

# Local 99

American Federation of Musicians • AFL - CIO / CLC

artistry  
advocacy  
unity



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Oregon Liquor Control Commission  
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OLCC Chairman, Commissioners and staff,

As president of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 99, I am here to speak in favor of the new minor VI posting. Obviously, my job is to work towards creating environments where musicians are able to earn a reasonable wage. With this new minor posting rule, though, two positive outcomes are at play. First, the potential for increased audience attendance should lead to more income for musicians. Secondly, this is a way to create a safe and reasonable environment for minors to hear and support the musicians and music community that they love and that is so vital to Oregon.

We are long overdue in bringing ourselves into alignment with many other states in the US. California, New York, and others have already determined that when it comes to the public's safety, it is much better to have minors in regulated environments, where staff and security are present to prevent illegal drinking. I am reminded that one of the negative effects of the minor entertainment rule when it was in place was to drive the dancers into dangerous, unregulated environments, without slowing their activities. The same type of effect already impacts minors today, as they will certainly find places to see and hear music, places where there may be alcohol readily available to them with no control or oversight.

I do have concerns about the new language, however, as it leaves for too much subjectivity when looking at the posting environments. Historically, the OLCC has taken a very conservative view in its use of the terms "drinking environment" and "dance halls", an expression with little relevance today. These past decisions have consistently worked against musicians and the presentation of live music. If this is to work as intended, an effort to be more consistent with the rules from venue to venue should exist. For example, if it is ok for there to be beer advertising and signs at the Rose Garden, they should also be allowed in a club and should not be considered a detriment in determining eligibility. We would be naïve to think that the mere presence of a sign in a venue could have more impact than the onslaught of beer commercials we see on TV. If these amendments are adopted, common sense, and today's realities should prevail as you review control plans. In other words, in both (2)(b)(B) (the definition of a drinking environment) and 5(g) (qualified performing arts facility) of the proposed statute, we should be relaxing those definitions, or preferably, the language should be altered to create more reasonable opportunities for consistent compliance in today's environment.

In closing, I want to thank the OLCC for its efforts on this proposed amendment. I certainly support the work you have done. But let's not forget the intent of this work. We want consistent and fair rules, across the board, for all types of venues. You now have a chance to support the music community and to offer expanded, safe, entertainment opportunities for our minor citizens, by allowing businesses both the freedom and responsibility to offer creative programming and presentations.

Thank you,

Bruce Fife  
President, AFM, Local 99