

Good afternoon chair and members of the committee, my name is michael benson and I have been the liquor agent in West linn Oregon for over 16 years. I'm here to show my support for HB 5018 this idea was a cooperative effort between liquor agents and the OLCC, it has been well received and has gained the most support of all other plans presented over the decades, compensation for liquor agents have not kept pace with all of the expenses of running a brick and mortar store, costs such as credit card fees, insurance, rent, wages, shoplifting, employee benefits, and the pandemic has skyrocketed over the last few years. When costs increase businesses simply increase their prices, liquor agents are not allowed to do this. The legislative process is the only way we get a pay raise, in the early years we could increase our sales to help offset the increased costs with new stores being added each year to the state, this is no longer possible I feel this bill HB 5018 updates or compensation for many years ahead and agents will finally have some financial security, in the passing of this bill HB 5018, it would be a valuable investment for the state of Oregon and will help liquor agents become positive stewards of Oregon's unique distilled spirits program. Please vote yes on HB 5018. Thank you for your consideration on this important matter. Sincerely michael benson West Linn Liquor store agency number 1212