

Testimony OPPOSING SB 616

Submitted by Oregon Recovers

April 19, 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 I serve as the Policy and Advocacy Director for Oregon Recovers. We are a movement of people in recovery from addiction focused on implementing a comprehensive policy agenda that will move Oregon from last to first in access to safe, effective, and immediate addiction treatment and recovery support services. I'm also a person in long-term recovery, which for me means I've not had a drink in over 6 years.

I urge you to vote against SB 616.

This bill prioritizes the sale of alcohol over public health and safety.

- State law already allows up to 2 cases of beer and cider per month to be shipped directly to Oregon homes, but SB 616 will increase the limit to 5 cases per month. More than doubling the allowable size of monthly beer and cider shipments will harm public health, and will worsen Oregon's lethal and costly addiction crisis.
- SB 616 will make alcohol more accessible in Oregon homes, and increasing access to alcohol impacts how often and how much people drink. Easy access to alcohol encourages binge drinking and enables underage drinking.

Oregon has an alcohol crisis that affects hundreds of thousands of people:

- 12.34% of Oregonians age 12 and older have an alcohol use disorder. 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.

Oregon's alcohol crisis is hurting the state's economy:

- According to the CDC, excessive drinking costs Oregon \$2.08 per drink. Comparatively, Oregon taxes a 12 oz beer at a rate of only 7/10 of a penny.
- Excessive alcohol use cost Oregon \$4.8 billion in 2019, including \$2.19 billion in lost labor productivity. Loss of productivity drives up the cost of goods and services in Oregon. It also stifles the economic growth and opportunity that CHIPS funding and SB 4 are intended to encourage.

Alcohol Addiction is lethal.

- Alcohol kills 6 Oregonians every day.
- Excessive alcohol use is Oregon's third-leading preventable cause of death and disease.

Treating alcohol as strictly an economic issue, and not as a health issue results in deadly consequences.

- Beer and cider makers shouldn't be permitted to treat a deadly public health crisis like it's an economic opportunity, especially in light of the staggering economic burden the alcohol crisis imposes on our state.

It's time to change Oregon's relationship with alcohol. Please vote NO on this costly and unnecessary bill. 2 cases is plenty.

Thank you.