

To: House Commerce Committee

**Testimony in Opposition to HB 2200
Allowing alcohol sales in Grocery and Convenience Stores**

February 12, 2015

I have owned Horton's Retail Liquor in Pittsburg for over 25 years. I love the liquor business and plan to continue working for another 20 years. Out-of-state corporate interests would put an end to that dream. Family owned retail liquor stores absolutely cannot compete with national and international businesses and their virtually unlimited buying power.

They talk about not being able to sell wine and spirits. They say it's not fair. Is it fair for my wife and I to try to compete with Dillon's or WalMart selling the same products as our store but at a markup just over cost?

They say it would give retailers a chance to "expand" and be "entrepreneurs". Almost every store in Kansas has a limited amount of space to work with. Even if we can all get hundreds of thousands of dollars in loans to expand our buildings, add gas pumps, groceries, etc. Great. Another convenience store every town doesn't need. How magnanimous of these people to empower the little ol' retail liquor stores! It's about money and control.

Corporations want all of our money and nothing more. They will not add much needed jobs in Kansas just because they add alcohol to their stores. But we will lose locally owned businesses that buy property, pay taxes, buy groceries, and support local functions. They also want to make our license worth something. If I work 20 more years my license is worth 20 times my net earnings. Jobs, good jobs, are needed throughout Kansas and the whole country. If governments keep giving corporations everything they desire, one day we will all be working for WalMart, Dillon's, etc. for \$8 an hour. And that is not fair.

Let Kansas be a State that stands up for their citizens and locally owned businesses instead of making the rich even richer. It's proven every day that profits never trickle down. Instead of giving this group what they want, why not take alcohol out of grocery stores and convenience stores and make it only available in the Kansas businesses that each and every one of us knows as a neighbor, friend, or relative. Passing this bill will signal the end of yet another hometown business that WalMart and their ilk have made extinct in the last 30 years.

Perhaps the most disturbing thing to me is that outside interests can throw money at our legislators to re-write legislation in their favor and they aren't even Kansas citizens! Please vote "NO" and prove you are representing Kansas citizens and not lobbyists and millionaires that don't even live in Kansas.

Sincerely,

Travis and Lori Horton

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