



April 22, 2021

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97302

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward and Rayfield,

On behalf of the Oregon Wine Council, which represents over fifty percent of Oregon wine grapes grown, produced and sold, we urge you to support a one-time allocation of \$2.68 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars to fund a smoke analysis lab at Oregon State University.

This lab, and its expanded research capabilities, would help ensure the wine industry is better prepared for future wildfire events, which have become all too common throughout the state over the last decade.

When the state experienced unprecedented wildfires last fall, Oregon's wine industry, which was in the middle of harvest, was deeply impacted. Wine grape growers scrambled to find labs with the capacity and expertise to test wine grapes for smoke exposure. While some growers turned to labs in California or as far as Australia, the vast majority were unable to access testing. At the time, the OWC strongly urged the Oregon Wine Board (OWB) to provide funding for additional testing capacity at Oregon State University, which allowed the existing lab to test a handful of regional grape samples.

But the inability to test grapes from more specific areas and vineyards left many small, family-owned wineries with the impossible decision of either opting not to use their grapes to make wine that year or investing the time and money in harvesting their grapes and producing wine, without having any way of knowing if the wine that was produced would be drinkable.

Not only would the expanded access to smoke exposure testing right here at Oregon State University be a game changer for Oregon's prized wine industry, but it would further establish OSU as a leader in the viticulture industry and in viticulture research and education.

We urge you to support this \$2.68 million funding request to better prepare our wine growers and wine producers for future wildfire events. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Kindly,

Elin Miller, Co-Chair
Umpqua Vineyards LLC

Ken Johnston, Co-Chair
Winemakers LLC