

Testimony of Rachele Cronk on HB 2267
Special Committee on Financial Institutions and Insurance
October 11, 2017

Thank you, Chairman Longbine and members of the committee, for the opportunity to express my opposition to HB 2267, a bill that will greatly restrict consumers' access to short-term credit in Kansas.

In my time with Advance America, I have been able to help countless Kansans meet financial obligations that can't wait. Customers choose to visit our centers because they appreciate the respectful service they receive, and the transparent and simple nature of a cash advance. These consumers —our neighbors and friends— are coping with difficult situations, and make the rational decision to take out a cash advance after weighing the costs and characteristics of our service against missing a bill payment or overdrawing their bank account.

HB 2267 will likely take away this option for thousands of people across Kansas. While some claim that this bill will improve short-term lending in our state, it will do just the opposite in restricting access to short-term loans and setting lending requirements that will likely force lenders to close.

In my position, I work every day with the Kansans who will be impacted by this harmful legislation. One person who comes to mind is a recent customer who visited our center needing a short-term loan to pay for medical testing after being denied by a number of other financial institutions. While the test unfortunately revealed that she had cancer, I hate to think what would have happened if we couldn't provide a loan to her. Simply put, our company was there to help her when, through no fault of her own, she needed credit in between paychecks. I am proud to be there when our customers need help the most, and to treat them with the dignity, respect and care they deserve.

I am also grateful to work for a company that cares about its employees and community, as well as its customers. Advance America provides a good job with important health benefits and flexible work schedules to help me support my family. Through my employer benefits, I provide medical insurance for my husband and our grandchildren. Our family cannot afford to lose this coverage if my center is forced to close because of HB 2267. My coworkers share my concerns.

Supporters of HB 2267 claim that the bill will help borrowers. I wonder if they have ever needed to borrow a little money to make ends meet. Please understand the negative impact this regulation would have on consumers' ability to access short-term loans during financial challenges, as well as its effect on employees like myself. I urge the committee to say "no" to any legislation that would restrict Kansans' access to short term credit.