

Please support YES on HB 2740. Compensation has not kept pace with all of the expenses of running a brick and mortar store. Payroll has gone up the most, with rent, taxes and insurance following close behind. I have been doing this for almost 30 years, and in the beginning both my staff and I were paid well and they were given a SEP IRA every year at the maximum amount allowed. Now, neither of us get IRA's or decent pay. I would like to keep my employees by giving them raises and contributing to retirement accounts for both of us again. Minimum wage was \$3.35 back then and it is more than 3 times that now, but even with the growth that my store has had, my current paycheck is no where near 3 times what it was back in the 90's. Please, ask liquor agents that have been around for a few years what their income versus their expenses are and what they were when they first started as an agent. You will be very surprised! Our pay system is broken... it was written 34 years ago... a LOT has changed since then! We are a revenue source for the State of Oregon and we are showing huge gains in our sales that contribute much to the State budget, so please support us so that we can afford better and larger locations, newer fixtures, long time trained employees that are compensated decently, and give us a few dollars to put away for retirement. As an agent, we do not get the benefits that State employees receive. No sick pay, no vacation pay, no automatic pay raises, no decent retirement (I contribute the max and get \$150 from the OLCC per month). It was voted in that liquor stores could deliver to licensees, but there was no increase in revenue to us to support the purchasing of a vehicle, the insurance, the gas and maintenance, the extra employee(s) needed nor the expense of having them travel back and forth instead of when all we had to do was pull bar orders and the licensees came to the store to pick up their liquor. All we had to do was load it out to their vehicles. We are paid less for the licensee liquor sales because it is considered a "volume sale" and that we should be making enough off of that volume. Not when you have to add all of the new expenses in with no extra compensation! We used to have a shoplifting allowance to help offset the expense. We used to have paper bags and cash register tape supplied. All forms were printed and sent to us, now we have to print them (and pay for the machine, the paper and ink). We buy new computer systems... we buy new programs... we pay for new signs, we pay for new paint and all of the upkeep to our locations... we pay for EVERYTHING... not OLCC. When any other business has an increase in expenses, they increase their prices to pass on the extra expenses. We can't do that! The State owns the liquor and sets the prices and we have no control over "passing on the expenses to the consumer". We are at the mercy of the system and the system is broken. OLCC and liquor agents have worked TOGETHER to come up with a plan that is up to date and more reasonable and equitable for all. Please support this new compensation plan that BOTH sides agree is a good plan for both the State and the Agents for the State.

Sincerely,

Debra M. Thorpe, Agent
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