



Joe Warren, Director of Administrative Services

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To: House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

From: Joe Warren, Director of Administrative Services, City of Atchison

Date: February 18, 2020

Re: HB 2596, Alcohol Manufacturer/Drinking Licensure

Honorable Chairman Barker and fellow Committee Members,

The City of Atchison supports HB 2596. This bill is a common sense solution that addresses the current inequities facing border communities seeking to compete for tourism and recreational revenues with contemporaries in bordering states.

Atchison sits on the Kansas-Missouri border, about 20 miles from Weston, Mo., which has created a successful tourism and recreational niche, partially due to the existence of the McCormick Distillery. Thanks to supportive state statutes in Missouri, McCormick has a tasting room and retail shop on premises and another one in the heart of downtown Weston that helps drive alcohol tourism and recreational spending from the surrounding region.

Under current state statutes, MGP Ingredients, a large distillery in Atchison, is unable to have a similar arrangement. Since MGP has started crafting its own brands, there is significant demand for their products throughout the region and their quality offerings are generating tremendous buzz throughout the industry. Atchison has found some success as a tourist destination thanks to Amelia Earhart and the Most Haunted Town in Kansas promotions. It would not be a stretch to believe that if MGP were able to host a tasting room and destination restaurant in Atchison that the community could not only piggyback on the success just 20 miles down the road, but that MGP's offerings would stand on their own as tourism and recreational revenue generators.

Essentially, the biggest barrier between Atchison, Kansas and Weston, Missouri on this issue is differing state statutes.

This bill would rectify that situation in a way that would be beneficial for MGP Ingredients and the residents of Atchison.

We ask that you support this bill and thank you for supporting local taxpayers.