

March 15, 2021

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation  
From: Laurie Chadwick and Lee Mercer, Silverton OR  
RE: Support for full funding of Measure 110 drug treatment programs and SB 755

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation

We are retired business owners and former Californians residing in Silverton. We love living in Oregon, where most of our children and grandchildren live near us in Silverton, Salem and Scotts Mills. We are supporters of Health Care for All Oregon, a member organization of the Health Justice Recover Alliance, which supported the passage of Measure 110 to decriminalize small quantities of drugs and provide funding for adequate drug treatment programs throughout the state of Oregon.

Having grown up in California in the sixties, and in other settings, we have been touched by the life challenges of those afflicted by drug addiction. My best friend from childhood, deep into drug use, was hospitalized at Agnew State Hospital, underwent 60 shock treatments, and continued as a lonely alcoholic in Big Sur till he finally got sober. Then after reaching sobriety, his drug and alcohol use caught up with him as he came down with hepatitis C and succumbed recently from liver cancer.

Several other friends of Laurie's and mine in the sixties died of drug overdoses. A good friend of mine in high school, and Laurie's first husband, became addicted to heroin. While Laurie was 7 months pregnant with her first child, who now is grown and lives in Scotts Mills, her husband would leave them home and with no money for groceries, as he disappeared for days to feed his habit. When he was home, she would have to hide her cash and her watch when she showered, to keep him from stealing them to buy drugs. When her son was born, his father was doing hard time in a California penitentiary for crimes committed to feed his habit. And while their infant son was growing up, he never got to know his father well, due to his dad's struggles with drugs. Finally, having gotten off heroin he turned to alcohol abuse. Out on many a bender, his friends would drop him off on the front lawn, passed out. He finally sought treatment with Antabuse, a drug which is supposed to keep an individual from drinking, as it causes a violent reaction if you drink while on it. And, despite knowing the risk, he had a few drinks and died.

In later years others of our friends and coworkers suffered from drug addiction. While managing a temporary labor agency putting homeless folks to work in Santa Cruz, as the workers lined up at 7 am to sign up for construction jobs, for which they were paid daily, I learned that one of our regulars had overdosed and died in the nearby creek bed, where many of them camped.

Now in Oregon, use of hard drugs is not only rampant in the Metro area, but throughout rural Oregon. It is surely time we step up as Oregonians and become our brothers' and sisters' keepers and provide the addiction treatment services needed to end this nightmare.

We respectfully request that you support full funding of Measure 110 and pass SB 755.

Yours Sincerely,

Laurie Chadwick and Lee Mercer  
Silverton, OR