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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FROM OREGON
PARTNERSHIP*****

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**OREGON PARTNERSHIP CALLS FOR “VERY
CAUTIOUS APPROACH” TO OLCC
PROPOSAL ALLOWING TEENS INTO MUSIC
VENUES THAT SERVE ALCOHOL**

(Portland, Oregon) Oregon Partnership recommends caution and strict enforcement of a proposed rule change by the OLCC that would allow teens to be admitted to more establishments where alcohol is served.

Local music industry promoters are backing the move, saying teens who want to listen to live music have little opportunity because they are unable to attend venues where drinking is allowed.

In drafting the rule, OLCC staff has made a substantial effort to exercise care and caution in allowing more opportunities for young people to enjoy live entertainment and other activities.

But Oregon Partnership, a statewide non-profit providing substance abuse prevention education and treatment referral, warns that it won't support the rule if it allows younger children – particularly those seventeen and under - into entertainment venues where alcohol is consumed

“More young tweens and teens – especially girls –are partying with older males in their 20s,” says Oregon Partnership’s Pam Erickson. “No rule should facilitate this dangerous trend.”

There is nothing in the rule change addressing age limits or requirements and no indication that curfew laws must be considered.

The rule includes a new provision giving the OLCC the ability to cite the licensee if they fail to follow their own control plan, which is a critical enforcement tool. A control plan must demonstrate that minors will not obtain alcohol or be exposed to a “drinking environment.”

“The number of licenses has been increasing regularly for many years without a concurrent increase of OLCC enforcement staff,” says Erickson. “We would like to see new OLCC resources devoted to premise compliance checks, which is a proven method of reducing illegal sales to minors.”

While the OLCC received funding for additional staff from the last legislative session, Oregon Partnership still feels it does not meet current needs. With the number of licenses growing each year, there is also a growing need of enforcement.

Not only should the OLCC be cautious about allowing more minors in licensed establishments, but it should also be cautious about overtaxing its enforcement resources.

About Oregon Partnership:

Oregon Partnership is a statewide nonprofit that has worked to promote healthy kids and communities for well over a decade by raising awareness about drug and alcohol issues, providing prevention education in classrooms, and 24-hour crisis lines for people needing help. To learn more, visit www.orpartnership.org.