

December 4, 2023

Joint Interim Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Testimony on Oregon Legislature's Response to Homelessness and Addiction**

Co-Chair Kropf, Co-Chair Lieber, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony. My name is Jude al-Ghazal Stone. Although I work for the ACLU of Oregon, I'm only sharing my personal thoughts today and not representing the organization.

**I urge you to oppose criminalizing approaches to Oregon's homelessness and addiction crises.** I share people's concern and heartbreak with the current state of human suffering that we see on Oregon's streets. Like many proponents and critics of Measure 110 alike, I want to reduce the suffering of Oregonians who are struggling with addiction and homelessness.

But if we want less drug addiction and homelessness, we need to listen to the data and implement strategies that actually work. The war on drugs is widely regarded as a failure, whereas the data shows incredible success when we treat addiction like the health crisis that it is.

Addiction runs in both sides of my family, and I have many loved ones who have wrestled with substance use. Notably, not one of my loved ones has found recovery in a jail cell or the prison system. They got their lives back through voluntary, health-based treatment clinics.

I agree with most people that the rollout of Measure 110 was extremely disappointing. But one thing is clear: jailing people struggling with addiction never helped Oregonians in the past, and it won't work now. Instead of returning to failed, criminalizing policies, I urge you to push for major improvements in getting homeless people into supportive housing, and people with drug and mental health issues into treatment.

We need to move beyond scare tactics and fear-mongering. We keep expecting police to solve every social problem, from mental illness to homelessness and addiction. We don't need controversial policies that disproportionately harm Black and brown communities and our homeless neighbors. It's time for solutions that let mental health and drug treatment professionals help people who need and want treatment, freeing up police to focus on violent crime.

**Please help Oregon heal by opposing criminal responses to addiction and homelessness and increasing data-backed support services that can actually solve these issues.**

Thank you,

Jude al-Ghazal Stone  
He/Him/His