

Chairs Lieber and Kropf, members of the Committee

For the record my name is Julia Pinsky and I live in Jacksonville, Oregon.

My husband and I started Max's Mission in 2016, 3 years after our son Max died of an overdose. He was 25 years old.

Max hadn't been using long but like many addicted to using opioids he experienced a rapid downhill escalation. We had been desperate to help him but his entanglement with law enforcement due to his possession charges for heroin kept him trapped stuck in a penal system that offered no help. At one point he was in the hospital about to go into treatment when a sheriff came and arrested him. We were continually thwarted by his justice involvement and he spiraled into desperation as he was made to feel like he was not worthy of any help by those holding him accountable for his charges. We know that a lot has changed in law enforcement since then however going back to punishing people for their addiction will cost lives, not save them. It is not the decriminalization of drug possession that has caused the rise in fatal overdoses although it seems an easy blame. The Washington Post recently reported that overdose rates throughout the country directly correlate to the number of prescription opioids that flooded the country back in 2012. Counties that received the most pills are the counties that are now experiencing the most overdoses. The demand for opioids and the subsequent generational use that we see combined with the spread of fentanyl from the East Coast to the West Coast is the driver of the drug use and overdoses that we experience now. Our problems in Oregon have been compounded by too little too late. There is nowhere near enough treatment or detox beds and when we finally have low barrier harm reduction care, peers from many organizations collaborating to get people the help they need and many programs contributing to positive outcomes, there is talk of the need to change Measure 110 because "It's not working".

Since 2016, when we founded Max's Mission and were putting together naloxone kits in our living room. Today we have walk in offices in Jackson, Josephine and Klamath Counties and an incredible team of dedicated peers, one of whom was saved by naloxone we gave to her mother 5 years ago. We give out approximately 700 naloxone kits every month and we

have helped save countless lives, over 1000 were reported last year alone. At Odyssey our Center in Medford we have over 100 people come in every day mostly unhoused who can access multiple services including assessments for treatment and mental health, housing, medical care, access to MAT telehealth, wound care, naloxone, clean using supplies, grief counselling and so much more.

We are ready to expand our services in Josephine County by opening a similar navigation center in Grants Pass and are seeking \$500,000 to purchase a centrally located building to operate from and expand our capacity to offer these much needed services which we are not currently able to do in Grants Pass.

People struggling with addiction are patients deserving care not criminals needing punishment. We drove 4 hours so that we could talk to you in person. We have met so many amazing people in recovery and we work every day to help people stay alive and find their way back to the life they thought they would have.

Sincerely,

Julia Pinsky

Executive Director Max's Mission

Medford Oregon

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