

**House Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development**

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2447

Presented by Rebecca Hertel

Owner of Petland West Wichita

Monday, March 13, 2023

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Rebecca Hertel and my husband Troy and I own Petland West Wichita.

We started our pet store from the ground up. The location was a blank lot. We have spent the last nearly six years growing a thriving business in the Northwest corner of Wichita. When we started there were only a few businesses in the area. Since we have been open, we have seen banks, retail, restaurants, and services open around us. We believe we were a part of the cornerstone of development in that area.

We are a licensed and regulated business. In fact, we are probably the most regulated place you can get a puppy. The service we provide cannot be found anywhere else. We help people find the right pet for them and their families. Without us the citizens of Kansas would be reduced to either shopping online or shopping out of state. Neither of those options provides jobs to Kansans nor provide tax revenues to the state of Kansas.

Limiting or outright banning of licensed and regulated businesses has no benefit to our community. Think of all the businesses we touch. Veterinarians, groomers, other pet stores, they all service pets. Dog walkers or pet sitters, dog parks, fencing companies, again all service pets. Every day there is another business closing in the Wichita or surrounding area. Every day there are more people being pushed out of work. The burden of unemployment falls to all of us. Think of the reduction in tax revenue that funds roads and other infrastructure such as police, firefighters, and ambulances. Kansas should have diverse employment opportunities. We should welcome all licensed and well regulated businesses to make us a stronger state. A robust economy is driven by small businesses of all types. It is what makes communities. It makes Kansas a desirable place to live. What message would you be sending to businesses looking to move or expand to Kansas if you did not pass HB 2447?

We are just a small business. We are very proud of what we do. Our kids grew up here and went to school here. We work, play, live and shop here. We ask for your support of HB 2447.

Sincerely

Rebecca and Troy Hertel

Petland West Wichita