



Kansas Families
Against
Liberal Liquor Laws

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2206
House Commerce, Labor and Economic
Development Committee
Pamela Fair
Kansas Families Against Liberal Liquor Laws
March 7, 2013

Chairman Kleeb and Members of the Committee:

I am Pam Fair, representing Kansas Families Against Liberal Liquor Laws, a group of Kansas families in opposition to changes in state law that would increase the access and availability of liquor to Kansas children.

As you consider this legislation, I pray that you keep one irrefutable fact in your hearts and minds. Increasing density and availability of alcohol in communities increases harm to our children and families. Those who wish to place convenience over our beliefs and values will tell you this is not true. For every obscure reference they use to back up these claims, study after study suggests there is a direct link between the increased density of alcohol and alcohol related harms to our families.

The introduction to the American Medical Association's Alcohol Policy article on *The Relationship Between Alcohol Availability and Injury and Crime*, clearly summarizes this issue:

"There is a growing body of research that shows what many people already know: areas with more alcohol outlets (a business or location where alcoholic beverages are sold) tend to experience more alcohol-related injury and crime. Incidents of sexual and other assaults, domestic violence, child abuse, youth violence, homicides, alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes, and drunk driving have all been shown to increase when the availability of alcohol increases."

Furthermore, communities will be defenseless against the negative effects of this legislation. Law and liquor enforcement agencies lack funds and staff to adequately carry out enforcement responsibilities now! These problems have been exacerbated by recent budget cuts. How will these agencies guarantee the safety of our children and families by adding thousands of establishments to their enforcement responsibilities?

Many local communities have taken a stand in defense of their citizens by passing ordinances to protect children from the moral decay that comes with the increased alcohol density and objectionable businesses. As communities work to curb increases in underage drinking and violent crimes connected to alcohol access, legislation increasing liquor availability deserves a similar morally conservative defense. Why does the Legislature feel the need to consider legislation that will immediately undo these efforts?

I ask you not to lose sight of the significant public price that will be paid by Kansas families under this legislation. There is no denying the devastating social impact it will have on Kansas. On behalf of Kansas families concerned about the well-being of our children, I respectfully ask you to oppose House Bill 2206 and stand in support of strong Kansas children and families.

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