

Legislature passes liquor bill

Lawmakers vote to allow liquor stores open Sundays, but the governor may veto

By John Liebhardt
Oregon Daily Emerald

If the Legislature has its way, Oregonians will be able to purchase a little more spirit on Sundays.

The Oregon Legislature passed a resolution during last weekend's special session that would allow the state's 237 liquor stores to open for business on Sundays. The money from Sunday sales of distilled beverages would go to the state's general fund programs, including the Oregon University System.

budget deficit, and the Democratic governor is at odds with the Republican-controlled Legislature on how to rebalance the state's budget.

"At least (Sunday liquor sales) will be an ongoing source of revenue," said State Sen. Tony Corcoran, D-Cottage Grove. Corcoran nicknamed the legislation "shots for tots" because it would provide added revenue that could be funneled directly to public schools.

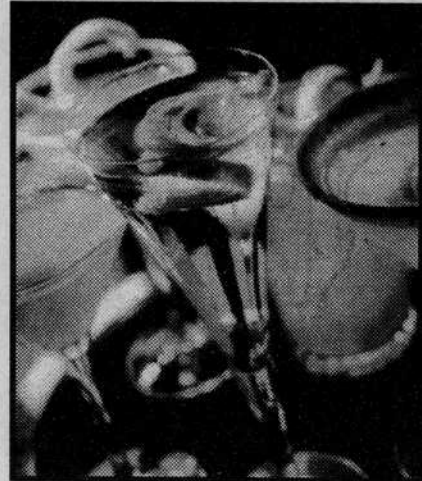
Oregon has been in the liquor business since 1933, when legislators decided to make the state responsible for the sale of packaged liquor. Legislators created Oregon Liquor Control Commission to handle that task.

erages are one of the last things to come out of people's budgets."

If the governor does not veto the legislation, supporters say it will provide an added \$3 million in state revenue. Local liquor store owners doubt it will ever create that much money because the OLCC has said it won't force stores to open on Sunday, which may reduce the amount of alcohol bought that day.

"We can't tell how much revenue it will generate right away, but it will generate revenue," Palke said.

Connie Hammond, co-owner of Northgate Liquor in Springfield, said she and her husband Tom Hammond are not looking forward to the prospect of opening on Sundays.



Russell Weller Emerald

Is gin a tonic for Oregon's budget woes?

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission distributes more than \$100 million per year in net revenue.

Figures are in millions of dollars

State General Fund	\$52.5
City Revenue Sharing Account	\$13.1
Cities	\$18.7
Counties	\$9.4
Mental Health, Alcoholism and Drug Services Account	\$6.2
Wine Advisory Board	\$0.2
Total	\$100.1

Source: Oregon Liquor Control Commission

Oregon law currently forbids liquor stores to open Sundays, while grocery outlets may sell beer and wine all week.

However, Gov. John Kitzhaber may stop the party before it gets under way. Kitzhaber announced he may veto the bill, along with eight others, passed by the Legislature during the special session. A spokesman for Kitzhaber said the governor is expected to decide on its fate by Tuesday at the earliest.

Supporters of the measure see an extra day of liquor sales as another way to increase revenue for a cash-strapped state. Currently, Oregon is facing an estimated \$830 million

During the past fiscal year, OLCC contributed more than \$100 million to different state funds, with a majority going to the state's general fund, the primary pool of revenue for state-funded programs.

Liquor "has been one good source of revenue for the state," said Ken Palke, spokesman for the OLCC.

OLCC purchases stock from alcohol distributors and has the 237 liquor stores sell the inventory. Palke said liquor is a safe business because it is recession proof.

"When times are real good, people tend to buy higher end products," he said. During a recession "durable goods like food and bev-

"We enjoy Sundays off," she said. "We work six days a week, and Sunday is very appreciated." Hammond said she usually spends her day off cleaning shelves, preparing stock and conducting general store maintenance.

Also, years of Oregon blue laws have conditioned Northgate liquor's customers to plan ahead for their purchases.

"Our customers know that we are not open on Sundays, so they do all of their shopping during the week," she said.

E-mail community editor John Liebhardt at johnliebhardt@dailyemerald.com.

News brief

Student Senate approves EMU budget

After an hour of discussion, the ASUO Student Senate Wednesday night voted to approve a 2.6 percent increase in the EMU budget, setting it at \$2,924,191 for 2002-2003.

The board passed the budget by a vote of 9-1. Three senators who are on the EMU Board abstained. Senators passed the budget as requested by the EMU Board, with little debate over line items within it.

EMU programs that received new increases in areas such as programs and employment included the UO Cultural Forum, the UO Ticket Office and EMU Club Sports. Senators briefly discussed

the club sports program.

Sen. Eric Bailey asked for an explanation of how club sports programs could receive incidental fees and yet cut some people from teams during tryouts.

"All incidental fee-funded programs need to be open to every student on campus," he said.

Club Sports Chairman Josh Greenough said cuts are necessary in some teams, especially traveling groups.

"It's just not feasible for us to have 100 people on a soccer team," he said. He added that other club sports programs "absolutely encourage beginners."

As a result of the EMU Budget Committee's decision to eliminate the Student Activities Resource Office, there may be an EMU budget balance of \$32,000 next year. If current SARO coordinator Debra Mar-

tin retires or is hired on in another University position, her salary will revert to the EMU budget. Otherwise, the money will continue to be paid to Martin because her position is contracted.

Some senators suggested moving this money to surplus funds, but after some discussion, the senate decided the EMU Board would allocate the money to groups throughout the year as needed, if the money becomes available.

Prior to the EMU budget hearing, senators voted 11-1 to appoint law student Daneal Grotenhouse to the vacant PFC senate seat. PFC Chairwoman Mary Elizabeth Madden voted against her appointment.

They also voted 10-2 to appoint law student Stephen Yoshida to the ASUO Constitution Court.

— Kara Cogswell

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