

Testimony SUPPORTING HB 3308  
Submitted by Oregon Recovers  
March 21, 2023  
House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chair Nguyen, Vice-Chair Morgan, and Members of the House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business:

My name is Tony Morse, and it's my honor and privilege to serve as the Policy and Advocacy Director of Oregon Recovers. We are a movement of people in recovery from addiction with the mission to transform Oregon's fractured and incomplete addiction recovery system into a recovery-based, continuum of care which recognizes addiction as a chronic disease. I'm also a person in long-term recovery, which for me means I've not had a drink in over 6 years.

**I'm here to urge you to vote for HB 3308. But first we need to talk about Oregon's drinking problem.**

- Alcohol is a toxic, addictive carcinogen that kills more Oregon residents than all types of drug overdoses combined.
- 12.34% of Oregonians age 12 and older have an alcohol use disorder—the **fifth highest** rate in the country. That means 453,609 Oregon residents age 12 and up are addicted to alcohol. That's about 7,560 people per Oregon House District, and roughly 15,120 people per Oregon Senate District.
- The World Health Organization says no level of alcohol consumption is safe for our health, and has linked drinking to female breast cancer. That should be of grave concern to policymakers, as OHA determined that the percentage of adult women in Oregon who binge drink increased by over 77% between 2001 and 2021.
- Alcohol causes health equity issues. For example, rates of alcohol-related esophageal cancer and pancreatic disease have been shown to be higher for Black men than white men. Additionally, Hispanic men have been shown to have the highest rate of liver cirrhosis mortality.

**Meanwhile, lack of access to treatment is killing Oregonians**

- Oregon ranks 50th--dead last--in access to treatment.
- Our ability to provide youth treatment has shrunk. According to the Lund Report, Oregon had 144 treatment beds for adolescents struggling with addiction in 2017. In 2020, there were only 100. And last April, there were only 13 beds.

**All of these facts should give us pause, as the instant bill speaks to a business model that makes alcohol more accessible to the public at large.**

- Making alcohol easier to get makes it easier for alcohol-related problems to take hold.

**Oregon Recovers opposes alcohol home delivery on public health grounds.**

- But, if home delivery is to be permissible, then it must be regulated in a way to maximize the protection of Oregon residents and young people.
- To that end, we depend on the OLCC to safeguard public health and safety interests. This bill will vest them with the tools they need to do exactly that.
- Express authority to conduct minor decoy operations, and the power to levy fines against unscrupulous companies that prioritize maximizing sales of a toxic, addictive carcinogen at the expense of public health and safety are paramount.
- We need rules that will keep booze away from kids, and drinks out of the hands of visibly intoxicated people. And we need a regulatory framework that will keep the influence of big alcohol in check.
- Please give OLCC the power they need to do their job. And please reject other bills that would create a more lenient framework for those in the business of selling alcohol.
- Alcohol kills 6 Oregonians every day. Addiction is lethal, and public health is a priority.

**Please vote in favor of HB 3308. Thank you.**