



**Oregon
Winegrowers**
ASSOCIATION EST 1981

HB 3610 testimony
House Rules Committee
1 pm on April 20, 2023
Jana McKamey, Executive Director
Oregon Winegrowers Association

RE: Written copy of live testimony on HB 3610

Chair Fahey, Vice Chair Breese Iverson, and members of the committee.

For the record, I'm Jana McKamey, Executive Director of the Oregon Winegrowers Association. OWA is a statewide organization representing hundreds of Oregon wineries and grape growers from all corners of our state. Our winery members represent two-thirds of all wine produced in Oregon and include some of our smallest and largest producers in the state. For more than 40 years, OWA has been the leading advocacy voice for Oregon wineries and growers, benefiting all members in the state across every American Viticultural Area.

Thank you for allowing OWA to make a few comments on HB 3610, which seeks to establish a Task Force on Alcohol Pricing and Addiction Services. We want to start by saying we recognize there is much attention and concern about alcohol addiction and the availability of prevention and treatment services in Oregon right now. Our association members are willing participants in conversations about solutions and our members are committed to offering responsible sales, service, and consumption of our products.

Although we are testifying as neutral today, we think it is critical to create more balance within the makeup of the taskforce. As proposed, there are 13 Governor-appointed members in total that will be studying alcohol addiction and malt beverage and wine taxation and pricing issues in Oregon. 10 of those members are direct or indirect beneficiaries of current malt beverage and wine taxes. Three of those members pay the current malt beverage and wine taxes.

For the analysis and conclusions included in the 2024 report to the legislature to be more representative of the diverse perspectives of impacted stakeholders, the composition of this taskforce must be more balanced. Any recommendations on the issues to be studied by this group would be diminished in the absence of more equitable representation on the taskforce. For this reason, we are requesting the taskforce include two members from the wine industry, two members from the malt beverage or cider industries and one from the wholesale malt beverage and wine industry, and that those members be nominated by associations with statewide membership.

We also join others who have suggested that the task force scope be expanded beyond just looking at alcohol addiction, alcohol costs and alcohol prices. Many addiction issues are co-occurring, and Oregon needs to conduct a comprehensive addiction prevention and treatment services needs analysis before any proposal to raise taxes on wine, cider and malt beverages would be justified. Such an analysis would help the state understand the actual need for additional resources for treatment facilities and workforce as well as where resources are currently going and how care is coordinated.

We want to acknowledge that the -2 amendment improves the scope of what the taskforce will be asked to study somewhat. We believe it is particularly important that when the taskforce studies "additional funding options" for addiction treatment, the group start by considering how ALL the current malt beverage and wine tax revenue is being distributed and whether that formula should be revisited before proposing to increase taxes for malt beverage and wine.

Thank you for allowing us to share these thoughts on HB 3610, and we look forward to working with your committee and the bill sponsors.