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To: Representative Mark Hutton, Chairman  
House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Aaron Rosenow. I am the second generation owner/operator of Vern's Retail Liquor located in Topeka, KS. I purchased this business from my father, Vernon Rosenow, in 2008 after he had owned it for 15 years. Since 2008 I have had to move my business two times because of the simple fact that we leased space for our business. I finally bought some land and built a building for my business so that I would be the sole responsibility of whether or not my business succeeded or failed. I did not want someone else to have that kind of power over me or my livelihood.

I currently employ 8 part time and 1 full time employee. These people are not just teenagers looking for some extra money for gas or to go out on the weekends. My employees work here to help pay for their families well being, their homes, and their future. I know all of their names and they all know me. I'm not sure the owners of Kroger, Wal-Mart, and Hy-Vee can say the same thing. I wouldn't expect them to. They are multi-state companies with billions of dollars in annual revenue.

I am a Kansan born and raised. I did however spend some time outside of Kansas. I spent 8 years in the Marine Corps traveling from places like Camp Pendleton, Camp Lejeune, Quantico, and Taqaddum Iraq. When I left the Marine Corps and came back home I wanted to stay in Kansas and own a business. I learned throughout my time in the Corps and seeing different parts of our country and other countries that most people just want to have a family, and a job that supports that family. I had the unique opportunity of having the chance to take over my father's business which I did.

This bill presented by UnCork Kansas which gets a new name and new number every year isn't being drafted by people in my community. This bill is not being sought after by people throughout our state. This bill is being concocted by entities outside our state for the sole purpose of sending our hard earned money to the head quarters of the companies that want this bill to pass. The people who say that they want a "Free Market" and to end a supposed but nonexistent monopoly on the sale of intoxicating products in our state don't even live in our state. They are paid mercenaries whose only loyalty is to the man behind the curtain.

I believe in a code that served me well when in harm's way serving with some of the most loyal Marines I have ever met: "You don't leave a man behind and you don't sell them out." The bottom line with this or any bill that UnCork Kansas concocts is that if you pass this bill, small, locally-owned, businesses will close. People and families will lose their jobs. Ask UnCork Kansas if you don't pass this bill how many grocery stores or big box stores will close if they don't get the blood money they are asking for.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Aaron Rosenow

