

**Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee
Written Testimony Opposing SB 298
March 31, 2015**

My name is Joyce Jabara, I am a co-owner of a liquor store in Sedgwick County. I am also a court employee that deals with many aspects of domestic and family matters in Kansas.

I am writing today in opposition of SB 298, not only as a liquor store owner, but as an advocate of children and families in our community who sees daily the negative impact of alcohol abuse in our community. The cost of this spans many areas including increasing violent crime, traffic fatalities, under age substance use and abuse, increased domestic violence and increasing relapse rates for the recovering alcoholics.

Alcohol is a factor in 40% of all violent crimes today. Based on victim reports alcohol use by the offender was a factor:

- 37% rapes**
- 15% robberies**
- 27% aggravated assaults**
- 25% of simple assaults**

Domestic violence affects Kansas families. The number of domestic violence cases that Kansans see will increase as the availability of alcohol increases.

- Drinking proceeds acts of family violence in 25%-50% of all domestic violence cases.**
- One in four murders in Kansas are domestic violence related.**
- Law enforcement receives 25,000 domestic violence calls each year**

Of the families that I personally have dealt with; 30-40% allege alcohol abuse as a concern. These families vary in socio-economic status and situations; there isn't an income or moral differential here. All income brackets, races and ethnicities are negatively impacted by alcohol abuse.

Uncork Kansas would like you to believe that increasing the availability of alcohol does not contribute to an increase in crime, domestic violence and traffic fatalities. Numerous studies show a correlation between increased alcohol availability and crime.^[1] In 2012 Washington State implemented privatization of liquor retailing. The number of retailers increased in the City of Seattle from 20 to 134. Reducing the distance to the nearest retailer by one mile leads to a 6-8% increase in monthly crime rates. ^[2]

The board of Uncork Kansas is predominately seated with "individuals" who represent grocers and convenience stores that do not even "headquarter" their business in Kansas; much less reside in Kansas. The Uncork Kansas push towards allowing alcohol in grocery and convenience stores does not

take into account the number of families, communities and lives that will be negatively impacted by this bill. [3] I have heard members of Uncork Kansas quoted as saying, "give the consumer the convenience of one stop shopping." Since when did family values, protection for victims of domestic violence and violent crime and the safety of our children become less important than "convenience for consumers"?

How do you tell a mother of 4 children who sent her husband; who happens to be a recovering alcoholic that the "temptation" in the grocery store isn't there when he leaves to take the children to the store and returns having succumbed to the temptations of the liquor or wine bottle next to the bread?

The concerns are not only realistic but proven by a number of studies throughout the country. Alcohol should be no less regulated than narcotics and sold in a strict controlled environment.

Please consider the family values, protection for victims of domestic violence and violent crime and the safety of our children as the reason you will need to say NO to Uncork Kansas and SB 298 and yes to Kansas families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce Jabara".

Joyce Jabara

[1] See "Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms in Los Angeles County
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc/resources/AODFinalRevised13012.pdf>

[2] See Andrew Chamberlain-"Urban Crime and Spatial Proximity to Liquor: Evidence from a Quasi Experiment in Seattle." <http://www.achamberlain.com/uploads/2/4/3/0/24309472/wp2.pdf>

[3] See William Alex Pridemore and Tony Grubestic "Alcohol Outlets and Community Levels of Interpersonal Violence: Spatial Density, Outlet Type and Seriousness of Assault"
<http://jrc.sagepub.com/content/50/1/132.full.pdf+html>