

Good Afternoon Tri-Chairs of Ways and Means.

My name is Charles Hemingway. I live in Bend. I am an Addictions Professional. I have worked in residential, outpatient, recovery house and private practice settings Central Oregon for the past 18 years and I am in long-term recovery myself.

As an Addictions Professional I ask you to create and fund Representative Sanchez's legislative task force in HB 3377. This task force will give us the opportunity to finally have a meaningful conversation about how to sustainably fund behavioral health services in Oregon.

Each day throughout Oregon people are dying from alcohol addiction. This past winter in Bend we had a high profile case of Mr. David Savory, a husband and father who died outside, alone, from exposure after apparently passing out dead drunk and succumbing to hypothermia.

The questions and issues are complicated. Mr. Savory died in an alley about 100 feet around the corner from a location where cheap alcohol could be purchased. Was that a factor? Was it the lack of available treatment beds where we could have reached him earlier? Was it the paucity of peer support specialists and other addiction professionals who could have reached out to him? This task force will begin the process of addressing cases like Mr. Savory's so that his death and the death of others like him are not in vain. Please pass HB 3377.

Thank You