

Testimony of Rackets Tap House, Inc., to the
Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs
Proponent for SB 511 03/01/2024

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony supporting Senate Bill 511 regarding selling beer and hard cider by microbreweries to entities, including retailers, drinking establishments, and public venues. As a new business in downtown Abilene, we are excited about this bill and how adopting this legislation will give small businesses another tool for success.

We started Rackets Tap House to make Abilene a hub for Kansas beer. Due to the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum, we attract over 100,000 visitors annually, many of whom are from out of state. By featuring beers from across our state, we want to spark an interest in our visitors to stay in Kansas a little longer to explore these breweries. Unfortunately, with the current law, we cannot access beer from breweries that do not have distribution agreements. If passed, this bill would provide greater access to Kansas beer, broadening tourists' exposure to what our great state has to offer.

More importantly, we want to highlight how Kansas microbreweries are among the few businesses breathing life into historic downtowns across the state. Nearly all these breweries have some presence downtown, if not their headquarters. With the expansion of online retail reducing the viability of downtown retail, microbreweries are a rare business viable to invest in restoring historic downtown spaces. By passing this legislation, you will give microbreweries greater market access, increasing their chances of success, which they have already shown leads to more vibrant downtowns.

We appreciate your consideration and thank you for your service in the Kansas Legislature.

Respectfully,

Trevor D. Witt

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President, Rackets Tap House, Inc.