

March 7, 2013

Dear Chairman Kleeb and Committee Members,

I was at the Committee meeting earlier today and heard the comments about Kansas Wine, Spirits and Beer Wholesalers and their position regarding House Bill 2206. I thought I should weigh in as a small, independent Kansas-owned Distributor.

Worldwide Wine and Spirits is located in Lenexa. We are family-owned and operated. We employ 29 people – all but two of whom reside in Kansas.

While Worldwide represents a few product lines which have recognized labels, we mainly carry smaller, high-quality, family-owned wineries, distilleries and microbreweries – including many which are local. We strongly oppose HB 2206 for many of the same reasons you heard today, but also because most of the stores represented by the proponents of this Bill will limit the selection of products available on their shelves to products which are highly advertised and/or have established national contracts with them. In doing so, products from local wineries, distilleries and microbreweries may never be included in their product mix or may be relegated to bottom-shelf status.

These products are likely to lose as much as half of their current placements. Sharkbite Cocktails, an Olathe-based spirits supplier testified to this fact before this Committee last year while opposing similar legislation. The current marketplace is spurring growth in Kansas spirits manufacturing right here in eastern Kansas.

I am attaching a letter from Seth Fox, President of High Plains, Inc., makers of Most Wanted Vodka. Seth and his family live in Atchison. Most Wanted products are made in Atchison. Seth's products are Kansan – made for Kansans.

I invite you to consider Seth's concerns and sincerely hope that you reject HB 2206.

My contact information is below if you have any questions or if I can provide additional information.

Lyle A. Rolofson, Jr.
President
Worldwide Wine and Spirits, Inc.
17501 W. 98th Street, #35-38
Lenexa, Kansas 66219
USA
Ph. (913) 859-9925
FAX: (913) 859-9321
www.worldwidewineandspirits.com