

Written Testimony in support of Senate Bill 307
Kansas Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee

February 6, 2018

Chairman Estes and members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee:

I would like to capture a few moments of your time to discuss something near to my heart, as well as to many others who call Western KS home. I live, work, and volunteer in Wallace County. My husband, Adam, and I also raise our children here – and one thing that we do well in Wallace County is COMMUNITY! We take pride in our work, in our volunteering, and give of ourselves when able to do so.

Wallace County is home to a locally owned and operated amusement association, comprised of volunteers of various professions: farmers, electricians, veterans, firemen, Rotary members, pastors, and many others. Our amusement association operates small amusement rides and games 3 evenings a year during our county fair. Similar to most surrounding counties, community volunteers spend many hours in the days prior to fair setting up the rides and testing them, ensuring that they are safe and functional for all attendees to ride. Ticket costs are kept reasonable to allow every family the opportunity for their kids to enjoy the annual event. With the profit margins removed, revenue provides enough return to put into maintenance, re-invest in new rides (eventually) and purchase prizes for games. In our community, specific rides are typically "adopted" by a business, group, or church - thus providing almost everyone in the community a chance to be involved. It is the type of small town atmosphere where the kids connect with their classmates, elderly sit to enjoy the evening while catching up with old friends, and those who have grown up and moved away return home once again to let their children enjoy the same atmosphere they once did themselves.

Now that you have that picturesque image in your head of what a small, home-owned carnival is, I hope you can understand the reason for my concern. I, as well as many others, are concerned that the future - and of what previously implemented legislation regarding amusements will do to our small organizations. The safety of our children (both young and young at heart) is of absolute importance - but so is common sense. You wouldn't play a game without an understanding of the rules. Drive a car without knowing how to operate one. Grade a test without a key. Or write a check with no money to pay for it.

SB 307 bill is a common-sense solution to a problem that could damage many small Kansas county fairs and events both now, and possibly eliminating them for the future - in areas where tourism and economic development boom substantially because of the fair. This bill is a just effort to help guide safety for our small home owned carnivals, while allowing for compliance to be affordable for our organizations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Christine Smith