

Testimony in Support of HB 3470 Mobile Dispensing, April 12, 2013

House Business and Labor Committee, Representative Doherty, Chair

Chair Doherty, members of the committee, my name is Casey Flesch, I live in Oregon City. I support HB 3470 because it creates another opportunity for entrepreneurs in one of Oregon's strongest industries to further promote the great craft beer that over 5,600 Oregonians work every day to produce. ¹

The craft beer industry started in Oregon over 30 years ago by the same kind of original thinkers, experimenters, and home brewers that still power it today. The only difference is that it's come a long way since Kurt and Rob Widmer drove around to Portland bars offering samples of a new kind of beer that was cloudy and had a funny name. Today, the industry generates over 2.4 billion dollars ² annually to the Oregon economy and is still growing at a rate of 7% ³ each year. Oregonians love their craft beer!

Oregon is home to 169 breweries and more are opening all the time. The city of Portland has more breweries than any other city in the world. The city of Bend boasts over 14 and cities from Astoria to Baker to Tigard to Eugene and others all over our state have bustling craft brewing communities.

Oregon brewers are not the only ones helped by a thriving craft beer industry. Oregon family farms produce 17% of all hops grown in the US, with an annual crop worth over 23 million dollars.⁴ Oregonians love their hops too!

In recent years, growlers, which are reusable glass vessels, have become a popular way for consumers to enjoy beer from their favorite breweries at home. Due to the high capital costs involved with packaging, growlers are a way for small breweries to offer their beer outside their four walls and they allow large breweries a way to distribute their small batch and seasonal offerings.

Currently, many breweries throughout Oregon are licensed to fill growlers on premise. In addition, a number of 'growler filling stations' have opened that don't brew beer themselves but instead fill growlers for consumers with beer from a variety of Oregon breweries. The city of Bend has been very open to these kind of businesses and has seen the positive results over the past couple of years with a thriving new business sector and many new jobs created.

HB 3470 would make a minor change to current law by allowing mobile growler filling operations. The mobile operation's vehicle would be required to be parked on private property with the permission of a current Brewery-Public House Licensee. The OLCC would be allowed to inspect the vehicles as they currently do for fixed location operators. Mobile Licensees would also be subject to the same regulations as non-mobile Licensees, such as hours of operation and server training.

HB 3470 is a small change with big benefits. Oregon job creators can help promote one of Oregon's fastest growing industries by giving craft beer enthusiasts a convenient way to find beers made all over the state in their local community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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Sources: 1,2- Oregon Brewers Guild 3- OregonLive 4- Oregon Hop Commission

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