in the state of Kansas. Following that conversation, Mr. Jorgensen contacted our club, KCBM, to inform us of our potential violation of the state statute. I asked, Mike McVey to contact Mr. Jorgensen, who informed us that in Kansas, homebrew could not be shared at club meeting or entered into a competition because it was **“solely for the use of the maker and the maker’s family.”**

As a result of that conversation, we informed the various Kansas homebrew clubs of the potential statutory violation and as a group we discussed the potential ramifications if the current statute was enforced. As a result, the Bier Meisters moved our club to Missouri. Unfortunately, the clubs serving central Kansas do not have the ability to move across the state line. Therefore, we are asking for a change in the law to allow us to share the fruits of our hobby with our friends, fellow club members as well as the right to enter our beers in homebrew competitions. Specifically, we are asking that the **“solely for the use of the maker and the maker’s family”** clause be revised.