



Testimony supporting SB 755 -
funding substance abuse treatment, to implement Measure 110

Our organization, Justice Advocates, opposes mass incarceration and anything that unjustly leads to it, such as criminalizing drug use, including the disproportionate convictions of people of color and poor people for possession. We know that drug addiction should be treated as a health issue, not a criminal issue, and therefore enthusiastically endorsed Measure 110's decriminalization of personal-amount possession, regardless of what the drug is. Moreover, if someone wants and needs substance abuse treatment, they should be able to get it anywhere in our state.

Oregon voters agreed and passed Measure 110 by over 58%, so the Legislature job now is to ensure that treatment is available for everyone who wants it. Oregon has been deficient in providing enough treatment centers to meet the need, especially in rural areas. Now there is a mandate to greatly increase availability, and we have the funding to do it. Using both the surplus tax revenue from marijuana sales and the money that will be saved as a result of possession decriminalization, Oregon can fund the needed treatment programs.

Although SB 755 doesn't call for expunging records of those who were previously convicted of possession, we think that an amendment should be added to the legislation. It's time to erase the burdens regarding housing and jobs and contacts placed on individuals with previous convictions for possession that is no longer considered criminal. Let's help people successfully re-enter our Oregon communities.