

Submitter: T Edward Grimes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: HB2502

Honorable Members of the Committee:

As I know you are well aware, the Distilled Spirits sales system in Oregon is unique. We have a valuable partnership between the State and private business that enables to provide a service to their neighbors, their communities and be of benefit to every Citizen of Oregon, while providing livelihoods for thousands of people. Many of us have invested our literal life savings in these stores, and reinvested all we can into ever-increasing sales, service to our local Citizens and Communities and our own people. It is a business that operates at a relatively low rate of return, requiring a firm and ongoing commitment from the Agent business owners and results in a loyal and productive resource for the State of Oregon.

We are asking that our efforts be protected and our families and people not be ruined in the event the Legislature or the Public takes actions that our businesses are totally vulnerable to when we ask that you approve and pass into law HB2502.

We know there is a lot of noise and pressure from Out Of State Big Money wanting to destroy our system. They wish to carry off the margins that now go to the General Fund, and to critical State programs, and carve profits out of every step of distilled spirits distribution and sales on the backs of Oregon consumers by convincing them that is a "great idea". We know there are some here that shortsightedly wish only for the cheapest possible bottle to be on hand at every gas station, corner store and supermarket. That is obviously a less safe and secure system that what we have, and would directly result in not just our hundreds of Small Businesses being destroyed, but less choice, easier access by unqualified and underage actors and likely less variety, pricing fairness and equality of service to the Citizens of Oregon. We watched as the Citizens of Washington destroyed their system with a dismay similar to theirs as they now endure the terrible results.

But we also know very well that the Voters will, and should, have their say, and that Laws can change for reasons unforeseen.

Our group efforts contribute a goodly amount of funding to vital State programs while helping the People of Oregon both inside and outside our stores.

All we are asking is that some of the fear and punishing losses that are the potential of such changes be reduced, and allow us a little more security in continuing our mission to provide exemplary service to the People of Oregon.

Thank you for the chance to be heard.

T. E. Grimes, Dallas