



SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4
OPPONENT TESTIMONY SB79

The Greater Topeka Chamber represents the voice of over 1,200 business members, and today we write to urge you to oppose SB79. While we understand the thought behind this measure, and other components of SNAP it hopes to address, we feel strongly that it puts select industries and our state at a competitive disadvantage and increases additional burden in both the private and public sector.

From an economic perspective, large manufacturers who offer primary company employment in our region, small business owners who rely on a grab and go model and retailers would be adversely affected. We would be the only in our region to have this restriction, recipients would still be able to use this in other states. If passed, and a waiver federally granted, this would place Kansas on an island alone, sending a powerful message that is unfavorable to both business and residents.

Similar legislation in other states has failed – and strong concerns that generally arise is the complexity of re-categorizing products, the tracking of nutritional content by product to create a SNAP approved list updated in real time, then communicated to small business, results in an additional administrative burden on the agency to maintain, and small businesses to implement.

Food stamps is a federal program, outside of the negative commentary that would arise and discourage investment in our communities, waivers to the program continue to be rejected by the USDA. Creating work for our agency departments year after year to attempt to get this approved while maintaining the qualifying list of products. Past data shows over 650,000 food and beverage products on the market with 20,000 introduced annually to be continually reviewed, if a bill like this were to go into effect. There may be an effort at the federal level to modify the SNAP program, and since this is a federal program would make the most sense to discuss at that level.

We hope you will stand with us and not move SB79 forward as is.

Respectfully submitted by:
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President
Greater Topeka Chamber