



Celebrate Oregon Beer

1020 SE 7th Avenue, #14954

Portland, OR 97214

March 31, 2025

Dear Members of the Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response,

I want to thank you for the hard work you do serving the people of Oregon. You probably don't hear it often enough, but we appreciate it. In my capacity as Executive Director of Celebrate Oregon Beer, I am writing to urge you to oppose House Bill 3197, which is before your committee. I'm sure you've heard all the hard statistics on Oregon's brewing industry, the 300 breweries, two dozen hop farms, 50,000 jobs, \$2.8 billion in wages, and \$8.7 billion in economic activity. I'd like to tell you about the cultural importance of brewing in this state, however, which is an underappreciated element of what makes Oregon Oregon.

Our organization's mission is to establish Oregon's reputation as one of the world's premier beer regions. It is like few places on earth, where hops, barley, and yeast are grown, where hops are bred and researched, where beer styles were born, and where beer is a cultural artifact in a state nicknamed "Beervana." Anywhere you go in Oregon, from dive bars to fine restaurants, bowling alleys to movie theaters, you find local beer. More people drink local beer in Oregon than anywhere else in the US, and by a large margin.

People understand that when they visit Germany or the Czech Republic, having a beer means participating in part of the culture that defines those regions. It would be a tragedy to see the industries damaged not just for the jobs and economic activity, but because beer is an essential part of those cultures. That's every bit as true for Oregon. People have made beer and grown hops here since the 1860s, and it is an indelible part of our heritage.

We understand the need to fund our schools, pave our roads, and protect our citizens. But we also need to do so in a way that preserves our cultural heritage. In the aftermath of COVID-19, Oregon breweries are already endangered, with dozens closing in recent years. A tax increase of this magnitude would put many, many more out of business, along with pubs and taprooms across the state. We're asking you to support Oregon beer and reject HB 3197.

Sincerely,

Jeff Alworth
Executive Director
Celebrate Oregon Beer