



OREGON
WINEGROWERS
ASSOCIATION

**Testimony on SB 582 (-1 amendment)
Submitted by Oregon Winegrowers Association
Senate Energy & Environment Committee
February 23, 2021**

Chair Beyer, and members of the committee, the Oregon Winegrowers Association respectfully asks the legislature not to act this session on bills that would subject the wine industry to new requirements for recycling, redemption or mandatory membership in Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs).

Specifically, we ask that your committees not move on SB 582, with the proposed -1 amendment, which would require Oregon wine industry participation in new PROs, due to the fact we make products that use bottles, cans, and other consumer packaging materials.

Rather, we ask you and legislative leaders to convene broad stakeholder discussions to help develop a collaborative statewide policy on recycling and to inform the future of the Oregon Bottle Bill.

These important stakeholder discussions have not happened thus far. Wineries and most other producers were not included in DEQ's multi-year Recycling Steering Committee, and so producer views were not heard by the DEQ, nor represented in the development of the PRO framework outlined in this amendment. For this reason alone, more time to study and consider the role of producers and how this will affect our industries is needed.

We have more than 900 wineries in Oregon. It appears each one will be affected by this legislation. It is critically important that we have good industry dialogue on these issues before a new state policy is developed.

Our wine industry is unique to this policy discussion. Unlike other products and packaging that would be subjected to this bill, **wine bottles and cans can be included in the Oregon Bottle Bill or made part of enhanced recycling initiatives, such as PROs.** Our wine industry needs to vet the pros and cons of both options, as well as others, before a new state policy is enacted.



As you know, the price of wine in our competitive international marketplace matters. Oregon already has some of the highest wine prices in the country. Our industry needs to fully understand the potential cost increases on our businesses and wine prices.

We need to study and understand how any new requirements – whether PRO participation or inclusion in the Bottle Bill - will add new costs to our businesses that likely will affect our prices.

This could be a competitive disadvantage for Oregon wineries, especially if wineries outside of the state don't have these imbedded costs.

There is simply not enough time during this current legislative session to bring together all the key stakeholders, including the producer community like Oregon wineries, to forge a workable policy on this complex, but important issue. Those most affected by this bill need to be part of the conversations informing the policy.

Our Oregon wine industry has prided itself on being a leader in environmental responsibility and stewardship. We lead in sustainable farming practices and sustainable wine making. Addressing product containers in the context of sustainability is a logical next step, but this can only be done through thoughtful work that includes all industry voices.

Again, we ask that you not move on this legislation this session, but instead work with our wine industry on policies that can be backed by Oregon producers. We would support other legislation that moves forward these important discussions. Thank you.