

2/25/2021

ORLA Testimony on HB 3177

To Chair of the House Committee On Economic Recovery and Prosperity  
To The Members of the House Committee On Economic Recovery and Prosperity

My name is Craig Peterson, partner of The RingSide Steakhouse located in Multnomah County, Portland Oregon. I am writing today in support of vote "YES" to HB 3177 which would limit the restrictions the Governor could impose on food service establishments and indoor fitness facilities that are not imposed on all other types of businesses.

Our staff has been severely impacted by having to close their place of employment. Close, open, reclose, guest capacity restrictions, total capacity restrictions, etc.

The uncertainty of what lay ahead for the business caused a great deal of emotional distress and anxiety for our employees who were left with doubt regarding the stability of their job status now and in the future as well as their overall financial well-being. The open/close structure did little to assist the restaurant with planning efforts that could help our employees pay their monthly bills.

Due to the Company toggling between serving only to-go customers, serving at 50% capacity, then at 25% capacity and then back to no indoor dining, with rules often varying week to week; our employees experienced loss in hours, wages from full-time to part-time to 0 hours.

Thank you Chair & Members of the House Committee On Economic Recovery and Prosperity for hearing our concerns. I urge the Committee to support HB 3177.

Below is a quick summary of what our staff has experienced since March 2020.

3/17/2020 Governor Brown ordered "stay home saves lives"  
Restaurant closed

6/19/2020 Governor Brown opened Multnomah County for Phase 1 which included 6ft distancing & no on-site consumption of food & drinks after 10pm.  
Restaurant remained closed.

6/27/2020 Governor Brown released a statement "if COVID-19 cases keep rising; everything is back on the table including the shuttering of restaurants & bars"

6/28/2020 The RingSide made the decision to postpone on-site consumption opening scheduled for 7/13/2020. Wait until 7/18/2020 to see what the effect of Independence Day holiday gatherings have done to COVID-19 case increases just in case we are required to re-close due to holiday surge.

7/22/2020 Governor Brown announced several new measures to help suppress the spread of COVID-19 and drive transmission rates back down.

7/27/2020, face coverings are required for ages 5 and up, outdoors when unable to physically distance, capacity for restaurants reduced to 100 people indoors including staff, restaurant must close by 10pm statewide

7/28/2020 The RingSide sent out "Return to Work" letters to the staff

8/14/2020 The RingSide unveiled To Go & Delivery program

8/19/2020 The RingSide re-opened indoor dining & the new tent dining area. Restaurant dining 5 nights per week; Wednesday thru Sunday

10/21/2020 The RingSide closed the tent to winterize by adding heat.

10/30/2020 Tent re-opened

11/6/2020 Governor Brown announced a 2-week "pause" starting 11/11/2020 thru 11/25/2020. Governor's orders reduced indoor occupancy to 50 people including staff & guests. Limited maximum party size to 6 guests.

11/13/2020 Governor Brown announced a 2-week "freeze" starting 11/18/2020.

11/18/2020 The RingSide closed on-site consumption & offered To Go only

2/9/2020 Governor Brown announced that Multnomah County move from extreme to high-risk level while will allow indoor dining effective 2/12/2021

2/12/2021 Multnomah County indoor dining opens

2/26/2021 & 2/27/2021 The RingSide soft opening for indoor on-site consumption.