

Hello,

I am the owner of a world famous restaurant and bar located in downtown Portland's West end. I also am born and raised in Portland, growing up in SE and going to high school and college in our great state. I recently have invested over \$ 3 million dollars in this world class bar so that it would remain Oregon owned and run. Pre-covid I employed over 40 people, with most in high paying jobs in fact the highest paid in our industry. I provided health and dental insurance to all the employees. I have taken offense to the description and subsequent feeling of parental control of bars and restaurants as places where bad things happen. In my model we are about exploration of spirits respecting the process of how things are made and learning about the people and cultures that make them. It is not just a bar where people only come to get drunk. Having us close at 10 was very offensive and made us feel that we were children being scolded, not to mention unaffordable and no scientific backing. I would say every bar, is not just an irresponsible get drunk model and this generalizing and stereotyping to think we are all that way is offensive. We are about education, learning about the diversity of people and cultures that make spirits and understanding that we all have similarities and we need to celebrate the similarities which allow us to break down barriers and embrace diversity.

In the time that we were allowed to be partially open we invested heavily into personal protection equipment, HVAC upgrades that kill 99.9% of viruses, 3rd party cleaning every night using hydrogen peroxide droplets, staff training and we followed all CDC guidelines for spacing, masks etc. The result, not one case of Covid from any of our members, employees or vendors. I repeat not one. We were also only able to be at 1/3 of the employees and business. We lost money but were happy to keep people employed to keep hope alive for them and to provide a safe place for people to have a moment of sanity. I hear from all that I have had to let go over this last year and they are all experiencing possible evictions, fear, mental health issues, stress and depression. The hope as to when we are getting back to full is not just around the corner and many are afraid there will be no jobs to come back to. They also feel forgotten by our elected officials who are giving more effort to those who are homeless or breaking things.

Unfortunately our industry is not a wall street big money one and therefore we are not typically donating to government elections and therefore we are typically last on your list. I would say to you that who we are is about 1/3 of the people employed in Oregon. Many people are watching as to how you are taking care of small business and our downtown. Thus far it has not been great. The grants are only worth \$1500 and although its something, that amount really isn't helpful. I must remind you Portland was internationally known for its food and cocktail scene, people come to Portland for this- they do not come for the homeless or protests or the weirdness. They come for the food, the outdoors and the diversity! If you allow things to continue this spiral there will be no tourists or downtown to come back to. Which means way less tax revenue and more homeless. If owners of these small business are allowed to fail, its not easy to just think others will come in and start over as there will be no banks or landlords wanting to invest in this sector for quite a while- we must save the people here now.

We are known as a non-friendly business county and state period and you all need to change this perception. This is bad for a reconstruction that is going to be needed. I ask you to provide small business with actual relief that will help. Including larger grants, tax relief, license fee relief, property tax relief... You know not once in my lifetime of owning and running business has any government official from Portland come to my place of business and just ask "how can we help you?" It is in fact always the opposite, its only about how can we get more money out of you or fine you. Business owners are not the bad guy. This is not a healthy relationship at all and creates one of fear and anger. We are your customer not the other way around.

Restaurants bars and small business need relief now, the platitudes and speeches are nice but are not helping- we need action. For me I will close forever in the next weeks if nothing changes and I can say I am in way better shape than most. I will also say that take out and cocktails to go are nice but will not make us profitable- indoor dining especially in the winter is a must. We are not children and we will act responsibly as we have since this started and operate the correct way.

Thanks for your time,

Ed