

Submitter: Beth Poteet

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety  
Response

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

Dear Co-Chairs Prozanski and Kropf, and Members of the Committee,

As a social worker and public health professional, I am writing to support HB 3197. The US Surgeon General published a report earlier this year outlining the evidence of the link between alcohol consumption and increased risk of cancer, including breast cancer<sup>(1)</sup>. Members of my family have both survived and died from breast cancer. Increased cancer risk is only a small part of the many ways alcohol makes things go wrong both for drinkers and the people around them. We could also talk about the costs of liver diseases, traffic crashes, domestic violence, alcohol addiction, the list goes on. I would hazard a guess that each of has been negatively touched by alcohol use in one way or another. Just two weeks ago, a childhood friend of mine died while driving drunk, leaving behind two small children.

Oregon's current micro-taxes on beer and wine benefit the big alcohol corporations of the world, while we have to fix the mess they leave behind: massive medical bills for families, overwhelmed addiction treatment centers across the state, a growing death toll on our roads, and more misery in our streets. Just like for tobacco, alcohol taxes are smart: the heaviest drinkers pay the bulk of the tab while moderate and non-drinkers barely notice.

Setting a sensible point-of-sale tax on beer and wine will help Oregonian be more resilient in these times. Dedicating these taxes to scaling up prevention and care for Oregon Youth is a great investment in our future! Please vote yes on this bill.

Sincerely,  
Beth Poteet, MSW

1. <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/alcohol-cancer/index.html>