

CITY OF SMITH CENTER

119 West Court

Smith Center, KS 66967-2601

Dear Chairman Kleeb and Honorable Members of the Commerce Committee,

Eliminating government regulations that prevent our rural liquor, grocery, and convenience stores from meeting the needs of their customers should be a top concern for this committee.

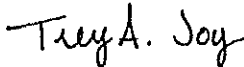
As the mayor of Smith Center, Kansas, (home of nearly 2,000 residents and located an hour and a half north of Hays ... or fifteen minutes from Nebraska), I'm quite familiar with how draconian Kansas liquor laws are stifling our county's economy.

Our neighbor to the north, Nebraska, is a state that allows the sale of single strength beer, wine, and spirits in grocery and convenience stores. Smith County residents frequently make the thirty minute trip to the nearest Nebraska town for their groceries, household items, and alcohol. There they can do more in one location, then find a place to eat lunch and fill up their car with gas. None of those dollars spent benefit Smith Center, Smith County, or Kansas.

While it's not a cure-all, the ability for our grocers and convenience stores to add beer and wine to their store offerings presents an opportunity for them to increase their sales and prevent the loss of revenue and sales tax to the border state. Moreover, the law would also assist the liquor stores in our county that can now only sell alcoholic beverages. With the passage of HB 2206, they could expand their product line to include non-alcoholic items.

I implore you to vote in favor of HB 2206 for the benefit of rural Kansas and Smith Center.

Respectfully,



Trey A. Joy, Mayor
City of Smith Center

City Clerk
785-282-3812

City Treasurer
785-282-3249