

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 Addiction and Community Safety

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony today. My name is Emily-Grace Cropper-Russel and I work for the ACLU of Oregon, but am speaking in a personal capacity as a lifetime resident of Oregon, parent and active community member. I live in Newberg and have worked in social services for the past 10 years. **I urge you to oppose reverting to a criminal approach to Oregon's addiction crisis.**

Before working at the ACLU, I worked at Habitat for Humanity in Yamhill County. Through this work, I saw first hand how Oregon's addiction crisis and affordable housing crisis coincide. We know that stable housing is imperative in addressing addiction. A loss of housing can contribute to the cycle of addiction and services are harder to access without a home.

Reverting to a criminal approach will criminalize poverty and homelessness, when social issues like these need social services not punishment. We know that the war on drugs has been ineffective. Let's not continue to utilize methods that are ineffective.

Thank you,

Emily-Grace Cropper-Russel