

February 13, 2020

Representative John Barker, Chair
Kansas Capitol Building, Office 285-N
Topeka, KS 66612

Subject: Proposed amendment to House Bill 2385

Dear Representative Barker,

I writing in support of the **Proposed Amendment to House Bill 2385** presented by Allen Hahn, President of the Kansas Square Dance Callers Association.

I have squared danced for over 60 years, a square dance caller for 42 years, served 12 terms as President of the Kansas Square Dance Callers Association and various other offices. I danced in grade school and 4-H. My wife and I met in square dancing and were the Business Chairman's of the 57th National Square Dance Convention held in Wichita, KS in 2008 and Vice Chair of Education Seminars and Panels at the 67th National Square Dance Convention in Kansas City, MO in 2018. In addition, I have served 6 years on the Board of Governors of CALLERLAB, the International Association of Square Dance Callers, and fifteen years on the Executive Committee of CALLERLAB. In 2009 I was selected to become the Executive Director of CALLERLAB and Executive Secretary of the CALLERLAB Foundation which is an organization to preserve and promote square dancing. At the time of my appointment to Executive Director, we moved the CALLERLAB Home Office from Cocoa, Florida to our current office location at 200 SW 30th Street, Ste. 104 in Topeka, Kansas where it resides today. Many of our members visit our office and we even host a school to teach individuals to become square dance callers. I'm attaching a brochure of what CALLERLAB does which may help explain how organized square dancing is.

As noted in other testimonies, square dancing is great exercise for the body and mind. In addition, it provides social networking for people of various backgrounds whether doctors, lawyers, farmers, teachers, laborers, housewives....they all come together with a common interest of wholesome fun and entertainment. Henry Ford, being a visionary, felt square dancing would help his executives build a better work environment.

In addition to four square dance clubs I call for regularly, I routinely perform square dance parties for schools, churches and other social groups throughout Kansas. These groups enjoy the traditional western atmosphere of square dancing and the fact that we use a variety of traditional dance music along with modern music. Many of these parties include family members of all ages, neighbors and friends and most are repeated annually. The activity helps people forget their troubles and enjoy an evening of networking with those who attend.

Square dancing is a non-alcohol activity that the entire family can enjoy together. I strongly encourage you to adopt the amendment as presented by Mr. Hahn to make square dancing the Kansas Folk Dance.

Sincerely,

Dana Schirmer

785-554-7221