



Kansas Families
Against
Liberal Liquor Laws

P. O. Box 2326, Topeka, Kansas 66601

Dear Chairman Brungardt and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 54.

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

Numerous studies have shown that with increased access and density of liquor come greater social problems – teenage drinking, DUIs, addiction and violence.

I have attached to my testimony findings from various studies done on alcohol density and public health, compiled by the Marin Institute. Just a brief glimpse of this information paints a disturbing picture.

- Alcohol density is the single greatest predictor of violent crimes in neighborhoods, greater than other social and economic factors. One study found that reducing violent crime by one percent could be achieved by reducing alcohol outlet density by less than one percent.
- Adolescent binge drinking and driving after drinking have been significantly associated with the presence of alcohol retailers within a half mile of one's home.
- Youth who live in neighborhoods with higher alcohol outlet densities have greater access to alcohol from direct purchase.
- Suicide rates among boys between 15 and 19 years old have been shown to increase by up to 12 percent when outlet density increases.

Furthermore, according to the International Institute for Alcohol Awareness, underage drinking cost the state of Kansas a staggering \$646 million in 2005 alone. These costs include medical care, work loss, and pain and suffering associated with alcohol related problems. Youth violence and traffic crashes attributable to alcohol use by underage youth represented the largest costs for the State.

Can we afford for these numbers to increase with greater outlet density and access to liquor?

I am not an economist, so I will not attempt to persuade you with economic statistics. While the economic impact of this legislation seems open for debate, there is no denying the devastating social impact this legislation would have on Kansas. The evidence is incontrovertible. There may be winners and losers economically, but increasing access and density of liquor will only lead to a lost quality of life for children and families.

On behalf of the thousands of Kansas families concerned about the well-being of our children, I respectfully ask you to not lose sight of the tremendous public price of this legislation and vote no on Senate Bill 54.

Thank you.

