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Written Testimony submitted Regarding House Bill HB 2282

Chairman Les Mason and Members of the House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee:

I have submitted testimony on Uncork proposals for a number of years, and several years ago I pointed out the trend in politics whereby conservatives have become the defenders of main street and no longer automatically supportive of big business initiative. In the most recent election, liberals all but conceded this as they buoyed media efforts to promote the exportation of companies and jobs while the Republican candidate went after big business doing the same. At the local level we need to reflect this shift before it's too late and we lose not just jobs but some of our political voice as well. I don't need to emphasize the obvious fact that Kansas small businesses will be harmed by Uncork's proposals. What I do want to emphasize is that in our changing political environment, the political voice of Kansas is weakened when our small businesses are.

My previous letters and testimony addressed many conservative economic arguments about how our current practices harm small business. I discussed how our central bank money pumping scheme devalues local small business bank accounts but swells big business stock purchasing power. I noted how big government loves big business and they engage in a mutually beneficial regulatory scheme despite their apparent disputes. I noted how big companies can run losses for years and years because they're market share and market value oriented—not income oriented like small family business. All this to the detriment of local business. This does not mean big business is bad. In fact, at the national level we need tax reform so big companies bring their money back to America and to American workers. This is something that the current President is working on with broad base support. However, like any entity, large companies look out for themselves and they are simply better at doing that than small ones. We have to maintain balance.

What I want to focus on today is the continued trend in national politics whereby not only has the left warmed to big businesses but businesses have figured out they get free advertising when they shift left. Sadly, it doesn't matter that conservatives have made some of the biggest electoral gains in history; what

matters is that liberal control of social media and virtually all of web and television media means that big business gets free advertising when they push left and they get hit hard if they refuse to push left or dare to tip toe on the right side of the political spectrum. It's just a matter of time before any particular business supports left wing causes.

I really enjoy Walmart and Kroger as a patron, and I commend them when they have taken stands against leftwing regulation. Most recently Kroger refused to capitulate to demands they forbid conceal and carry in their stores when it was clearly allowed by local law. However, as a publicly traded company, it's just a matter of time.

None of the nationwide businesses supporting uncork will advertise on the most popular AM conservative talk radio show, but they will advertise on hard left media. In April 2015, the Washington Post wrote a glowing article about Walmart's condemnation of the Arkansas religious freedom bill (and Indiana's similar bill). The article discussed a number of companies threatening economic action if Indiana's bill were to pass and the article was in clear approval of the CEO influence on the issue. There are many more recent examples of this as well. As I write this, the AP has posted an article "Shoppers weigh boycott calls as buying gets more political."

Regardless of what you think about the religious freedom bills, or any bill, it is a disturbing example where big business interest is directly impacting the sovereignty of the state legislators and their constituents. In the past this influence may have been relegated to finance and labor issues, but now companies are being used and leveraged by the media to affect all legislation whether it has anything to do with business or not. The hysteria that the left is able to generate from controlling almost all media is simply unmatched and big business has to react to protect their bottom line. That frankly means business will lean left as the path of least resistance.

I'm not asking you to harm big business or be angry with them: they're being rational in our country's overwhelming leftwing propaganda atmosphere. I am asking you not to harm small business, which would in turn hurt our local political voices and then strengthen out of state ones. You have that chance to maintain our political voice by maintaining the status quo and voting against this Uncork proposal.

Sincerely,

/S/ Tim Liesmann

Tim Liesmann