

Submitter: Rob Miller

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB616

January 27, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

I write in support of SB 616 which was on your agenda for yesterday, January 26.

My name is Rob Miller. My wife and I own and operate a cidery called Runcible Cider in Mosier. We grow apples, ferment hard cider, package and distribute in Oregon and Washington. We also ship cider directly to our customers throughout the US. We would like to be able to ship cider directly to our residential customers in Oregon at the same volume as is permitted for the wine industry.

While our business has grown steadily since it began in 2016, it is difficult to make high quality, artisanal cider profitable. During the last three years of the pandemic, we have come to appreciate the value of customized shipping at a safe social distance. Our customers have let us know how much they appreciate our prompt and personalized service. This is an area of potential growth for our cottage industry. We support the pending bill for the following reasons.

1. Fairness: Wine makers recently secured the right under Oregon legislation to ship a total of five cases per month directly to consumers. There is no meaningful distinction that would justify the legislature's refusal to extend this rule to cider and beer.
2. Protection of minors: The constraints upon direct-to-consumer shipments of wine in Oregon could and should be applied easily to shipments of cider and beer. [Arguably, cider poses a reduced risk because its alcohol content by volume is usually about half that of wine.] Our shipping service is well versed in the laws applying to alcohol and has been very reliable.
3. Expanding an important marketplace: Craft beverages represent the essence of Oregon's innovation in home-grown goods. This industry sector has continued to grow in recent years while other parts of the national beverage industry have lost ground. Oregon is now identified with high quality, exquisitely made luxury consumables, with wine, beer and cider at the top of the list. The legislature recognized this by expanding the limits on direct-to-consumer shipping of wine. It should do the same for cider and beer.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Miller
Runcible Cider
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