

March 16, 2021

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senate Energy & Environment Committee
Oregon Senate
Salem, Oregon

Dear Chair Beyer and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Oregon wine industry, which includes over 900 wineries and 1,200 vineyards across the state, we're writing to express our support for SB 847. This legislation proposes a thoughtful approach to exploring the question of potential expansion of Oregon's Bottle Bill to include additional container types, like wine bottles and cans.

As Oregon looks to adjust and adapt its many recycling program policies, it is more important than ever before that the wine industry has an opportunity to engage in conversations about how our products will be incorporated into these new programs. These are exceptionally complex questions with potentially sweeping impacts, and it's critical that they are considered with a full range of interests working around the same table.

As long-time leaders in sustainable farming, winemaking and environmental stewardship, our industry is interested and well-positioned to be an active participant in the forum detailed in SB 847. The COVID-19 pandemic and wildfires have led to extreme revenue losses for wineries and grape growers. Smaller wineries, or those producing less than 1,000 cases a year, are expected to lose 66% of their revenue in 2020. Statewide closures, while out of necessity to prioritize public health, have led to severe declines in tasting room sales. These factors have placed a strain on wineries and growers large and small. Recognizing that there are efforts being considered to address recycling for a broad range of products, we believe issues impacting the wine industry should be discussed in SB 847 rather than as a part of extended producer responsibility recycling program. Not only is it important to examine the impact, benefits and challenges including wine bottles and cans in the Bottle Bill has on the wine industry, but also on the system currently managing these recycling operations. The venue for discussion created through SB 847 provides the industry with a meaningful opportunity to engage, build trust and cultivate consensus around the future of Oregon's Bottle Bill.

Oregon's Bottle Bill is one of the most effective recycling systems in the world. While we celebrate its success, we must ensure that we are thoughtful about its potential expansion by allowing for a deeper dive and consideration of the many moving parts at the beginning of the policy process. We stand in support of SB 847 and ready to join the task force as participants.



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