



February 18, 2020

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas Beer Wholesalers Association, thank you for the opportunity to provide written neutral testimony on H.B. 2596, AN ACT concerning alcoholic beverages; relating to the club and drinking establishment act; authorizing the issuance of drinking establishment licenses to licensed manufacturers.

H.B. 2596 would allow for a manufacturer of beer, wine, or spirits to obtain one drinking establishment license provided that the location of the drinking establishment was within 1.2 miles of the actual site where the manufacturing license is held and is valid.

Kansas' three-tier system has served Kansans well. It has provided for an orderly and safe market place whereby citizens are assured of both safe products and a competitive atmosphere leading to significant consumer choice and fair pricing. One has to look no further than what has occurred with the craft beer industry in Kansas to see the benefits; benefits that would not exist if not for the tenets of the three-tier system. I would be remiss if I did not mention that it has also significantly assisted in the collection of taxes for the state.

Our Association opposed legislation two years ago that is similar to what is contained in H.B. 2596. That strong opposition was based on our desire to protect the three-tier system. We applaud Representative Eplee and others for their willingness to work to solve a problem for their community while also working to protect the three-tier system and the benefits afforded by said system to the citizens of Kansas.

We believe that H.B. 2596 is a fair approach to solving a unique situation while not eroding the foundations of our three-tier system. For this reason, we do not oppose its passage.

Very truly yours,

Jason P. Watkins
Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce