

To Oregon Legislature,

This letter is in support of the proposed bill being presented tomorrow: HB2797 – Taylor’s Law.

Please consider the extremely important benefits of this proposed law. Punishing drug dealers for selling drugs

To individuals that result in the cause of an overdose is a critical factor in the widespread opioid addiction epidemic.

It would at the very least give significant consequences to criminal behavior that is otherwise overlooked.

More than two million people are currently battling opioid addiction, and the numbers don’t show any signs of slowing down.

In the late 1990’s, the pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients could not become addicted to opioids,

And healthcare providers began prescribing them at a greater rate. Opioid prescriptions increased fourfold between 1999 and 2014.

It is no surprise that the U.S. is facing an opioid crisis of epic proportions. Doctors keep prescribing and patients trust their doctors so

They keep taking the medication. In the situations where a doctor finally stops prescribing the opioids, the patient is already addicted and

doesn’t have the capacity to function without the opioids so often turns to the street drug dealers to obtain the opioids.

Taylor Martinek was a vibrant, loving, charismatic individual. He had so much going for him and so much life to live. He was a productive, contributing

Member of our community. His doctors kept prescribing this knowingly addictive drug. Once they stopped and he was the victim of this horrible addiction,

he was further victimized as a result of the drug dealer selling him the pills his body needed. He died. The criminal who sold the pills to him

suffered no consequences.

There are two people in my own family who have faced similar opioid addictions. They became addicted to opioids because of surgeries and chronic pain. One has a doctor who has continued to over-prescribe the pills knowing of this individual's addiction problem. His clinic may face criminal charges soon. That doctor will likely end up in prison.

The other family member had a doctor who stopped prescribing the opioids. He turned to the streets to get the pills and ended up dying as a result. His DRUG DEALER received no punishment, just as Taylor's dealer did not – though a doctor would.

Because of this epidemic, numerous doctors are now being prosecuted for over-prescribing opioids – they are being called drug dealers in white coats.

There are enough of these greedy, immoral professionals who continue to destroy patient's lives that our criminal justice system is starting to take action.

They are guilty of creating the prescription epidemic which is driving the opioid epidemic.

If there are consequences for DOCTORS over-prescribing opioids to their patients, there must at least be equal consequences for STREET DRUG DEALERS.

Mandatory prison sentences is an absolute necessity to deter these criminals.

If it takes our Oregon Legislature to pass a law to make this happen, then let us be the first in the nation to take this step.

Sincerely,

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