



December 17, 2020

Co-Chairs Kotek and Courtney, and members of the Joint Committee:

RE: Support for Oregon's restaurants & small businesses

Thank you for the opportunity to voice support for LC 10. Oregon Small Business United (OSBU) came together this year as a "pop-up coalition" to help support small business owners in the midst of the pandemic. OSBU members range from culturally specific chambers, to entrepreneurial and business support organizations and community lenders. OSBU's mission is to unite and amplify the voices of organizations serving small businesses, with a particular focus on Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and rural entrepreneurship.

LC 10 makes needed, temporary changes to Oregon's liquor laws to help Oregon's restaurants and bars by allowing "cocktails-to-go" and capping third-party delivery charges. OSBU supports LC 10 and urges its passage.

Oregon's restaurants employ a host of Oregonians, bring in significant tourism dollars, and are the cultural anchors of communities across the state. The restaurant and food industry have also been the gateway to the American dream for many immigrants—starting out in historically low-wage jobs as dishwashers, prep cooks, or table bussers with the goal of one day running their own restaurant or helping their kids go to college for a better future. The pandemic has been devastating to the restaurant industry but especially to these families' livelihoods. There is no denying that precautions and limitations are needed to protect public health. But there is also no denying that the consequences have been dire for restaurants and the many people they employ. Cocktails-to-go will be a lifeline to some of these establishments as we continue to weather the pandemic in the midst of a rainy Oregon winter.

Beyond passage of LC 10, we urge you to do everything in your power to continue supporting small business owners, including additional assistance dollars through the Emergency Fund allocations in LC 28. We applaud the work the E-Board and Governor have done throughout this year to put much needed dollars into the hands of businesses in need. Many of our members helped to distribute emergency assistance grants in Rounds 1-4—and others have worked directly with business owners across the state to adapt and innovate in the face of great uncertainty and significant revenue loss. The

ongoing need remains great: when Business Oregon opened applications for \$20M worth of emergency grants in November (Round 5), the system shut down applications after just 27 minutes. The needs far exceeded the \$20M total, with over 2,000 businesses requesting \$100M+ in assistance.

Additionally, support for commercial tenants, either through an extension of a commercial eviction moratorium or personal guaranty changes, is desperately needed to help small businesses hang on. Without additional support, we will see an avalanche of business closures, bankruptcies, growing unemployment, significant loss in tax revenue, and empty storefronts across the state.

We urge the passage of LC 10—and additional support for Oregon’s small businesses. Oregon Small Business United stands ready to bring the voices and lived experiences of businesses run by underserved and underrepresented communities to help craft future solutions for business development and support.

Thank you,
[Oregon Small Business United](#)

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF OREGON SMALL BUSINESS UNITED:

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