

NEWS

Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission

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OLCC Chair Dennis Doherty Announces Retirement; Commissioner Alicia Hays Named New Chair

Commission will continue its progress and commitment to Oregon's Way

Portland, OR -- Commission Chair Dennis Doherty has retired after more than four years of service to the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC), including nearly three years as its Chair. Commissioner Alicia Hays has been appointed by Governor Tina Kotek to serve as the Commission's next Chair, ensuring continued leadership as the agency maintains its mission of protecting public health and safety while serving Oregon's alcohol and cannabis industries. This change was effective June 24, 2026.

Doherty joined the Commission in 2022 in one of the most challenging periods in the agency's history. He later became Commission Chair in October 2023, and under his leadership, the Commission helped restore stability following a leadership transition while also taking steps to improve governance and transparency and restore public trust.

During his tenure as chair, the Commission appointed an Executive Director, oversaw significant progress on the agency's new 350,000-square-foot distilled spirits distribution warehouse in Canby; advanced the implementation of the Cannabis and Alcohol Management Program (CAMP); expanded the Commission from seven to nine members; and continued modernization efforts that positioned the agency for long-term success.

"It has been an honor to serve Oregonians in this capacity. The OLCC has a vital mission: protecting the health and safety of our citizens while creating genuine opportunity for Oregon business owners and entrepreneurs. As I depart, I have full confidence in the OLCC's future. I am proud of the respect and care we brought to our mission. Our Executive Director, Tara Wasiak, is an effective leader and has assembled an extremely talented executive team. Finally, I am excited that Alicia Hays is stepping into the chair role. She is a dedicated, thoughtful public servant, and I have no doubt she will be an able steward of the OLCC," Doherty said.

To this new role, Commissioner Hays brings both her three years of service as an OLCC Commissioner during a very busy time for the agency and her impressive public service background.

Hays joined the Commission in October 2023 and brings more than three decades of leadership in public health and human services. She retired as Director of Lane County Health & Human Services after a distinguished career focused on behavioral health, disability services, public health, juvenile justice, and programs supporting children and families. A longtime advocate for equity and inclusion, Hays also served four terms on the Eugene School Board and was recognized as Oregon School Board Member of the Year in 2020.

"I was very honored when Governor Kotek asked me to assume this new role. I want to thank Chair Doherty for his stewardship of the OLCC over these past four years. It's been an immense privilege to serve with him, and we will miss his wisdom and deepfelt dedication to the Commission," Hays said. "In the last three years, I have been impressed and inspired by the commitment of the agency towards its critical mission – overseeing the safe and responsible access to alcohol and cannabis – and I'm confident we will continue to make great strides towards this goal."

As Chair, Hays will lead the Commission as it continues to modernize agency operations, strengthen regulatory oversight and ensure Oregon's alcohol and cannabis industries are regulated in a manner that protects public health and safety while supporting responsible businesses throughout the state.

"I want to thank Chair Doherty for his years of service to the Commission and for his leadership," said Executive Director Tara Wasiak. "I very much appreciated his support during my transition into the Executive Director role and his commitment

to collaboration and cooperation. I consider us fortunate to have worked with Chair Doherty, and I look forward to working with Commissioner Hays in continuing our agency's focus on service to the state."

Doherty's retirement marks the conclusion of a transformational chapter for the Commission. It's part of a new beginning, an era of leadership focused on continuing the agency's progress and commitment to its mission, ensuring all Oregonians can enjoy the benefits of our well-regulated system for generations to come. That's Oregon's way.

Each year Oregon's Way of distributing and selling distilled spirits generates hundreds of millions of dollars and brings many benefits to people all across our state. Oregon's Way keeps our communities beautiful, safe and prosperous, delivers more choice and fairer prices and gives small businesses and entrepreneurs a better deal. Learn more at [Oregon's Way](#).



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