



News Release

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Oregon Liquor Control Commission Chair Rob Patridge Resigns Championed Economic Development Opportunities for Oregon's Alcohol Industry Designed Licensing & Regulatory Framework for Recreational Marijuana Program

Portland, Oregon – Rob Patridge, Chair of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, today submitted his resignation to Oregon Governor Kate Brown. Patridge is leaving the OLCC to join the private sector. Patridge's resignation from the Commission is effective March 10, 2017.

Patridge was appointed to the OLCC in October, 2012 and appointed Chair of the Commission in July, 2013.

"The opportunity to serve on, and lead, the Commission during this dynamic time at the agency has been a highlight of my public service career," said Patridge. "Because the OLCC has an extremely capable and professional staff we've been able to effectively and efficiently make changes that reflect the rapidly changing alcohol and cannabis markets."

Patridge was instrumental in guiding the OLCC during a period of increased consumer interest in craft alcohol beverages, and translated that interest into policies and actions to re-invent the agency and its interaction with the community and the public.

During his tenure as Chair, the Commission advocated for more economic development opportunities for Oregon's liquor licensed businesses. In 2015, the OLCC launched annual training for retail liquor store agents bringing in international experts to share the latest information on consumers' distilled spirits preferences and best practices for improving the customer experience.

As a former Oregon State Representative, Patridge provided strong leadership skills to the Commission and created common ground for collaboration among legislators, licensees, and the public. In 2013, the OLCC brought together these stakeholders to better understand the rapid growth of Oregon distillers, showcase their stages of business development, and drive national visibility for Oregon's leadership role in the craft alcohol industry.

“We’ve taken our responsibility as the third largest source of revenue for the state very seriously,” said Patridge, “and much of our time and focus has been on how to make the agency more effective, more innovative, and contribute more revenue to the state.”

With the support of the legislature, and the involvement of key stakeholders and the public, the agency and OLCC Commissioners embarked on its largest retail liquor expansion since Prohibition. To date, the effort Patridge led has resulted in an eight percent increase in the number of stores that sell distilled spirits, while increasing customer convenience and satisfaction, and maintaining public safety.

“The Distilled Spirits Council has had the pleasure of working with Rob during his tenure at the OLCC. He has been a leader in marketplace modernization, an effective and open communicator and a friend to the distilled spirits consumer,” said Kraig R. Naasz, President and CEO of the Distilled Spirits Council.

After the November 2014 passage of Measure 91, which gave the OLCC responsibility for regulation of legalized recreational marijuana in Oregon, Patridge sharpened the OLCC’s focus to create a roundly supported system. Patridge led statewide “town hall” public meetings and other stakeholder engagement to formulate the framework for rulemaking to regulate the recreational marijuana industry. At the time, Oregon was the third state to approve legal cannabis consumption for adults.

“There was a lot skepticism about how the OLCC was going to regulate cannabis,” said Anthony Johnson, Executive Director, New Approach Oregon and co-author of Measure 91. “But Rob was always reasonable, and provided clear reasoning and a basis for his decisions. There was never a surprise about his point of view or whether or not he would be fair.”

Patridge used his knowledge as a district attorney and former legislator to guide creation of a citizen rulemaking advisory committee that included members of the cannabis industry, public health and safety interests, and community organizations. Along with the OLCC’s executive leadership, Patridge worked with Oregon legislators during the 2015 and 2016 legislative sessions to translate Measure 91 into workable laws that served the cannabis industry’s development.

“Rob Patridge has been a great chair for the commission – he’s laid a solid foundation upon which we can continue our work of implementing the recreational marijuana program as well as retail expansion for liquor stores,” said Steve Marks, Executive Director of the OLCC. “Rob’s voice will be missed; however, I look forward to working with the new chair as we continue this important work.”

Patridge, who also has served as Klamath County’s District Attorney since 2013 also will resign from that post.

Patridge grew up on a working cattle ranch in Eagle Point, Oregon and has served southern Oregon as a Deputy District Attorney, President of the Medford City Council, and for three terms as the State Representative from Medford where he was the House Majority Whip and Chaired the Public Safety Sub-Committee of Ways and Means.

He also served as the General Counsel for the Rogue Valley Manor/Pacific Retirement Services, president of a multi-state real estate development firm, as the General Counsel and District Director for U.S. Congressman Greg Walden, and as a private business consultant. Patridge is the married father of two teenage children.