

Testimony for Senate on Thursday, 17 March 2022

HB 2688

Disposition: proponent

Oral, in-person testimony

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Representing self.

Testimony in Support of HB 2688

KC Wine Co is a farm winery located in Johnson County Kansas. We have been operating for 8 years. Open to the public for 7 years. We employ 6 full time employees and over 40 part time employees. We were voted one of the top 25 businesses in Kansas City with under 25 employees back in 2019. We built this agriculturally based business despite intense opposition from local county government. Here is a quick synopsis of our journey:

Originally in 2014 Johnson County BOCC and County Planning and Zoning fought against KC Wine Co being issued a license to have a Farm Winery.

They refused to sign necessary forms (ABC-806) required by KABC that simply verified that the proposed location was indeed zoned "agricultural" and not within 200' of a church or school.

We were granted a hearing with ABC to determine our status. After the hearing, Counsel for Johnson County was asked by my representatives, what they would do if KC Wine Co prevailed. They said if we prevailed, they would shut us down. We were granted a license and opened in June 2015.

Soon after, we were cited with code violations for operating without a county permit. A 2-year court battle ensued costing over \$100,000 dollars, caused anxiety and uncertainty of success. We ultimately prevailed. However, we still had issues with Johnson County in the years following. Both regarding licensure and our buildings.

Farm Wineries already meet all the regulatory requirements for a CMB. Obviously, we sell alcohol of higher content than the restrictions of a CMB license. This bill will allow Farm Wineries to expand their retail sales to meet the demands of customers desiring CMB products without now falling under the restrictions or be denied licensure from county or city governments.