

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Geoffrey Hamlyn and I am a resident of SE Portland, OR.

Oregon is in the midst of a public health emergency. No better term can be found to address what is happening on our streets as a result of the fentanyl crisis. Fentanyl is destroying lives - of those who are using, of their families and friends, of the business owners and employees who work in hard hit areas, and of millions of community members who are now living in a less safe, less economically stable state.

Measure 110 was passed during a period of rapid change and in reaction to the over-policing and disenfranchisement of BIPOC communities nationwide. It was also passed in the spirit of Oregon's historic tolerance around substance use. The motivations behind Measure 110 were and still remain laudable.

What could not have been foreseen in 2020 was the potential for fentanyl, homelessness, and general economic upheaval to converge in 2021+, which together have helped drive the conditions we see today. What could have been foreseen in 2020 was the state's lack of treatment capacity and infrastructure to support addiction and mental/behavioral health.

While many will argue about why we are seeing addiction on our streets and why our economy is struggling, it is beyond a doubt that fentanyl and the constellation of mental/behavioral health issues surrounding it are a significant driver of the problems we see in Oregon (and particularly in Portland) today.

I urge the state to take action: to require treatment for anyone found to be using fentanyl or meth; to dramatically expand our capacity to treat addiction and mental/behavioral health issues; and to recriminalize possession and public use of fentanyl and/or meth for repeat offenders, punishable by at least a class A misdemeanor, if not a felony. The state should also undertake a massive PR campaign to educate the American public around the outcomes of Measure 110 and how it is proactively taking steps to course correct. We need good narratives coming out of Oregon again, and this is a major opportunity to start promoting progress.

There is no time to waste. Our state is in the midst of an emergency of our own making and lawmakers need to act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Geoffrey Hamlyn