

*Stone Barn Brandyworks*

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Dear Oregon House Economic Development and Small Business Committee,

We write to you as distillery owners in Portland, in support of the creation of an Oregon Spirits Board, HB2976.

As a husband/wife team, we founded Stone Barn Brandyworks in 2009, in the industrial area of inner southeast Portland. Over the years, we have grown from a facility that produced a few hundred bottles in 2010 to our 2022 production of 12,000 bottles.

We have progressed from a two person operation, to engaging a part time apprentice, to hiring one part time employee, to our current staffing of one full time employee and two part time employees. The tasting room tax reduction enabled us to increase our team and enabled us to provide competitive wages, full health coverage and sick leave through Stone Barn for all employees working 25 hours or more.

Stone Barn produces small batch spirits using local ingredients. Over the years, we have forged relationships with growers, farmers, millers from the Dalles to the southern Oregon coast. A large part of our business is contract distilling for local wineries & cideries, and we also distill brandy from local wineries for our own spirits, so we have many sustained relationships in this quadrant as well.

We have sourced apples, pears, rhubarb, cherries, apricots, plums, cranberries, quince, wheat, corn, haskap berries, malts, sugar syrup, and wine from local businesses: EZ Orchards in Salem, Western Union Gardens in Hillsboro, Mecca Malts in Madras, Camas Mills in Eugene, Orchards of Oregon in Wilsonville, Johnson's Orchards in the Dalles, Seaview Farms in Bandon, Elk Cove Vineyard in Gaston, Fraga Farms in Gaston, J.Scott Cellars in Eugene, Hiyu Wine Farm in Hood River, Joe's Syrups in Forest Grove, and also sourced retooled barrels from Rewine in Salem. (This is not an exhaustive list!). All told, we source fruit & grain from producers in 17 Oregon counties, at last count.

During the first months of Covid in 2020, we got special licensing from the FDA and produced hand sanitizer which we donated to community organizations, customers, and farmers market vendors. Also in 2020 we distilled beer that would have been discarded from a local brewery and donated monies from the "Bierschnapps" sales to the Humane Society and "Don't Shoot Portland".

We have a regular presence in both city-wide and coastal farmers markets, as well as a tasting room at our Portland facility, and in these direct-to-consumer relationships we are careful to adhere to all OLCC rules and regulations and do not serve minors or visibly intoxicated persons.

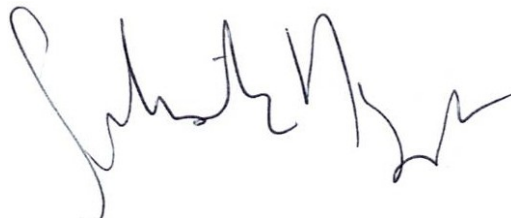
We have a Washington state distributor and a small presence in Germany and Japan. We have traveled to Japan through the sponsorship of WUSATA (Western United States Agricultural Trade Association) and through this connection and one with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, we participated in FoodEx, an international sales event held in Tokyo.

We moved to Oregon in 1980, have raised two children in Portland, think of Portland as home, and are proud to establish our business here, where there is a love for independent businesses, quality spirits and delicious cocktails. We believe the distillery business can as widespread and visible as the beer and wine industries, while producing income for the state and increase its already positive impact on tourism.

An Oregon Spirits Board would cement the already demonstrated draw of Oregon as a tourist destination for tasting and learning about craft spirits. It would give the hundreds of distilleries in Oregon a solid brand and identity. It would give all of us a green light to develop and/or expand our operations! It would give the state another visible and highly desirable credential.

We urge your endorsement of HB2976.

Appreciating your recognition of Oregon distilleries,



Erika and Sebastian Degens

*Owners, Stone Barn Brandyworks*