

Commerce and Labor Committee
Mr. Marvin KleeB, Chairman
Testimony of Frances Wood
3342 SW Chelsea Circle, Topeka, KS 66614-3936
Phone 785-271-9320- e-mail franwood@cox.net

Mr. KleeB, Members of the Committee

I stand to give testimony in opposition to HB 2206. Most of you are aware of the evils of alcohol, but after hearing glowing testimony of why we should make liquor stores out of our grocery stores, I feel you may need some reminders.

LOCATION; LOCATION; LOCATION:

Yes, location is the big concern with this bill. According to my colleague there are currently 761 liquor stores and approval of this bill would increase the outlets to over 1500. Having liquor available in the grocery stores makes access so much easier. Some people are hesitant to go into a liquor store. Having alcohol in the grocery store makes it so convenient, therefore increasing consumption. Sometimes I have not thought of purchasing a certain product but because it was there in front of me, I put it in my basket. People who have a real problem with alcohol avoid going in the liquor store but it is hard to avoid going in a grocery store.

There were 115 alcohol related traffic deaths in Kansas in 2011 and a projected 75 in 2012. Thankfully, the number of deaths is lower in 2012. However, let's not overlook the injuries due to alcohol related accidents – 1542 in 2011 and 1580 in 2012.

If we would have had 75 deaths in Kansas from cantaloupe, don't you think we would all be reluctant to eat cantaloupe. Some of you may remember the Tylenol scare a number of years ago. The stores cleaned their shelves of Tylenol. We certainly did not have 115 deaths in Kansas because of Tylenol but you could not buy it. How about a recall on Alcohol? It not only produces traffic deaths but causes homicides, suicides, domestic violence, and contributes to various diseases including a number of cancers.

Let's put a face on two of those tragedies that involved alcohol. Marc Schultz sits in a prison because he hit and killed Timothy Roberts while Mr. Roberts was riding his bicycle. I know Lucylle Cannon wishes there had never been alcohol because she witnessed her husband's vehicle hit by a drunk driver. Her husband subsequently died and she was injured in the same accident because the vehicle she was driving from behind became involved in the wreck.

What are you thinking if you vote in favor of this bill? You are saying "Yes" we want more consumption of this killer product. Be smart and vote "NO" on HB 2206. Remember alcohol is not like selling lettuce.

House Commerce & Economic
Development Committee

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