

Chairs Lieber and Kropf, members of the Joint Interim Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response,

I am reaching out to you to call for real solutions, real safety, and real healing when it comes to addressing the overdose and addiction crisis. Leaders need to do more - and fast - to address the crisis in our community. They need to finally provide the housing, drug treatment, and mental health care that people need and voters have overwhelmingly supported. We also need to move beyond scare tactics and fear mongering. Controversial and divisive proposals to repeal Measure 110 are not the answer.

We shouldn't expect the police to solve social problems like mental illness, homelessness, or addiction — and we cannot arrest our way out of these problems. It's time for solutions that let mental health and drug treatment professionals help people who need and want treatment, reducing waiting lists and lines for detox services and not returning to the harmful war on drugs that disproportionately impacted Black and Brown Oregonians.

We know the real solution is to expand access to treatment services and I urge the committee to focus on helping and healing our communities.

We must be honest. Ms 110 failed to include a provision requiring treatment availability before decriminalizing hard drugs. Those 2 features needed to be linked. And, overcoming the shortage of trained staff and available beds remains a challenge, especially in a state like OR where high quality implementation leadership and management is absent.

Your emphasis must be on getting treatment available urgently. Your committee must hold state officials to account via regular reports on specific implementation steps. Failure to impose aggressive oversight will leave drug lords as the continued winners.

Sincerely,
John Elizalde
john_elizalde@hotmail.com 97223