



Oregon Retailers of Cannabis Association

www.oregoncannabisretailers.com

541-632-4442

March 14th, 2017

To: Members of the Legislature's Joint Committee of Marijuana Regulation

Re: Testimony regarding -1 Amendments to HB 2198

Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Marijuana Regulation,

My name is Casey Houlihan and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Retailers of Cannabis Association. We represent the largest trade association of cannabis businesses in the state. Our members are predominantly retail cannabis businesses, but we also represent other OLCC licensees making retail cannabis products as well as ancillary businesses working with retailers who are entirely dependent on the success of Oregon's legal market.

I wanted to reach out to you today regarding the -1 amendments to HB 2198, and how some of the changes in **this amendment would hurt the members of our association as compared to the original draft of the bill.**

For the last two years, the legislature has done an outstanding job taking input from a variety of stakeholders and using that input to construct reasonable and fair statutes and regulations. However, *outside of the legislative session there is no one to whom cannabis business owners can directly concerns in the state regulatory framework.*

One of the aspects of HB 2198 that was supported universally by our membership was the addition of OLCC commissioners specifically from the cannabis industry. The original draft of the bill called for adding four new commissioners from the cannabis industry specifically. The inclusion of these commissioners would be so incredibly helpful for the many folks looking for answers and accountability when the legislature is not in session.

The -1 Amendments of HB 2198 largely remove this provision, and leave the cannabis industry with a regulatory body that is largely devoid of anyone with actual industry experience, expertise, or knowledge from which to draw.

Under the -1 amendments, the OLCC would maintain it's current structure of five voting commissioners, with one required to come from the food or alcohol industry. This is wildly unfair to cannabis business owners, all of whom must operate under the OLCC's purview and decision-making authority. If the OLCC is going to be the regulatory body for legal cannabis businesses in the state, it stands to reason that at least some of the commissioners should be required to have a certain minimum level of experience in and knowledge of that specific industry and field.

We strongly urge the members of the committee to consider a new amendment to HB 2198 that more closely resembles the proposed changes in the original text of HB 2198, and to **please consider adding commissioners to the OLCC specifically from the cannabis industry to help bring more insight and fairness to their decisions.**

Thank you for your time and please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Respectfully,

Casey Houlihan
Executive Director
Oregon Retailers of Cannabis Association
541-632-4442
casey@oregoncannabisretailers.com