

Dear Co-chairs Lieber and Kropf and Members of the Committee:

Oregonians deserve real healing, real safety, and real solutions to drug addiction and overdose deaths. Our leaders must do more to address the crisis in our communities, but regressing back to failed drug war policies is not the answer.

Dear legislative representatives,

My name is Jevon Deese, As a concerned member of the community, I am writing to express my strong support for Measure 110 and to urge you to maintain its decriminalization of personal drug possession in Oregon. I have been an active member of our community for many years, working to improve the lives of those around me.

I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of Measure 110 on our community, particularly in its ability to prevent the unnecessary incarceration of individuals struggling with substance use disorders. Measure 110 has provided crucial opportunities for those experiencing houselessness to access much-needed treatment and support, rather than being trapped in a cycle of incarceration.

It is imperative that the legislative body grants more time for Measure 110 to continue its work and to refrain from reverting to criminalization of simple possession.

I implore you to consider the real, positive impact that Measure 110 has had on our community and to support its continuation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

These potential benefits are intended to improve the overall approach to drug-related challenges in Oregon, focusing on support and treatment rather than punitive measures.

Incarceration can have significant effects on individuals' ability to obtain homes and jobs, particularly in the context of drug charges. Here are some impacts and stipulations that may arise for individuals with drug charges on their record in the absence of Measure 110:

1. Housing: Individuals with a drug charge on their record may encounter barriers when seeking housing, as landlords and housing authorities often conduct background checks and may be hesitant to rent to those with a criminal record.
2. Employment: Individuals with a drug charge may face challenges in securing employment, as many employers conduct background checks and may be reluctant to hire individuals with a criminal record, particularly for certain types of positions.
3. Stigmatization: Those with a drug charge on their record may experience social stigma and discrimination, which can further hinder their ability to reintegrate into society and access opportunities for housing and employment.

Measure 110, by decriminalizing the possession of small amounts of drugs and emphasizing treatment over punishment, aims to mitigate these challenges by reducing the impact of drug-related offenses on individuals' ability to secure housing and employment, ultimately promoting better opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

Sincerely,

Jevon Deese

Criminal penalties for people suffering from addiction disproportionately jails Black and Brown Oregonians and hurts people who are struggling. Courts are not qualified to determine whether or not a person needs drug treatment, nor should we force people into treatment when they are not ready to be successful in their recovery.

We deserve real solutions. Oregonians need housing, drug treatment, and mental health care -- and the needs are urgent. We must expand services so that people who want mental health and drug treatment can get it, and we need to reduce waiting lists and lines for detox services.

Handcuffs and jail cells cannot solve behavioral and public health problems like mental illness, homelessness, or addiction. I urge the committee to focus on helping our communities with real solutions that help people heal.

Sincerely,

Jevon Deese  
Portland, OR