

Submitter: Kelly Woodcock

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: HB2976

To Whom it May Concern.

I'm writing on behalf of Westward Whiskey (House Spirits Distillery LLC). We started back in 2004 and are located in Portland, OR. We employ about 78 people and produce about 20,000 9L cases. Among other things we actively participate in the philanthropic community by donating time and product to support benefit drives, release annual charity bottlings to fund non-profits and make the 5th best whiskey in the world according to Whiskey Advocate Magazine.

At Westward we not only employ people here in the state but we source our grain from local farmers, source used barrels from wineries, create partnership products with Oregon wine and beer companies and are proud to call Oregon our home. We love operating in this state because the climate is ideal for making our products and the people that live here have the creativity that Oregon fosters as well as a rich history of beer making that we rely on as distillers.

As one of the larger craft distilleries here in Oregon, we've found success distributing our product not only in Oregon but in about 23 states and internationally. We've had success in Australia, the EU and Asia but are always looking to grow that distribution. We are excited about the idea of taking the current \$0.50 bottle surcharge and redirecting those funds to create an Oregon Spirit board. As I travel around the world talking about Westward, I am often met with people that know the great Oregon wine tradition but that's where the knowledge stops. We are eager to follow in the wine industry's footsteps because we know Oregon creates world class products and in an ever crowded spirits market, being able to utilize the clout that Oregon and Oregon wine has to more effectively tell the story of why someone should carry Oregon spirits is an obvious win not only for our business but for the state as a whole (in employment, agriculture and manufacturing jobs).

We think of ourselves as being where the wine industry was 20 years ago. With the help of a spirits board, I get excited thinking what we can bring to the state in the next two decades.

Thank you for your consideration!

Cheers,

Kelly