



10260 W 75<sup>th</sup> ST

Merriam, KS 66204

Phone: 913-381-0071.

Email: sealinellc21@gmail.com

Web: www.vapesruskc.com

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**3/1/2022**

**House/State Affairs**

**HB2706 – Proponent**

**Thank you to all those in observance of the peoples' voices on this meeting at this committee. I, Maher El Gergawi, residing in Johnson County diligently working to be a successful entrepreneur. I own a store in Merriam, Kansas and have been operating since October 2021. Previously owning successful businesses in the state of Kansas and enjoying the freedom to create jobs, tax revenue, and enjoy this state. We have been steadily growing our brand of friendly, safe, and transparent products. Currently we employ 3 people who greatly benefit from our business. Please understand that obstructing this industry is truly a strain on state civilians, business, and the state government as a whole.**

**When we opened the vape storefront, we decided considering the prior years economic fragility to diversify our product selection. Meeting the needs and desire for hemp-based products. It has been an income generator allowing us to remain open and provide taxes to the county and township. Another thing we bring a warm, clean, and safe atmosphere to the community. Thriving to be a leader in safe, and legal alternatives to the drugs and pharmaceuticals literally legal cannabis surrounding this state. We believe that federally tested and standardized products available to free Americans is the pursuit of happiness. We remain confident as many other State's have considered these hold ups and moved forward with revitalized diverse hemp alternatives worldwide.**