



February 5, 2016

To: Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
Senator Lee Beyer, Sen.LeeBeyer@state.or.us  
Senator Fred Girod, Sen.FredGirod@state.or.us  
Senator Rod Monroe, Sen.RodMonroe@state.or.us  
Senator Chuck Riley, Sen.ChuckRiley@state.or.us  
Senator Chuck Thomsen, Sen.ChuckThomsen@state.or.us

Fr: Travel Lane County Board of Directors, *roster attached*

Re: SB 1543 Opposition

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Travel Lane County is opposed any changes to the WCLP program and is on record opposing SB 1543.

We are uncertain as to why a bill to change the program has been submitted during a short session, with so little dialogue, citing an emergency provision. There is no emergency. If changes are felt to be needed, there is plenty time to vet issues with stakeholders throughout Oregon and align those stakeholders around improvements in anticipation of a regular legislative session.

In 2011, Travel Lane County was actively engaged in the passage of the original Wine Country License Plate bill, and testified in support of its passage. It originated from the tourism industry, not the wine industry. We are familiar with the current collection and uses of proceeds under the administrative support of Travel Oregon, which recently processed the first distributions of regional funds and matching grants. Travel Lane County received a small grant under the program, and we are implementing a wine promotion in collaboration South Willamette Wineries Association.

Travel Lane County sees no problems with the statutory language in place currently. The program is young, and seems to be working as intended. In checking with local wineries, we have heard no support for SB1543 from any wineries we have had contact with.

Travel Lane County's membership is comprised of 574 businesses and organizations located throughout Lane County, who share a common interest in attracting and serving visitors. The Travel Lane County Board of Directors is comprised of 38 business and community leaders, who represent our membership and Lane County as a visitor destination.

We urge the committee to oppose SB1543 and hold on making any changes in the current Wine Country License Plate Program.

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