



September 17, 2020

Special Committee on Economic Recovery
Kansas Capitol
Video Testimony

Chairman Lynn and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for convening a special committee regarding the effects of the pandemic crisis on Kansas businesses.

My name is Michelle Meyer from Holy-Field Vineyard and Winery in Basehor, Kansas, southeast Leavenworth County.

Holy-Field Vineyard and Winery was established in 1994. Our vineyard was started in 1986; just one year after the Kansas Farm Winery law was established in 1985. We are Bonded Kansas Winery #5. We weren't the first Kansas winery, but we are the oldest Kansas winery. As such, we have established ourselves as a heritage brand. I believe that our longevity has helped us through this pandemic crisis. It would be great to see more businesses benefit from help/aid so they can stay open and achieve decades in business, or for other heritage businesses to remain viable in their communities.

Throughout this crisis, our main goal has been to keep our business a safe place and for guests to feel safe at our business. Wineries wear a lot of hats. We are farmers. We are winemakers. We are a hospitality venue. Wineries are places where people visit and taste and purchase wine. Guests also gather for events. Hospitality is hard during a pandemic. For the safety of our guests and our family, we have canceled approximately 25 scheduled events. And there have been additional expenses to reinvent the way to continue business during a pandemic. Some of these expenses include sanitizing stations and loads of sanitizers for guests. We have also invested in Zoom so we can host online events and remain top of mind with our customers. As much as possible we have moved things outside and purchased tents and even a refrigerator to keep wine cold outside.

During the shutdown, we did not allow customers inside the winery. We quickly shifted to curbside sales. Many inquiries were made regarding our delivery services. Sadly, we had to inform our patrons that we are not allowed to deliver wine to their homes. There were many patrons who did not even feel comfortable leaving their homes. We were unable to assist them and this would have been a way for us to extend hospitality. Sadly, those customers chose out of state wines that could be delivered to their doorsteps. It would be extremely helpful if we could legally deliver our wine to our customers.

Inside, we were not idle. We invested in more counter space and reset our tasting room to offer more space for winetasting (at the appropriate later time) and thus allow for more social distancing. Although we were able to accept curbside orders, guests could not visit our gift shop area for wine accessories and gifts. This is an integral part of our business.

Wineries are an agritourism destination. As such, the pandemic has put any indoor (winetasting) activities at a disadvantage. As the weather cools and distancing remains important; it appears that guests' ability to comfortably sit outside may be fewer and fewer. And indoor activities in our banquet hall will remain dormant.

It would be helpful to have a set of guidelines for all businesses and communities to follow. Then, our already in place best practices, can be streamlined to adhere as closely as possible to the guidelines. Lockdowns on businesses is unfair and counterproductive. It unfairly punishes those who are using safe practices and causes unsafe practices at private and unregulated locations.

The hospitality industry, which includes wineries, has clearly been impacted by the pandemic. It is my hope that these businesses are resilient in their efforts to remain open and an integral part of our local communities.

Michelle Meyer

Holy-Field Vineyard & Winery

18807 158th St.

Basehor, KS 66007

913-724-9463

holyfieldwinery@sbcglobal.net

www.holyfieldwinery.com

Become a Facebook Fan at www.facebook.com/holyfieldwinery

Become a Facebook Fan of the Holy-Field Wine Dogs at www.facebook.com/holyfieldwinedogs

Follow me on Twitter at www.twitter.com/holyfieldwinery (@holyfieldwinery)

[Instagram.com/holyfieldwinery](https://www.instagram.com/holyfieldwinery) (@holyfieldwinery)

[Instagram.com/kansaswinegirl](https://www.instagram.com/kansaswinegirl) (@kansaswinegirl)