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Mr Chairman and Members of the House Commerce Committee, Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present my testimony to you today.

Since I was in college, it has been my goal to own my own business. I have worked my entire adult life to gain the knowledge, experience and capital resources to accomplish this goal. My wife and I have invested a majority of our retirement and savings. In addition we have secured \$150,000 in loans to purchase and operate our business. My family's house is attached to this loan as well. If this bill were to pass we as well as many other Kansas small business owners will lose much more than just our businesses, we will lose our livelihoods and our homes.

In February 2011, I took ownership of the store. 2 days later I had a news crew in my store wanting to interview me about the big box liquor bill. Not exactly how I thought owning my own business would start out. Back then they called it a jobs bill. Today they are calling it a consumer bill. In truth this is a money bill. It will mean more money for the large corporations at the expense of Kansas businesses and the state of Kansas.

When I bought the store it was losing money and employed 5 people. Since then I have been able to turn the store around and make it a profitable business that currently employs 10 people. I have worked as many as 90 hours a week and sacrificed time with my family to achieve a successful business. My family and I understood the sacrifice that would go with owning our own business. If this bill would pass everything we have worked for and all the time sacrificed would be for nothing.

Possessing a retail liquor license is a privilege and I take it very seriously. My store has one entrance and is easy to control. My staff is trained to make sure the customers are over 21 years old, to handle individuals that may be impaired and take pride in our good compliance record with the ABC. Because my store only has 1 entrance theft is not a major issue. Through providing good customer service we not only are able to create a positive shopping experience but are also able to monitor any customer that may have the intent of stealing product. This cannot be said for the large grocery stores. Multiple entrances, tall shelving and few employees relative to the size of the store make it more likely liquor will be stolen in a grocery store.

This bill is not just about whose door a bottle of wine goes through. There is much more to it than that. It is about Kansas small business. Not just liquor stores but all the other small businesses that liquor stores help to support. As a small business we make a conscious effort to support other small businesses. There are 749 liquor stores in the state of Kansas, if each of these stores does business with

an average of 10 other local businesses that would equate to 8239 (7490 small businesses and 749 liquor stores) Kansas small businesses that would be negatively affected by this bill. As a small business we use accountants, pest control companies, advertisers, banks, lawyers, landlords/property owners, office supply companies and many more. These are tax dollars the state is not going to receive. These big corporations are not going to use local accountants, they are not going to buy their office supplies from a Kansas business and they are not going to support the kids that started a window washing business to pay for their college tuition.

On Friday February 6th I wrote an \$800 check to an advertiser, a local small business. It made me think. This advertiser works with 2 liquor stores. If this bill were to pass he would have 2 less customers. He would be losing \$1600 per month, \$19,200.00 per year. These are sales he will have a tough time making up. These are also sales that the state will not receive tax dollars on. I think it is fair to say that Dillon's will not be advertising in his small direct mail business.

The term "monopoly has been thrown out often the past couple of years. 749 independent liquor stores operating individually and competing against each other does not constitute a monopoly. On a 3 mile stretch of road around my store there are 7 liquor stores. Gross sales for these stores is conservatively estimated at \$10 million. On that same 3 mile stretch of road there are 2 Dillon's and 2 Wal-Mart's. If this bill were to pass the \$10 million in sales would be split between 2 out of state companies and maybe 1 independent (if they can make it). This brings Kansas closer to an oligarchy – a market controlled by a few corporations.

A lot has been said about "a compromise." How are we as Kansas owned small businesses supposed to support a bill that will negatively affect Kansas small businesses and the state of Kansas? There is no state or regional model that we can research. No state in the past twenty years has taken a private independent retail system and changed it to a private corporate system. We are not a "control state" opening up to private enterprise. Every bill that has been developed by the Uncork group has been made to benefit the big box stores and grocery stores. Let me ask you this, if a bill was proposed that devastated your livelihood and made everything you have worked for over the years disappear, would you be able to come up with a compromise?

In closing, I would like to remind the members of the committee that this is a very personal issue to the small business owners that own and operate Kansas retail liquor stores. We are not big corporations with endless funds. We are hardworking Kansans that have a personal stake in our business. These are small businesses that have entire families relying on the income from these stores. Some of us are parents and we hope our kids take over our businesses someday, some of us are grandparents, some of us are older and do not have the ability to start over, all of us are Kansas residents that respect the industry and take pride in being good stewards of the retail liquor industry. For the grocery stores this is a category, for the Kansas liquor store owners this is our livelihood.

Thank you for taking the time to review my testimony. Please feel free to contact me.

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