



550 BOWIE STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78703
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February 12, 2017

TO: The Esteemed Members of the Kansas Legislature

RE: Proposed beer and wine sales in Kansas grocery stores

I am writing today on behalf of **Whole Foods Market**, to express our company's enthusiastic support of the Uncork Kansas coalition's efforts to bring sales of wine and full-strength beer to Kansas grocery stores. We believe this long-overdue change to Kansas' laws would be consistent with the desires of Kansas consumers for greater convenience, would increase the pace of business development, and would benefit the State by making its businesses more competitive with those in neighboring states.

Our company sells beer and wine in the vast majority of our 460 *Whole Foods Market* locations around the country. We carry a wide selection of alcoholic beverage items, with a focus on smaller, craft, unique, and local products in each market. Our highly-trained Team Members provide suggestions for beer and wine pairings with food, offer recipes, and provide education on the characteristics and provenance of the alcoholic beverages we sell. Our customers love our selection of alcoholic beverages, and having the option to purchase those products with their groceries is very important to them. Our Kansas customers consistently express their desire to see beer and wine in our stores to our Team Members, and we would be thrilled to be able to offer them the one-stop shopping convenience they desire.

More and more states are in the process of updating their archaic liquor laws to allow the sale of wine and/or full-strength beer in grocery stores, and those efforts have met with a favorable reception from consumers. We believe that Kansas should consider making the same type of changes. In addition to benefiting Kansas consumers by providing greater convenience, greater selection, and lower prices through increased competition, an update of the liquor laws would benefit the State by making Kansas a more attractive place for companies like ours to do business. When we look for new sites, locations where the laws allow us to sell alcoholic beverages are certainly preferable. In fact, our ability to sell alcoholic beverages could be the deciding factor in determining whether to sign a lease for a new site or not. We believe that a change to Kansas laws to allow Kansas grocers to sell wine and full-strength beer would make the State a more attractive place for us and other grocers to do business.

For these and many other reasons, we urge you to consider the sensible changes being proposed by Uncork Kansas. This would be a big win for Kansas consumers and businesses. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Bissett
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