

KANSANS FOR ADDICTION PREVENTION

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SUBJECT: Senate Bill 54

There has been significant erosion of controls of alcohol over the past few years. There has also been a major jump in the number of alcohol related traffic fatalities. Alcohol is the number one drug problem in America. You have expanded access which always increases consumption. Senate Bill 54 however is not just an erosion of control; it is a radical shift in policy. This bill must be defeated.

PREVENTION: is our primary focus, and a proliferation of places that sell alcohol would mean that more people would drink. Prevention of access by youth means that fewer persons will become addicted to alcohol. Numerous studies throughout the world have linked expanded number of sales outlets lower grocery store prices, and/or expanded hours to increased consumption and the resulting harmful effects. In Great Britain, the sale of reduced price alcohol in grocery stores is blamed for a dramatic increase in harm done by alcohol. Alcohol takes a terrible economic toll in America. Each one of us spends \$652 to support the **economic loss** due to alcohol use and abuse. I resent the fact that the infrastructure of our state requires me to pay out the \$652 although I am among the 40% of Kansans who totally abstain from alcohol.

ENFORCEMENT: Under this bill, enforcement would need to be quadrupled. It needs to be vastly increased because you would be adding two to three thousand outlets for stronger alcohol. Would a large national corporation train their staff to the same standard that liquor stores now maintain? I have ridden with ABC officers, and in my opinion it would be very difficult to monitor underage purchases at a grocery store or convenience store when compared to a current liquor store.

In order to fund the vastly increased enforcement effort needed, it would be important to raise the tax on alcohol significantly. KAP has already proposed tax increases on alcohol in order to solve some of our budget problems, but much more funding would be needed under this bill for the expanded enforcement efforts.

The penalties, enforcement, and sales associate age to prevent sales to minors need to be level. If an infraction would close a liquor store, an equal infraction should close an entire grocery or convenience store. Does "free market" mean the right of mega corporations to have special privileges so they can run small enterprises out of business?

Garry Winget, KAP President

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