

Do Something About Ballot Measure 110

Dear Legislators —

I write today to urge you to fix Oregon's drug crisis.

I have lived in Portland for the better part of 40 years. I have never seen anything like the destruction wrought on our city by Ballot Measure 110.

Every day I ride my bike past tents and campsites where ragged knots of people huff fentanyl from tin foil and lie sprawled and catatonic on the sidewalk. Sometimes the drug hits them so fast they don't have time to lie down. They slump in doorways, they lean against walls, they drape themselves on benches. Their clothes are ragged and filthy. They're way too high to care. When they come down, they wander barefoot through the streets wrapped in blankets, looking for the next fix.

A man rummages through my trash cans in the middle of the night, looking for a bag of drugs he thinks he stashed there. The drugs make him crazy. He keeps turning on my garden hose to put out imaginary fires set by imaginary demons. I remove the handle so he won't flood the basement. So he turns on the neighbor's hose. More drugs. More fires. More demons.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, the number of unintentional opioid overdose deaths in Oregon has nearly quadrupled from 280 in 2019 to 995 in 2022. [And 2023 is on track to be worse than ever.](#)

10 minors in Portland have overdosed on fentanyl since June, according to the [Portland Police Bureau](#), including several toddlers. Five of them died. Tragically, the police were reduced to politely suggesting that users keep their drugs away from their kids. Because the police have no tools to stop people from using fentanyl or any other drug.

Ballot Measure 110 has been a catastrophe. Oregon's drug epidemic is destroying our brothers and sisters, our sons and daughters, our parents, our families, our schools, our neighborhoods, and our communities.

Everyone agrees that drug addiction is a medical problem and that users need treatment. The problem is that users resist treatment because it means losing access to the drugs they crave. So judges and police officers need stronger tools and incentives to help users get into treatment.

I urge you to act now:

- Double down on treatment programs that work.
- Give law enforcement the tools they need to break the cycle of addiction.
- Restore misdemeanor penalties for possession of hard drugs.

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