



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
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January 27, 2014

Sen. Lee Beyer, Chair, Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
Rep. Margaret Doherty, Chair, House Business and Labor Committee
State Capitol, Salem

Dear Senator Beyer and Representative Doherty,

The Oregon Commission on Black Affairs (OCBA) has been following the discussion on privatizing liquor sales in the state and know that more is ahead as the short legislative session convenes. Our Commissioners generally believe that there is no evidence of long-term gain for Oregon and its communities of color by privatizing liquor sales. We wish to add our voice to supporters of the OLCC retaining its historic role and control of liquor sales.

Like myself and the Vice Chair of the OCBA, a number of the OCBA Commissioners grew up in states where uncontrolled access to alcohol has devastated poorer neighborhoods. Where groceries with healthful foods are far away and convenience stores dominate the food and liquor scene, the effects of racial disparities, social violence and an impoverished environment are more pronounced mixed with easy access to alcohol. Other Commissioners who are longtime Oregonians have watched Washington's move to privatize and see no compelling reasons to support such a move either economically or socially based on Washington's experience.

We appreciate the interest of the Senate and House Committees in the OLCC's approach to the challenge of privatization. We agree with it and will testify during session in support of that model, but wanted to reach out to you with our viewpoint before session begins. If there is any further help we can be to the committees' work on this please let us know.

Sincerely,

James I. Manning Jr. Chair

James Morris, Vice Chair

Cc: Members: Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
Members: House Business and Labor Committee
Chair, Oregon Liquor Control Commission

OR Commission on Black Affairs

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