

Submitter: Jim Smiley
On Behalf Of: Santiam Brewing
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety
Response
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

Dear Committee,

Thank you for amplifying this important issue. I was able to attend the public hearing yesterday and was left with the impression there is consensus that Oregon's youth deserve addiction treatment options and support, regardless of their own resources. I applaud the youth that showed up and testified about their own struggles, the treatment they were able to get, and their concern that others have meaningful access to recovery programs.

However, this bill is not the means to achieve that end. Last year's joint task force did not recommend generating additional tax revenue as a solution to this problem, noting that there were substantial OHA funds allocated to this cause that could not be accounted for, nor was OHA able to confirm whether the programs in question were successful. The problem is not a lack of funding - it's a lack of accountability. You are responsible for this accountability, and I urge you to use the resources of this committee and ultimately the State to ensure good stewardship of its tax funds.

If you are convinced that raising additional tax revenue is necessary, I then urge you to look elsewhere for those funds. Oregon's alcoholic beverage industry was asked to shoulder the burden of keeping everyone else safe during Covid-19, and we have not recovered. Consumption across all sectors of the industry are down, revenues are depressed, and expenses are up. We are not able to sustain yet another financial hit.

Thank you for your leadership and considering this testimony.

Jim Smiley
Santiam Brewing

P.S. - I'm not sure if the Craft Beer Caucus is still a thing, but you are all welcome to join us at Santiam Brewing anytime.