

Dear Chairman Prozanski and members of the of the Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation,

My name is Lissette Erickson. I reside in Tillamook County and I am writing this Letter on behalf of North County Racial And Social Justice that was created last year in the wake of George Floyd's Killing on the street of Minneapolis on May 25th, 2020. I come to you today as a Mom of two teens, a business owner, an activist, and local community member. I have watched a few friends and family members battles with drug addictions and have witnessed the hardship after hardship they have had to go through because they couldn't get the resources they needed to get back up on their feet so they could be members of society.

There are so many families and lives that get torn apart because they are sent to jail or sentenced for years for carrying or using small amount of drugs...All because we don't have the right systems and resources in place to help people get the right help. Oxford Treatment Center did a report on March, 2021, that said Drug abuse and addiction often go hand in hand. The Prison Policy Initiative-reports that, in 2017, one incarcerated person in five faced a drug charge. Of those people, 456,000 were held for a nonviolent drug offense, including possession, which suggest that instead of helping these folks get the right help... They are sent to prisons, jails, and or incarcerate for years, and or never re-enters their communities because of shame and stigma.

Research that was cited by the American Public Health Association suggests that only 11% of people who have been incarcerated and have addictions get treatment for their addictions. The others are just left in-prisoned to fend for themselves with no where to turn or anyone to turn too for help, which doesn't make them feel good I'm sure As a human being. So they either end up taking their own lives or stay in the prison system that they were thrown in with an drug addictions and with no care. Funding need to be invested areas that makes it easy for folks to get the help they need and the Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act needs to be implemented. Changes need to be made in all corners so people aren't losing their lives or families losing loved ones, or lives being left in ruins.

'Imagine if the government chased sick people with diabetes, put a tax on insulin and drove it into the black market, told doctors they couldn't treat them, then sent them to jail. If we did that, everyone would know we were crazy. Yet we do practically the same thing every day in the week to sick people hooked on drugs.'

—Billie Holiday
Killed by the war on drugs

Lissette Erickson
Co-Founder, Activist & Organizer
North County Racial And Social Justice