

Joyce Jabara
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RE: In Opposition of HB 2282

My name is Joyce Jabara, I am a co-owner of a liquor store in Sedgwick County. I am also a court service officer in Sedgwick County in the department of Family Court Services. The Family Court Services department is responsible for conducting child custody investigations and assisting victims of domestic violence in obtaining protection orders.

I am writing today in opposition of HB 2282, not as a liquor store owner, but as an advocate of children and families in our community who sees daily the negative impact of alcohol abuse in our community. The cost of this spans many areas including increasing violent crime, traffic fatalities, under age substance use and abuse, increased domestic violence and increasing relapse rates for the recovering alcoholics.

Alcohol is a factor in 40% of all violent crimes today. Based on victim reports alcohol use by the offender was a factor in 37% rapes, 15% robberies, 27% aggravated assaults and 25% of simple assaults.

Domestic violence affects Kansas families. The number of domestic violence cases that Kansans see will increase as the availability of alcohol increases.

- Drinking proceeds acts of family violence in 25%-50% of all domestic violence cases.
- One in four murders in Kansas are domestic violence related.
- Law enforcement receives 25,000 domestic violence calls each year

Of the child custody families that I personally have dealt with; 30-40% allege alcohol abuse as a concern. These families vary in socio-economic status and situations; there isn't an income or moral differential here. All income brackets, races and ethnicities are negatively impacted by alcohol abuse.

Uncork Kansas would like you to believe that increasing the availability of alcohol does not contribute to an increase in crime, domestic violence and traffic fatalities. The board of Uncork Kansas is predominately seated with "individuals" who represent grocers and convenience stores that do not even "headquarter" their business in Kansas; much less reside in Kansas. The Uncork Kansas push towards allowing alcohol in grocery and convenience stores does not take into account the number of families, communities and lives that will be negatively impacted by this bill. I have heard members of Uncork Kansas quoted as saying, "give the consumer the convenience of one stop shopping." Since when did family values, protection for victims of domestic violence and violent crime and the safety of our children become less important than "convenience for consumers"?

How do you tell a mother of 4 children who sent her husband; who happens to be a recovering alcoholic that the “temptation” in the grocery store isn’t there when he leaves to take the children to the store and returns having succumbed to the temptations of the liquor or wine bottle next to the bread?

The concerns are not only realistic but proven by a number of studies throughout the country.

Please consider the family values, protection for victims of domestic violence and violent crime and the safety of our children as the reason you will need to say no to Uncork Kansas and HB 2282 and yes to Kansas families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Joyce Jabara