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Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development Committee

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

House Bill 2282

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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 Mason and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide neutral written testimony on House Bill 2282, which would modify the Kansas Liquor Control Act. My name is Tatiana Lin and I am a senior analyst and team leader 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 this written testimony is neither for nor against House Bill 2282.

In 2013, 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 sell alcoholic liquor. This study was conducted based on the proposals included in House Bill 2556 of the 2014 Legislative session. In general, House Bill 2282 includes many similar provisions. One of the main differences is that the current bill (House Bill 2282) does not allow convenience and grocery stores to hold liquor retailer licenses. It allows convenience and grocery stores to hold beer and wine retailer licenses.

A health impact assessment – or HIA – is a tool that brings health considerations into policy discussions in which health isn't always considered. Health impact assessments provide findings based on research, and also recommend 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.

In order to assess the potential health effects of allowing grocery and convenience stores to sell alcoholic liquor, the project team reviewed existing literature, analyzed state and national data, and 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 HIA found that allowing grocery and convenience stores to sell alcoholic liquor¹ may result in an increase in the number of off-premise² alcohol outlets in Kansas. The majority of the HIA findings were related to this possible increased density of off-premise alcohol outlets as well as the possible impacts on youth.

The HIA found that an increase in the density of off-premise alcohol outlets may increase alcohol consumption. However, the level of changes in consumption will largely depend on the magnitude of an increase in the density of off-premise alcohol outlets. The evidence suggests that consumption may increase slightly for the general population and may increase more for youth. The projected changes in consumption for youth may result in increase in alcohol-related

¹ The Health Impact Assessment did not examine impacts based on the type of alcoholic liquor sold at grocery and convenience stores. Given that House Bill 2282 would allow grocery and convenience stores sell only certain types of alcoholic liquor, the magnitude of the impacts might be somewhat different.

² Off premise alcohol license (outlet) – Allows the licensee to sell and offer for sale at retail in the original package alcoholic liquor for use or consumption off of and away from the premises and other sales as authorized by K.S.A. 41-308.

traffic accidents and sexually transmitted diseases. Furthermore, a slight increase in consumption for the general population is projected to result in no change - to a small increase, in driving under the influence arrests and alcohol-related traffic accidents. Additionally, an increase in density of off-premise alcohol outlets and consumption may lead to some increase in violent crimes (e.g., domestic violence, child abuse) and sexually transmitted diseases. To mitigate potential health impacts associated with increased consumption, the HIA report recommended the implementation of strategies for controlling density.

The availability of alcohol in grocery and convenience stores could also impact youth consumption and theft of alcohol products. Increases in product theft were reported in other states that enacted similar legislation. The level of change in youth consumption would depend on stores' surveillance and law enforcement practices.

It is important to note that any of these potential changes would depend on the number of liquor stores that remain in business, and the number of grocery and convenience stores that apply and receive new licenses according to the provisions of HB 2282.

To mitigate potential negative health impacts associated with an increase in youth consumption and product 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 near products likely to be purchased by youth (e.g., sodas, energy drinks, chips);
- Strengthening 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; and
- Expanding the use of the Community Alcoholism and Intoxication Programs Fund (K.S.A. 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 helpful to your decision-making process. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me at (785) 233-5443 or tlin@khi.org.

Enclosures: Attachment 1. Executive Summary and Recommendations: Potential Health Effects of Expanding Liquor Licenses to Grocery and Convenience Stores