



EXHIBIT: 9 SB 1557
2012 SESSION SEN. JUDICIARY
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SUBMITTED BY: Armenta

Hello Chair Prozanski and Vice-chair Kruse and members of the committee. My name is Lucas Armenta and I am a student at Lane Community College. I am here today to speak on behalf of the Oregon Student Association representing over 100,000 students across the state.

We have some concerns about Senate Bill 1557 and therefore lead us to be opposed to the bill in its current form.

It appears that this bill targets minors for illegal drug use. Furthermore, this charges a fee of \$1000 or \$2000. This is almost equivalent to a term of college. I would hope that young people would be focused on using those dollars for school. If the fee is necessary then I would hope that this bill directs those funds towards illegal drug rehab and educational programs.

This is yet another bill that criminalizes youth. The Oregon Student Association does not work exclusively with Oregon's young people but we do think that focusing on making illegal drugs illegal to young people leads people to have criminal records earlier in life:

- This can lead to suspension or expulsion from some college campuses.
- This can lead to a loss of financial aid dollars.
- This can lead to a loss of access to illegal drug educational opportunities that exist on our college campuses.

Personally, I don't use illegal drugs, but I believe that this bill does not target the root of the problem. It is well intentioned, but misguided.

We also believe that this law targets under-represented communities whom already make up a larger portion of the prison population.

Youth black males are more than 3 times likely than their white counterparts to be convicted of a measure 11 crime. We know this does not change measure 11 crimes, but those laws already direct tens of millions towards prisons and away from education in Oregon. We hope that you all had the opportunity to read through the Racial Equity Report that was published last month.

Finally, we are concerned about the nature of this subject in this session. This is a very complicated topic and we think a 35 day session is not long enough to fully address a law that could criminalize young people even further. We understand that police officers are looking for ways to limit illegal drug use at school and in public. \$1000 or \$2000 dollars is too much for a young person to handle. We would hope that preventative measures would be sought before charging unmanageable costs to young people.

Thank you.