



**Sharon Meieran**

Multnomah County Commissioner, District 1

501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600, Portland, Oregon 97214  
Phone: (503) 988-5220 | Email: [district1@multco.us](mailto:district1@multco.us)

---

**Testimony in support of House Bill 4143**  
***Governor's Opioid Epidemic Task Force 2018 Priorities***

Chair Greenlick, Vice Chairs Hayden and Nosse, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 4143, legislation brought forward by the Governor's Opioid Epidemic Task Force that will help address a crisis of opioid use and addiction that has caused harm in every community across our state.

As an emergency physician I see firsthand the effects of the opioid epidemic during almost every shift that I work. In Multnomah County, there are very few county services and programs that have not been touched by this epidemic. Our health clinics, public safety services, housing resources, and even our libraries are affected. We have had to devote a larger and larger share of our public resources to deal with the effects of opioid addiction, and the demand for substance abuse treatment across the board -- from detox to residential -- far exceeds the availability of these services.

The three elements of this bill take important steps to address different facets of the opioid crisis. First, the county pilot projects outlined in the bill will bring resources to the local level where they are needed most, and may be tailored to a region's unique needs. Peers can be such a powerful, effective element in supporting a person's recovery, so the option to fund evidence-based peer-delivered services through these projects is a wise investment. Second, requiring prescribers to register for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) is an essential step toward ensuring that providers have a complete picture of a patient's opioid prescriptions. Last year, the legislature took an important step toward identifying and educating providers who prescribe the most opioids with House Bill 3440's creation of the PDMP Advisory Commission Clinical Review Subcommittee. The PDMP can be a powerful tool, if providers are actively participating and we're able to use data effectively to target educational efforts and oversight. And finally, the Department of Consumer and Business Services study outlined in this bill has the potential to provide much-needed information to address challenges in ensuring access to quality substance abuse treatment.

I applaud the work of the Opioid Epidemic Task Force to produce these recommendations. The priorities forwarded in this legislation are important ones, and Multnomah County looks forward to seeing this work continue to develop and expand during the 2019 legislative session. As our communities grapple with the devastating effects of opioid addiction, I am pleased to support House Bill 4143, which advances our statewide efforts to prevent and respond to this crisis.

Respectfully submitted,

