

Dear Oregon Legislature:

I am currently a US Citizen of Spanish and Venezuelan origin. I have resided in Portland since 2011. I have witnessed first hand the destruction of the city. Decriminalizing the consumption of drugs without having effective treatment options ready has turned the city into an open air drug market. Many families are leaving the city. I have actually moved my children to a boarding school in India because it was no longer safe for us to walk to school, go to the parks in downtown, and do the regular daily activities we used to do.

I spend plenty of time in Europe now. I have visited Portugal as well. There's no excuse for the damage this policy and its implementation has created claiming it mirrors policies we have in Europe. Legislators and agencies should be held accountable for endangering public health, as well as the destruction of public property and the social fabric of the city. If you want to tackle the war on drugs, you need to legalize both sides of the trade. And because drugs are highly addictive, their sale should be highly regulated (<https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/politica/luz-verde-a-la-venta-controlada-de-cannabis-en-zurich-/48382294>). What you are doing now, is providing a great business opportunity for illicit organizations to flourish at the expense of licit businesses. There's nothing progressive about this. If you want to learn what we do in Europe and how it can be applied to the US, follow Michael Shellenberger's work (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/>)

Your approach to problem-solving and policy making is flawed at best. You need to stop encouraging vagrants, and focus on the policies that make a vibrant society: reduce red tape for small businesses, provide a safe environment for the people that come to the city to live and work within the legal and regulated economy, and stop experimenting with failed policies that only increase taxes and poverty. Unlike European countries, you don't have the public sector capacity to engage in complex publicly funded schemes. They drain the taxpayer and create more deadweight loss in the economy. You need to start looking at supply side policies. And if you don't know what they are, use common sense: don't make policies that kill your tax base. Instead, do policies that promote growth. You are turning Oregon, and Portland in particular, into a failed state, and a playground for Cartels, just like many Latin American countries.

Finally, if you're so concerned about the criminal justice system, instead of turning cities into open jails, I have a suggestion for you: re-build your prisons so they provide an effective avenue for people to become better members of society. Don't fool us by visiting Norway, and then just changing the inmate denomination. See here: [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/oregon-prison-system-legal-assistant\\_n\\_62604225e4b08393e1bfdd7f](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/oregon-prison-system-legal-assistant_n_62604225e4b08393e1bfdd7f). This is actually a good start if you actually cared for the country and the society, instead of your own ideology: <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/inside-jared-kushners-personal-crusade-reform-americas-prisons>

Best,

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