



Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent written testimony on HB 2688. I am Will Bergman, Proprietor of Bourgmont Winery, A Kansas Farm Winery located in Johnson County Kansas. My team and I farm over 14 acres of grapes, 250 apple trees (to make cider) and 20 pear trees. I make 11 different estate wines from the Kansas Vineyard and two different hard ciders from apples.

The life blood of Kansas Farm Wineries is bringing new products for sale. At Bourgmont, we sell all of our products exclusively at our tasting room. Every year, I experiment with producing different wines; we now make sparkling wine and dessert wine as a result.

The biggest hurdle for our business is the stigma against Midwestern wine. Across the state, we are now making the best wine in our history. When consumers try our products they are pleased, but we must overcome the negative presuppositions.

Having a Cereal Malt Beverage License will allow us to bring in beer drinkers to our winery. Once they arrive, they may be pleasantly surprised by our products. Most of the Farm Wineries in the state are located in rural locations. Typically, customers arrive in groups or carpool. If we can sell beer those groups will include a more diverse array of patrons and may stay longer.

Having a Cereal Malt Beverage License will also strengthen our relationships with local breweries. I fully expect partnerships to occur and for us to have joint marketing experiences. This bill will strengthen the alcohol industry in the state and provide better experiences for tourists.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent written testimony for HB 2688. If the committee has any questions for me, please contact me at (913)708-8505 or info@bourgmont.com.

Sincerely,

Will Bergman