

Testimony in Opposition of SB379

Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee

February 21, 2012

Submitted by: Les Meyer, Holy-Field Vineyard & Winery, 18807 - 158th St., Basehor, KS 66007
(Leavenworth County)

As a lifelong Kansas farmer (and grape grower since 1986 with 16 acres in grapes), and a winemaker with a winery since 1994; I am asking you to please help us keep the Kansas agriculture in Kansas Farm Wineries. SB379 wants to remove any requirement of Kansas grapes from Kansas wine. The bill would eliminate the requirement that wine produced by Kansas Farm Wineries use at least 60% Kansas grown fruit in its production. Without any specified Kansas content requirement, farm wineries would be free to produce wine containing NO Kansas grown grapes. Because this bill would allow "farm" wineries to use any amount of non-Kansas products in wine production, it promotes the interest of wine manufacturers over the interest of Kansas farmers. Entities desiring to produce wine unhindered by Kansas content requirements should apply for a Manufacturer's license, not a Kansas Farm Winery license. If we lose the Kansas agricultural content requirement this will cause Kansas wine to lose any state identity.

The original Farm Winery statute was agricultural, it was not a way for folks to "hang a shingle" and create wine from imported juice. I am proud of creating a true Kansas agricultural product and consumers who purchase Kansas wine should expect that what is in the bottle they purchase is more than just something fermented in Kansas. It should also be grown in Kansas. This issue is about grapes and farming, it shouldn't be about anything else. Please oppose this bill and show your support for Kansas farmers and grape growers.

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