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**TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation**  
**FROM: Mae Lee Browning, Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association**  
**DATE: March 1, 2021**  
**RE: Support for SB 755 – Implementation of the Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act**

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Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mae Lee Browning and I am testifying on behalf of OCDLA.

The Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association is a nonprofit professional association for experts, private investigators, and attorneys who represent Oregon's children and parents in juvenile dependency proceedings, youth in juvenile delinquency proceedings, adults in criminal proceedings at the trial and appellate level, as well as civil commitment proceedings throughout the state of Oregon.

**OCDLA supports SB 755.**

Addiction is a health issue. Much like diabetes and heart disease, it requires attentive and compassionate treatment and support. With long-term individualized support, people in recovery can live long, healthy lives.

Treating addiction as a crime is counter-productive. Criminal convictions for possessing a small amount of drugs can lead to difficulties finding a job, obtaining a professional license, or even obtaining a credit card.

The criminal justice system disproportionately harms people of color, who despite using drugs at the same rate as white people in Oregon, were three times more likely to be arrested for drug possession before Measure 110. People of color were also sentenced more harshly than white people. The Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act will decrease, if not completely eliminate, racial disparities in drug arrests and convictions in Oregon.

Halting drug arrests is only the beginning. Our treatment system is chronically fractured and underfunded — leading to preventable suffering and loss. Measure 110 was intended to fund critical recovery services that already exist, but are underfunded, and to expand housing assistance, peer support and harm reduction services.

By fully implementing the Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act, we have an opportunity to stand up for Oregon's values of racial equity, justice and healing. We can revitalize communities, keep families whole and open up economic opportunities. With increased funding for addiction recovery services through this new law, we can greatly expand access to drug addiction treatment and services, reducing long wait lines, and making those services available to all who want and



need them. The recovery services we need to invest in already exist; they just need more funding so that they can meet the demand.

**OCDLA urges your support for SB 755.** Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

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