

I support HB 3177. It is time to let restaurants, bars, and all eating establishments be allowed to be permanently open. When compared to other businesses, especially those deemed essential, I have seen no proof that the hospitality industry has created an environment that has significantly increased the the number of positive tests for the COVID-19. The State has indicated that it is not targeting restaurants and bars, but when the numbers go up, they are the first line of businesses to be restricted, Sure we need to be careful, but at the same time, we need to trust people to do what is necessary to protect themselves as well as others.

I have watched my customers show respect for others by going either moving to a corner of my lobby to provide safe space for other customers or by going outside to wait until their order is ready for them to come in and pick up. Others who are really concerned about coming in contact with others come through my drive-thru lane which at times has a line that extends into and down the street. Overall the public is courteous and kind and respectful of each other

Since early April 2020, I have had to travel some 250 miles round trip to get merchandise my vendors used to be able to supply me. I do this every few weeks because of restrictions and the forced closure of restaurants and bars has made it virtually impossible for vendors and suppliers to provide my business as well as other restaurants with merchandise they regularly use. Prices of merchandise has been sky high at times, if it was available. In spite of the difficulty in maintaining a menu, we have managed to stay open as my restaurant has no sit down eating area and our customers have been good and at times patient with us as we work through this difficult time.

Good business owners will do what they need to do to maintain a high standard of conduct and practices in order to stay open, pandemic or not. We need to be trusted by the State to do just that maintain good practices. We have experience in doing this because of the required health inspections we have at least twice a year, something other businesses that have not had to close are not subject to.

Instead of stimulus money that is provided out of thin air, we need to be allowed to open up, allow the thousands of hospitality industry workers to go back to work so they can provide for their families as well as support and help their employers be profitable enough to remain open and operating and adding to the local economy of which they are a part. There have been enough permanent closures across Oregon, even in my community, and if the restrictions and closures of restaurants and bars continue, there will be more permanent closures, workers out of work and fewer businesses to provide jobs for people who want to work and provide for themselves.

Support HB 3177 and let Oregon go back to work. This is the best way to resolve many economic issues as well as to let both businesses and individuals maintain a sense of pride, and self respect as we work together to get through this pandemic in a realistic fashion that is good for for all of Oregon and shows that the State is supportive of recovery efforts and in getting back to normal as much as possible. Trusting each other goes a long way in helping to get Oregon up and going again. Help Oregon become a great example of what works and how to do things in a positive way rather than trying to accomplish this by enforcing made up rules, regulations and restrictions.