

February 15, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of HB 961. I am delighted to submit my written support for this proposed bill.

It's an unfortunate commentary on the current state of American life when we need laws to allow children to put up a lemonade stand or engage in any similar childhood rite. Many of us have fond memories of barefoot summer days and sticky, makeshift cardboard signs advertising a refreshing cup of lemonade to our neighbors. If we were lucky, they let us keep the change.

Today, this innocent childhood pastime is increasingly being criminalized, with officials cracking down on youth lemonade stands. A seven-year-old boy from New York made national headlines in 2018 when a health inspector shut down his lemonade stand due to lack of permits (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/19/nyregion/brendans-lemonade-stand-reopens.html>). The action was later overturned, and a state legislator filed a bill to exempt young lemonade stand proprietors from health department permitting requirements.

A similar bill in Utah passed through the legislature, allowing children's lemonade stands to operate without government interference (<https://fee.org/articles/lemonade-stands-legalized-in-utah/>). This bill also helped to loosen occupational licensing requirements and permitting more generally, freeing aspiring entrepreneurs of all ages from certain barriers to entry, such as high government startup fees.

Entrepreneurship and ingenuity are the hallmarks of human progress and prosperity. As adults, we should actively encourage children to develop and display these traits, supporting their imagination and initiative. Young lemonade stand vendors become the inventors, creators, and leaders of tomorrow, building the things that make our lives better.

We should invest in our future innovators by protecting and promoting their childhood entrepreneurial spirit.

Sincerely,

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