

Submitter: Trina Lankford

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: SB643

My name is Trina Lankford, and I live in La Grande. I am one of many bakers who opened their cottage bakery during the pandemic. I then became aware of cottage food laws and how they are unique to each state. In researching this, it became quickly apparent that Oregon's cottage laws are among the most strict in the nation, and SB320 which was introduced in 2015 has become outdated as dozens of other states have since reformed their laws to make it easier to sell homemade foods.

My cottage bakery is based in La Grande, which is rural, and I did discover an untapped market in my local area. My customer base is thrilled to have someone who bakes in their own home who will create a quality custom product, but my customer base is exactly that—local.

Current Oregon law bans online sales and shipping through the mail, even though most states allow such sales. By not allowing the Oregon cottage baker to ship their product, this is unfairly restricting the rural cottage baker from expanding their market. We are limited to those in our local area with no ability to reach those outside our geographic area. Because our products are shelf-stable, nonperishable items, this actually makes them ideal for shipping. In addition, many of my customers live in our local area only part of the year, having a residence elsewhere during the winter months. The only time these customers can purchase my baked goods is when they are physically in our area since I'm prohibited from shipping.

Current Oregon law caps my GROSS sales at \$20,000—the lowest cap on homemade food sales in the nation. After subtracting expenses, this leaves me making less than minimum wage and nowhere near a living wage. For this reason, I am forced to have a full-time job outside of my cookie business which consequently also limits my ability to grow my bakery business.

I have several local businesses that have approached me about carrying my baked goods for resale in their shops. I have had to turn them down, as this is something I cannot do due to the restriction on wholesale in Oregon. In our area, people actually prefer to buy the locally produced baked goods, supporting small business, as opposed to factory-produced items from the chain coffee shop, but I am restricted in my ability to provide those. Again, these baked goods would have their own labels which meet Oregon's labeling requirements.

It is important to note that Oregon's current labeling requirements are not affected by this bill. Any goods produced in a cottage bakery require a label with not only name,

address, and phone number of the home food establishment (also addressed in this bill), but the labels are required to contain the name of the prepared item, the ingredients by descending order by weight, a statement that "This product is homemade and not prepared in an inspected food environment," net weight of the product, and any applicable allergy warnings. The current bill does not remove any of these labeling requirements. Current requirements will remain in place, in addition to any additional verbiage regarding pets being in the home, if applicable (also addressed below).

Oregon cottage bakers should not have to choose between providing for their families with their cottage baked goods and having a pet. Over half of Oregon households have at least one pet, and this bill would allow pets to be present in the home but require them to be outside of the baking area when baking is occurring. Only one other state currently bans pets of any kind in the home.

As an active cottage baker in the state of Oregon, I greatly appreciate you taking the time to listen to our concerns, and it is my sincere hope that Oregon can gain some ground with updates in our cottage food laws. Oregon should be known for supporting the entrepreneur, not stifling small business growth.

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