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Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development Committee

February 13, 2015

**A Health Impact Assessment
of Changes to the Kansas Liquor Control Act**

House Bill 2200

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To improve the health of all Kansans by supporting effective policymaking, engaging at the state and community levels, and providing non-partisan, actionable and evidence-based information.

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Chairman Hutton and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide neutral testimony on House Bill 2200, which would modify the Kansas Liquor Control Act. My name is Sarah Hartsig and I am an analyst with the Kansas Health Institute, where I work on a variety of initiatives related to community health improvement.

The Kansas Health Institute (KHI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan health policy and research organization based here in Topeka, founded in 1995 with a multiyear grant from the Kansas Health Foundation. KHI does not take positions on legislation, and therefore we are not here to speak either for or against House Bill 2200.

In 2014, KHI partnered with the KU School of Medicine -Wichita, to conduct a health impact assessment to identify the potential positive and negative health effects associated with allowing convenience and grocery stores to hold retail liquor licenses in Kansas. This study was conducted based on the proposals included in House Bill 2556 of the 2014 Legislative session.

A health impact assessment – or HIA – is a new tool that brings health considerations into policy discussions, where health isn't always considered. KHI has also conducted HIAs on topics including casino development in Southeast Kansas, the transit system in Wichita, and changes to corporate farming laws (due out this spring).

In order to assess the potential health effects of allowing grocery and convenience stores to hold retail liquor licenses, the project team followed these steps for the study:

1. Reviewed existing literature.
2. Analyzed state and national data.
3. Gathered stakeholder input from groups such as grocery and convenience stores, liquor stores, public health officials, and prevention centers that promote healthy youth behavior.

The health impact assessment provides findings based on the research, and also recommends evidence-based strategies for consideration by policymakers. The goal is to minimize potential negative health impacts of the policy decision and maximize the potential health benefits.

KHI staff members have reviewed the language proposed in this year's HB 2200, and offer the following information to the committee:

In comparison to the 2014 legislation (HB 2556), HB 2200 would set a cap on the number of licenses which does not expire. As a result, the density of off-premise retail alcohol outlets (number of outlets per 10,000 people) would not increase at the state level. However, changes in density may occur at a local level.

The majority of the health impact assessment report findings were related to increased density of off-premise alcohol outlets due to the cap being lifted after 2024 (as proposed in 2014 HB 2556). The HIA found that an increase in the density of off-premise alcohol outlets may lead to some increase in alcohol consumption for the general population and youth (page 27 of the report). An

increase in consumption could also lead to increases in driving under the influence, crime, and sexually transmitted diseases (pages 33, 39 and 45 of the report).

To mitigate potential health impacts associated with increased consumption, the HIA report recommended implementation of strategies for controlling density, such as maintaining the half-mile requirement for new liquor licenses beyond 2024. HB 2200 addresses this issue by setting a permanent cap on the number of licenses. With the current bill language, the HIA findings and recommendations related to changes in density may not fully apply.

However, several HIA findings were related to the availability of alcohol in grocery and convenience stores, which could impact youth consumption and theft of alcohol products. An increase in alcohol consumption among youth could result in an increase in alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents and deaths.

Additionally, an increase in alcohol availability in grocery stores may increase the risk of theft of alcohol products, as reported in other states that enacted similar legislation (pages 39 and 49 of the report). It is important to note that this increase would depend on the number of liquor stores that transfer their licenses to grocery stores, and the number of convenience stores that apply and receive new licenses according to the provisions of HB 2200. The level of change in youth consumption would also depend on stores' surveillance and law enforcement practices.

To mitigate potential negative health impacts associated with an increase in youth consumption and theft, the HIA included several recommendations, including:

- Maintaining regular compliance checks on alcohol retailers.
- Increasing store surveillance.
- Refraining from displaying alcohol products at the entrance of the store or nearby products likely to be purchased by youth (e.g., sodas, energy drinks, chips).
- Strengthen enforcement of laws prohibiting sales to minors.
- Including questions in the Communities That Care Survey (CTC) to determine where Kansas youth obtain alcohol products (grocery, convenience and/or liquor stores) and the type of alcohol consumed.
- Expanding the use of the Community Alcoholism and Intoxication Programs Fund (KSA 41-1126.7) to include efforts aimed at preventing underage drinking.

For a full list of recommendations, see pages 63-67 of the report.

These recommendations are based on the best evidence available and were developed with input from stakeholders who provided their perspectives to the HIA project.

This report is neither an endorsement of nor a recommendation against the proposed legislation. The Kansas Health Institute remains neutral on any decisions pertaining to this bill. We hope that you will find the information in the health impact assessment report helpful to your decision-making process. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me at (785) 233-5443 or shartsig@khi.org.

Enclosures:

1. Executive Summary: Potential Health Effects of Expanding Liquor Licenses to Grocery and Convenience Stores, *Kansas health Impact Assessment Project, 2014*