

Submitter: Christine Walter  
On Behalf Of: Bauman's Cider  
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety  
Response  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

I am a fifth generation farmer and I started a cider company on my family's farm in rural Marion County in 2015. The cidery now has 24 employees in Oregon in addition to the farm workers who pick and process our apples and the fruit that we use in our ciders. Over 90% of the cider we make is sold in Oregon. As a small business operating in Oregon, I can tell you that I am being taxed almost to death. Nearly every day I hear stories of Oregonians who are having to choose between the quality of life that they moved to Oregon for and the ability to pay for housing, childcare, increasing all around cost of living, and taxes. Oregon is losing the battle, and as a lifelong Oregonian, this breaks my heart.

If we make a decision to add a sales tax on top of an already challenging financial time, the numbers of business failing will accelerate. The more businesses that fail, the more people will lose their jobs and homes. We will have increasing need for public services, like this funding of addiction services for teens, and a decreasing pool of people paying into the fund. The math just doesn't work out.

This is not a question of whether we value crisis intervention and treatment for our kids, this is about whether this is the correct means to fund it. The answer is no. This is a short-sighted and irresponsible means of securing funds from people who can hardly afford to have one more challenge added to their plate. As a sales tax, this doesn't just affect businesses' bottom lines, it has a much broader impact. Sales numbers will go down in our state, home-grown Oregon companies will lose any competitive advantage they had, and Oregonians will be out of jobs. More problems are created and more teens than ever will fall victim to the down-spiraling economy and turn to drugs to cope with family and social stressors.

I am strongly opposed to HB-3197. Thank you for your consideration and collaboration in doing what is best for Oregonians.