



Oregon Retailers of Cannabis Association

www.oregoncannabisretailers.com

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Chair Bynum, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

Thank you all for allowing us to speak this afternoon. For the record, my name is Casey Houlihan and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Retailers of Cannabis Association (ORCA), the largest trade association of cannabis businesses in Oregon, representing over 500 different member businesses – primarily retailers, but we have members throughout the supply chain of all license types and all sizes, from big businesses to mom and pop stores – located in every corner of the state.

We are here today to express our strong support for HB 3112.

ORCA is very proud to have had the opportunity to participate - for the better part of the last year - in this coalition of stakeholders working to develop this legislation and pass it into law. Further, we are extraordinarily proud of our members for making this bill our top legislative priority for this session, even though a great many of them would not directly benefit from any of its provisions.

Oregon voters chose overwhelmingly, through both Measure 91 in 2014 and Measure 110 in 2020, to end the unjust drug criminalization policies that disproportionately hurt communities of color and low-income people across the state. However, since then, very little has been done to address the systemic, legal, and monetary inequities propagated by decades of having these policies in place.

HB 3112 seeks to do just that – focusing cannabis tax revenue on a variety of programs that seek to increase equity in the communities that were most directly harmed by these unjust policies, and to create new opportunities for wealth creation, education, job creation, and entrepreneurship.

We believe strongly it is the social responsibility of the people of the state of Oregon – not just the cannabis industry, but the entire state – to make right the wrongs committed in decades past. This bill is a comprehensive, considered, and inclusive solution that would direct the resources necessary to begin the process of helping people overcome past cannabis convictions and their consequences, which impact people's ability to obtain jobs, housing, and generational wealth.

The revenue from cannabis taxes are now on track to exceed the state's original estimates – around which the agencies who receive that funding designed their budgets – by a factor of five. Last year alone, the industry experienced a 39% growth in sales. The accompanying growth in tax revenue from 2020 is more than sufficient to account for the resources this bill requires in order to be successful, and the remaining funds directed to drug treatment programs (as per Measure 110) are still nearly double what the advocates of that measure stated would be required for those programs to be successful. For these reasons, we urge you to support the passage of House Bill 3112.

Thank you for your consideration and I am happy to answer any questions you have at this time.
Respectfully,

Casey Houlihan
Executive Director, Oregon Retailers of Cannabis Association.