



OREGON
FARM
BUREAU

Locally Grown
and
GROWING STRONG

March 2, 2023

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Morgan and Nguyen,

We appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House Bill 2976.

The distilled spirits industry in Oregon currently supports approximately 19,000 jobs, from agriculture production to value-added manufacturing and transportation, to tasting rooms and hospitality. It is estimated the distilled spirits industry in Oregon has an annual economic impact of around \$2 billion for the state.

Oregon Farm Bureau is Oregon's largest grassroots agriculture association, representing more than 6,000 farming and ranching families across the state. Our mission is to promote educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement for our members and the farming, ranching, and natural resources industry in its entirety. We support opportunities that allow Oregon's family farmers and ranchers to retain their autonomy to cultivate the crops or livestock that make the most economic sense for their operations

We continue to be in strong support of creative approaches to vertically integrate and remain viable. Additionally, we expect the growth and popularity of Oregon distilled spirits will create increased demand for Oregon agricultural products in general.

Now is the time to seize on the opportunity to promote the industry on behalf of many business sectors in our state. In recent years, Maryland, Virginia, and Michigan have invested in programs and agencies to support their growing craft distilled spirits industries.

The Oregon Spirits Board would be an independent state agency overseen by a nine-member board appointed by the Governor. While The Oregon Spirits Board would be funded by making permanent the current 50-cent "temporary" per bottle surcharge collected on sales of Oregon distilled spirits, this surcharge was put in place in 2009 and is not a new charge.

The creation of the Oregon Spirits Board allows even more of our state's agricultural offerings to be highlighted for all to enjoy.

Oregon Farm Bureau asks you to support HB 2976