



4TH DIMENSION RECOVERY CENTER

★ ACTION ★ COMMUNITY ★ KNOWLEDGE ★ EMPOWERMENT

HB3377

03/22/2021 - Testimony

Good morning Chair Sanchez, Representative Nosse, and the House Committee on Behavioral Health. For the Record, My Name is Robert Sanders, and I am a person in long-term recovery.

I come to this committee today with the belief that we all have an understanding of the skyrocketing rates of Substance Use Disorder that are affecting our communities, I believe that we all know how Oregon and it's taxpayers have been absorbing the costs of a fractured system through reactive means, emergency room visits, and policies that are as outdated as they are harmful.

Today I come to this committee with the belief that ACRA – spearheaded through the efforts led by the Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission and Representative Sanchez - bring us closer to realizing a system based in equity, prevention, and comprehensive care.

When I came home from my second deployment – I re-entered the civilian world chemically dependent, without connection, and lacking purpose. I was stuck between two healthcare systems that failed to prioritize the treatment and recovery support that would eventually lead me to the life I'm living today.

Sadly – despite battling stigma, long waits, and a broken infrastructure – my experience was still better than the 1923 of my peers who died from alcohol related causes in 2017.

I applaud this bill for being a step in the right direction; I fully support the increased access to healthcare that it creates.

I also urge this body, that we must keep moving forward.

With that being said, I believe that the need for culturally specific treatment, detox, and community centers are a necessary step forward. We cannot claim to be a state ahead of the curve – when we wait until it's deemed safe to take the risk. We cannot claim to be pioneers – when our steps are defined by those who stand with lobbyists and an industry that puts profit before people.

Today I urge that this portion of the Addiction Crisis Recovery Act be moved forward – but I plea that we don't settle.

I want to thank Representative Sanchez for having the courage to serve fearlessly, and this body for listening to our thoughts.

-Robert Sanders