



LEAVENWORTH LANSING CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
518 SHAWNEE STREET, LEAVENWORTH, KS 66048

March 4, 2024

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee
Senator Mike Thompson, Chair

Dear Senator and Fellow Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to support SB 511. The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce prides itself on representing businesses of all sizes, but particularly the *rights* of each business owner. Business owners should possess the fundamental right to control and distribute their products. This aligns with the principles of property rights and economic freedom enshrined in the Constitution. The ability to independently manage production, marketing, and distribution ensures the autonomy necessary for entrepreneurial success. Upholding brewers' rights under the Constitution reinforces the idea that economic liberties are essential components of a free-market system, fostering innovation, competition, and the pursuit of individual prosperity. Recognizing and protecting these rights supports the broader principles of economic freedom crucial for the success and diversity of the microbrewing industry. Moreover, allowing microbreweries to directly reach consumers enables small businesses to thrive, and enhances consumer choice. Self-distribution also empowers local brewers to build direct relationships with their consumers and communities, ensuring a more vibrant and dynamic craft beer landscape.

Make no mistake; microbreweries are good business; they not only contribute to property, employment, and retail tax base, but also draw a significant amount of tourism and activity to our struggling downtowns. Streets that have been deserted by businesses competing with big online box stores, restaurants and shop owners who have a hard time finding employees, high interest rates and developers moving inward. It's these clean, family-friendly microbreweries that have ushered in a new destination for day-trippers. They've created a space for our soldiers to meet up after a long day at CGSC school. They've created summer jobs for our teachers, and partnerships for our other local organizations. From Taylor Swift Trivia, partnering with our local Humane Society, to live music, our local micro-breweries took two old, dilapidated buildings, cleaned them up, and gave our community something to be proud of.

Please don't let the big distributors control our small businesses any longer. Microbreweries are not a threat to large distributors and never have been. If the Chamber wants to host a festival for our downtown, why shouldn't our distributors have the right to sell to us directly? Why should they have to take them to the distributors for a 30% markup for us to buy back? This is nonsensical. The distributors don't belong to our Chamber. They don't support our schools, civic organizations, or pay local taxes. They don't support our little leagues, local community colleges, or Education Foundations. They don't volunteer in our communities or contribute in any way. Our micro-breweries do.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jen Anders
President/CEO

"FORWARD AS ONE COMMUNITY"