

MEASURE: HB 2007
EXHIBIT: 11
H BUSINESS & LABOR
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SUBMITTED BY: Timme Helzer

Jan Nordlund
House Committee on
Business and Labor
Oregon State Legislature
Salem, Oregon

Dear Ms. Nordlund:

Please include my remarks into the public record and distribute them to Committee Members as they apply to House Bills 2007 and 2008.

As a longtime resident of Portland's river community of Hayden Island, I have seen the significant decrease in the quality of life here, due mostly to the incomplete legislation regulating lottery game retailers and related alcoholic beverage sales. Secondly, the lack of full enforcement of current state regulations is the other major contributing condition to this problem. And, the two factors are interrelated.

Currently, lottery game retailers gain more than 50% of their restaurant and bar income from lottery games. The Oregon Lottery Commission is now required by state law to audit all retailers who provide these products, but little or no auditing is done by the OLC to adequately enforce this law. Neither is any other public office at any level auditing these retailers.

These conditions have been allowed to continue unabated for so long, that overall public safety has declined significantly in "casino row" areas of concentrated lottery game activity. This has led to increased drug deals transacted, violent interpersonal confrontations, much greater theft, and the generally perceived personal threat by anyone living in or moving through these contiguous neighborhoods. House Bill 2007 will help enforce this law.

Regarding enforcement of alcohol beverage sales, although it is a state-wide problem, violations occurs locally, and can best be controlled by local city law enforcement where the violations occur. Coupled with the lack of enforcement of current lottery game activity, the significant concentration of alcohol licenses in one small community adds heat to this already explosive mix of gambling, drugs, theft, and violence created by unenforced state regulations of "casino row" areas.

Again, these conditions are state-wide, but occur locally where local law enforcement can best confront them. Local cities are in the best position to temporarily cease alcohol beverage sales to protect the public's sense of safety. House Bill 2008 supports these effective controls of local cities, and their use of law enforcement resources to much better manage this continuing problem.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these bills to improve the quality of life in our communities.

Respectfully,

Timme A. Helzer