

Written Public Comment
June 23, 2023, OSL Commission meeting

Submitted by Heather Field, Retailer

I have been a long-standing retailer since 1996. I have witnessed many changes in structure to the Oregon Lottery percentage commission scale system. Currently the system in place now drops the percentage value as the retailer makes higher income for the lottery. This is a punishment system and defeats incentive. We bars and restaurants struggle to stay alive. Our overhead is a hungry giant and we keep little profit. The initial percentage at the beginning of the fiscal year is good at 2.5%. In only 2 or 3 months of summertime busy on the Oregon Coast the percentage drops heading into fall and a few months later drops again and then again all through the long, slow winter months and at the end of the fiscal year in June I am at 1.34%. This is incredibly hard on my business. It's a bare bones survival game in the winter to have less percentage and still pay all the bills and overhead.

If the percentage rate stayed at 2.5% the business would be worth the trouble but as it drops I am always contemplating getting out of the business because of the survival hardships. I know the percentage drops are based on taxation. But this does not help my business. I would like to know why the lottery is concerned with my taxes and thus drops my income.

The more the machines are played the more we have to work, being taken away from other services of the business and yet we are fiscally punished. We earn that percentage. The machines are demanding with needs of fixing glitches, replacing paper, paper jams, stopping everything to address the machine alarms, keeping them clean etc. Not to mention the customer payout being very labor intensive, we are on our feet running and counting money constantly. Counting the lottery till in and out 3 times a day due to shift changes, paying the customers, changing bills out when a machine won't accept a bill, they are high maintenance and demanding of our constant attention. The lottery still makes it's full share and already gets the lions share. It feels like usury and punishment when the rate drops and then we pay amusement taxes and monthly line fees to boot.

The new system is good in many ways as it counts the dollar played and replayed ad infinitum. That structure is excellent. My complaint is only about the percentage rate dropping the more we make for the lottery resulting in the punishment system rather than the incentive system.

We create a great environment to draw the customers in, I have daily talks with employees to keep a smooth operation and the customers are consuming your product and yet we are punished.

Thank you for this platform to voice my concerns,

Heather Field
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