

Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

Rep. Mark Hutton - Chair

RE: HB2200 Alcoholic Beverages; expansion of retailer's licenses and the transfer thereof

I see that almost half of the members of this committee are business owners, managers, or retired from a business background. This tells me you are able to make logical decisions given accurate information. In order to run a business you've informed yourself of federal, state, and local laws and regulations and structured your operations to comply with them now and in the future. The retail liquor store industry has done just that for the past 65 years. The state of Kansas tightly regulates the sale of alcoholic beverages and entrusts this industry to adhere to these regulations.

So why, for the benefit of out of state corporations does this partnership need to change? The industry in Kansas was designed to be for small business. The impact of a penalty on a small business is paramount for regulation enforcement. The impact for that same penalty on a multi-state corporation is negligible.

"I am for big business, too. But if you want to expand your economy, you've got to get small business growing," Brownback told a crowd of supporters at Jackson's Greenhouse in Topeka in August of 2014.

Source: <http://www.kansas.com/news/politics-government/article1231845.html#storylink=cpy>

Why do we want to kill small businesses when the Governor wants us to grow them? Because other states do it? Not a good enough reason. And if this is such an attractive business, there is nothing stopping the grocery store owners from opening up a retail liquor store now. All they have to do is wall off a portion of their building, put in a separate entrance, cash registers, coolers, etc.

HB2200 does not increase competition. It will consolidate the sale of wine and spirits into a few grocery stores versus several neighborhood retail liquor stores competing against each other. It does nothing for consumer. Now there are retail liquor **STORES**, they want liquor and wine **AISLES**. Our staff is over 21, knows the products and can advise customers on choice. They want 18 year olds to do this and be able to enforce regulations pertaining to age and intoxication level at the point of sale. You'll hear the result over the loud speaker in the grocery store.... **"Sobriety check at register 4!"**

The creation of the Class A, beer only license reinforces HB2200 intent to eliminate competition to the grocery stores. This class of license will strip 50% of the sales from the liquor stores, but not be included in the freeze on license numbers or required to be transferred from an existing license.

On behalf of my family, my employees, and local vendors, I ask that you make an informed decision about changing something that works for the consumer, protects the community, and allows small businesses to grow!

Thanks for your consideration



Rod Blackburn

Bright's Liquor Store, El Dorado KS