



from the

OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

For Immediate Release

Date: March 3, 2021

Contact: HRO Press

Email: HR.Comm@oregonlegislature.gov

WA State Waives Liquor Fees While Oregon Democrats Seek 2800% Tax Increase

House Democrats pursue massive tax increase despite ongoing pandemic

Salem, Ore. - Oregon House Republicans today urged Legislative Democrats to abandon a massive proposed tax increase on beer and wine in favor of policies that would support the recovery of the restaurant and adult beverage industry amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Republican lawmakers contrasted a recently introduced proposal that would exponentially increase taxes on beer and wine producers in Oregon with Washington State's recent decision to adopt a one-time waiver for liquor licenses in the state.

"No industry has been hit harder by the pandemic than the restaurant and hospitality industry, and by extension the producers of adult beverages," said Rep. David Brock Smith (R-Port Orford). "In Washington, a bipartisan group of lawmakers had the common sense to provide some measure of relief to this industry. Unfortunately, here in Oregon, House Democrats have embraced the opposite approach to an extreme degree by proposing to increase taxes on beer by 2800% and wine by 1700%. At a time when so many of these businesses are struggling to keep their doors open or have closed permanently and hurt hardworking employees and their families, moving forward with a proposal like this makes no sense."

According to [reports](#), Washington's bill could save restaurants as much as \$2,500. House Democrats' bill, HB 3296, would increase the tax per barrel on beer from \$2.60 to \$72.60. The bill would increase the price per barrel of wine from \$0.65 to \$10.65.



Governor Jay Inslee @GovInslee · Feb 28

Restaurants, wineries, breweries and distilleries have been some of the hardest hit by the pandemic. I just signed SB 5272 - it waives a 1-time annual liquor license fee for those establishments. This will provide some financial relief while we work to get them back to capacity.

"It's really striking to see the difference between how our two states are treating this vital industry right now," said Rep. Bill Post (R-Keizer). "Instead of pursuing outrageous

tax hikes, I urge my Democratic colleagues to look for opportunities to support restaurants and producers and to help these businesses recover from the impacts of the pandemic and government shutdown orders.”

HB 3296 was formally introduced in the Oregon House on February 23, 2021. The bill has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing.

###