

Date: Monday, December 4, 2023

To: Joint Interim Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

From: Keith Tervalon

Re: Support for Measure 110

Co-Chairs Lieber and Kropf and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keith Tervalon. As a Black community organizer deeply invested in the well-being of our neighborhoods, I want to express my strong support for Measure 110 in Oregon, a pivotal initiative that addresses addiction with a lens of empathy and community well-being. In our society, too often, addiction has been met with punitive measures that perpetuate a cycle of incarceration. Never before the passage of Measure 110 have we made a sincere effort to address the root cause of addiction. Measure 110 takes a bold step in shifting this paradigm. It recognizes addiction as a health issue, not a criminal one, aligning with our community's ethos of compassion and understanding.

This measure is not just a policy change; it represents a commitment to transforming lives. By reallocating resources from punishment to treatment and recovery services, Measure 110 seeks to provide a genuine path to healing. This is a critical shift in perspective, recognizing that individuals grappling with substance abuse need support, not punishment.

Moreover, as a Black Man, I cannot ignore the systemic disparities that have plagued our communities for far too long. Men who look like me have, too often, spent their lives behind bars for experiencing addiction. Measure 110 is a vital component in dismantling these deeply rooted inequalities. By focusing on rehabilitation and support, rather than incarceration, we take a significant stride towards breaking the cycle of systemic oppression that disproportionately affects Black individuals.

Our communities deserve equitable access to health and wellness resources, and Measure 110 is a tangible step in that direction. It signals a commitment to justice that goes beyond rhetoric, acknowledging the need for comprehensive, compassionate solutions to address the complexities of addiction.

In endorsing Measure 110, we advocate for a future where our communities are not only safer but also more equitable. This initiative is an opportunity to reshape the narrative surrounding addiction, fostering understanding and support instead of judgment and punishment.

I urge each member of our community to join me in supporting Measure 110. Together, we can create a more compassionate, just, and healthier Oregon for all.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

*Keith Tervalon*  
Ashland, Oregon

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