

## The Columbia River Gorge Commission

April 29, 2020

Dear Commissioners;

I am deeply concerned about the push to restrict commercial activities like wineries on agricultural lands within the Scenic Area. Small production, family wineries, under 10,000 cases, aim to express and translate a specific place of growing fruit into a glass of wine. Nuances to wine quality and distinctiveness lose transparency when the location of viticulture and enology become separate in operation.

The connection of the consumer to a family run winery directly ties to experiencing the value added product on the site where it was grown and crafted. It is a bonding of the customer to the brand that makes artisanal, family operated wineries economically viable

A forced separation of the farming and wine production could lead to unintended consequences. Rather than building their winery in a small, modest facility, affordable to a family aiming to earn a living off of the land, the capital requirements of commercial construction, within an urban growth boundary, would force families out of the wine industry and result in large corporate controlled brands.

Events extraneous to farming or wine production are already appropriately regulated through the state and county ordinances. The State rules regulating wineries were crafted with over 50 years of observation, experience and adjustments to changing circumstances. I urge the Gorge Commission to pass on the opportunity to regulate in an business environment which already embraces extensive oversight.

Robert A. Morus  
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