

LB 875
General Affairs Committee
Online Comments of Chris Wagner
Project Extra Mile
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The Project Extra Mile Coalition fully supports the draft legislation; however, knowing that the introducer has filed AM2205 that will allow businesses to sell at less than cost 6 months after purchase, the coalition has serious concerns about the limiting impact that the amendment will have. We also have concerns about how this law will be enforced and by whom. The Nebraska State Patrol only has 6 investigators (one per troop area) that spend at least 51% of their time enforcing liquor laws and regulations. Those investigators are facing either vast troop areas, a glut of alcohol outlets, or a combination of both.

Nebraska ranks as the seventh-worst state for adult binge drinking (5+ drinks for males and 4+ drinks for females) with 19.3% of the adult population reporting this behavior (CDC BRFSS, 2022). Our state also experiences an estimated 720 alcohol-attributable deaths per year (CDC ARDI, 2022), 22 of which are underage youth. As drafted, LB 875 would show our state's commitment to public health and safety by taking a huge step towards reducing these preventable deaths, improve our state's health, and help slash taxpayers' share of the state's \$1.16 billion in economic costs (Sacks et al., 2015). However, if AM2205 is adopted, this bill will fall well short of achieving those goals, and our coalition will be firmly in opposition.

According to the CDC, establishing minimum pricing policies to make small price increases to the cheapest alcohol products could reduce how much alcohol people drink and save lives. Doing so would also help protect small businesses in Nebraska from big box stores that can take losses on alcohol to drive customer traffic and sales on other products in their stores.

The World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Community Preventive Services Task Force and other national and international organizations have found alcohol pricing strategies to be among the leading evidence-based and cost-effective interventions to reduce excessive alcohol consumption and its harms, including alcohol-related crime, hospital admissions, and morbidity (LeClercq et al., 2021; Griffith et al., 2022).

We urge the committee to table the amendment and advance LB 875 in its original draft form.