

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

My name is Talia Stringfellow and I live in NW Portland. I am here to advocate in support of SB755. I am a active community member who is concerned with our ability to provide adequate resources for those of us who are seeking to recover from addiction.

?Addiction is a public health emergency and needs to be addressed as such in this legislative session as part of your hard work to address the pandemic. Unfortunately yet unsurprisingly, People of color and low-income Oregonians, have historically been disproportionately harmed by Oregon's failed approach of treating addiction like a crime, rather than a health issue. They are underrepresented in the healthcare system, while being overrepresented in the criminal justice system. ?We must invest now in our tribal and minority communities via cultural specific organizations as they have had to bare the brunt of this health crisis in our state with little resources or support. In our communal effort to address systemic racism, this is a critical step to healthier BIPOC communities.

Treatment is a critical part of recovery and healing our community. It is already difficult for those of us affected by addiction to seek support and help, when people are ready to recover - we need to be ready and able to meet them half way. The infrastructure is, for the most part, already available - just severely underfunded. I urge you to vote to provide the critical funding necessary to address this health crisis.

Addiction affects all of us while homelessness, overdoses and mental illness plague our most vulnerable communities. This would be a proactive, positive next step in our work to have a healthier community. This is an opportunity to save Oregonian lives, now. I hope that I can count on you to advocate for comprehensive funding for these critical community services that voters approved in Measure 110.

Thank you.
Respectfully,
Talia Stringfellow