



HEADQUARTERS

PO BOX 240
HOOD RIVER, OR 97031
P 541.386.1588
F 541.386.1534
HRDSPIRITS.COM

**Senate Committee on Labor and Business
Testimony in support of SB 317-A
Submitted by: Hasina Wittenberg on behalf of HRD
April 29, 2021**

Members of the Senate Labor and Business Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide **testimony in support of SB 317-A.**

Hood River Distillers understands the importance of controlling the spread of COVID-19 in Oregon, but state implemented measures have resulted in economic losses that deserve consideration. **Hood River Distillers urges your support of SB 317-A which will give bars and restaurants the ability to sell cocktails to-go.**

In light of the Governor's new framework that outlines four different risk levels under which counties must operate, SB 1801 (3rd Special Session 2020) was passed to temporarily allow for cocktails to-go as an option for restaurants to provide them with a greater chance of survival and a greater likelihood of retaining employees—with no additional risk of spreading COVID-19.

As you are aware, state mandated closures and restricted operating abilities due to COVID-19 have been devastating to the state's bars, restaurants, and other alcohol beverage businesses, including Oregon distilleries, breweries, and wineries. Many businesses that sell spirits have been forced to close, downsize, or take other measures to compensate for lost revenue. Hood River Distillers is feeling that pain. Based on media reports, you may believe that the alcohol industry is thriving, but that is not necessarily the case. While some large national brands, and international companies are doing well, the environment for Oregon distilleries is not as rosy. At Hood River Distillers, our portfolio of spirits has performed particularly well in the restaurant and bar (on-premises) channel of business. However, from April through October 2020, our on-premises business plummeted 53% versus the same time last year. This has been devastating. Hood River sales in retail (off-premises) has not come close to offsetting our on-premises losses in revenue and profits.

Allowing restaurants and bars to serve cocktails to-go provides businesses in the spirits industry a better chance of survival and retaining employees while operating under regulations that protect against the spread of COVID-19.

Hood River Distillers supports SB 317-A which extends the temporary barrier previously enacted and permanently permits cocktails to-go. Please join the 33 states (including California, Washington, and Idaho) that safely allow cocktails to-go. Thank you for your consideration, and in advance, for your support of SB 317-A.

