

Willamette Valley Wineries Association Key Advocacy Issues

Alcohol Tax Proposals

Oregon Recovers, an addiction recovery advocacy organization led by Mike Marshall, has been spearheaded the effort to raise taxes on beer wine and cider. In 2021 they unsuccessfully urged the Governor to include tax increases in her budget. During the 2021 Oregon General Assembly they unsuccessfully attempted to pass a law to accomplish the tax increase. The Oregon Beverage Alliance (OBA) was formed in the summer of 2020 to counter these proposals. OBA includes a wide array of Oregon alcohol interests, including representatives of wine, beer, cider and distilled spirits producers as well as the hospitality industry.

At the end of the 2021 Legislative Session but a \$300,000 “budget note” was included in the Oregon Health Authorities budget to examine revenue options from alcohol, income and telecommunications during the interim.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) shall study the behavioral health structures for services provided through state agencies and whether the structure adequately meets the current needs of the state as identified by the Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission strategic plan and the State Health Improvement Plan. OHA shall analyze the cost required to meet projected unmet needs, current revenue sources, and additional revenue options including, but not limited to, taxes related to alcohol, income, and telecommunications. OHA shall report its findings to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to behavioral health no later than February 1, 2022.

The WVWA, other Oregon wine advocacy organizations, and OBA will continue to track what happens with this study and other conversations about alcohol tax increases.

Recycling Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR and PROs)

During the 2021 Oregon General Assembly DEQ took charge of managing a Recycling Steering Committee (RSC) bill. Senate Bill 582 became the vehicle for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) modernization legislation. This legislation expands the recycling system requiring expanded services to be provided by producers through Professional Responsibility Organizations (PROs). Local governments, DEQ and waste & recycling advocates led the charge alongside the bill sponsors to keep the bill on track and ensure passage. The focus now turns to rulemaking, leading to full implementation in 2025.

Bottle Bill Task Force

During the 2021 Oregon General Assembly Senate Bill 847 was introduced by Senator Michael Dembrow and Reps. Janeen Sollman, and Pam Marsh. SB 847 would have created a Bottle Bill Expansion, Access and Transparency Task Force. The bill was anticipated to work alongside EPR modernization legislation (SB 582), examining the Bottle Bill this year and reporting back to the 2022 legislature. Since SB 847 didn't pass, the wine industry will need to examine the new EPR regulations being established as a result of SB 582 and the current Bottle Bill and decide the

best way to fit into one or both systems.

Agriculture Worker Overtime

During the 2021 Oregon General Assembly there was an effort to pass a bill requiring overtime pay for agricultural workers working more than a certain amount of hours in a week. A workgroup was formed to hammer out consensus language, but the work group fell apart after just a few meetings and action on the bill went dark. This issue will not be going away. Interim work is expected as well as legislation in 2022.