

February 26, 2023

Re: Support for HB 2976

To whom it may concern,

I am a small business owner. I own and operate a craft distillery located in northwest Portland where I make Aria Portland Dry Gin. Founded in 2012, Aria Gin has risen to become a regionally recognized brand with distribution in over 190 liquor stores throughout the state, and distribution to multiple states across the U.S. With over 5000 cases in annual volume, Aria Gin employs six people in its production and marketing operations.

Since founding we have focused on fairness and positive impact in our marketing efforts. Specifically, we cater heavily to supporting the non-profit sector in their fund raising activities.

Aria has taken several awards from multiple, internationally recognized organizations, including a Double Gold from the San Francisco World Spirits Competition, and a Gold from the Beverage Testing Institute in Chicago.

Given the many options available, we chose to start our business in Oregon because of the thriving craft beverage industry. We believe this is specifically due to the cooperative and supportive political and regulatory environment - there simply is no other state that has the right mix of industry members and supportive government agencies like we have here in Oregon.

As our business has grown over the last ten years, we have come to rely on a number of Oregon businesses that supply us with our raw materials, everything from neutral spirit, to botanicals sourced either from local agriculture or from locally owned importers.

We pride ourselves on our responsible stewardship of the community. We take every action necessary to ensure public safety at our facility, both with our employees, and our customers. We take special care to observe all rules for responsible alcohol service, especially when it comes to not serving minors or anyone that is visibly intoxicated.

Given our relative success over the last ten years, our distribution reach is minimal outside of Oregon. Currently we sell our product in Washington, California, Nevada, Arizona on the west coast, as well as Indiana, Tennessee, New York, and Massachusetts on the East Coast. That said, we are aiming to double the number of markets that our products will be available to in the coming five years. The challenges that we face in obtaining this goal is lack of connections to out of state distribution channels.

We believe that the development of an Oregon Spirits board will help pave the way for our future success by developing these connections and making them available to over 100 craft distillers that have chosen to start their businesses here in Oregon. An active Spirits Board that is dedicated to promoting Oregon's Craft Spirits outside of the state and abroad, would be invaluable to the local industry (that employs thousands of men and women across the state) as a whole.

We can say for certain that we plan on creating up to five full time positions dedicated to production and sales and marketing should we obtain our goals of doubling the amount of markets our products are available. Therefore, I urge your support for House Bill 2976 as passage of this bill would be a benefit to Oregon's craft beverage industry.

Warmest regards,

*s/ Erik Martin*

Erik Martin  
Owner+Distiller  
Aria Portland Dry Gin  
503.936.2951