

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.

As someone who escaped the hell that is addiction without a record and now runs a community non-profit, works for another non-profit full time, and runs a part time small business in Salem/Kiezer and that has operated in over 170 cities in the state. I want to speak for the those other business owners I know, who care more about our community than our comfort and profit margins. I am constantly grateful when I think of what my life could have looked like had I been caught up in the criminal justice system. What got me to where I am was not punitive measures. It was low barrier housing and culturally specific counseling that took years to find.

I have worked for our juvenile system, I have taught in our prisons, I have worked for our great state issuing critical benefits and through that service I can tell you recriminalizatiin is not the answer. Time after time I've heard those trying to create a life for themselves say thier biggest barrier is thier trauma and barriers created by incaartion.

It is my belief that folks are conflating and confusing issues created by capitalism and racist criminal justice policy. If you spent any time doing community work at all you'd know these issues of public use, addiction, and behavioral health were issues long before M110 and the people voted overwhelmingly for this measure because they as well as all of us in this room know THAT CRIMINALIZING THESE ISSUES HAS NOT, DOES NOT, and WILL NOT WORK. Officers must ACTUALLY play their role in the success AND implantation of this measure instead of spreading false information and blaming M110 for ineffective policing. Contrary to popular belief they very much so DO still have the ability to act. To continue to pretend that the they don't is delusional and harmful at best. They are still able to remove Drugs; selling and manufacturing is still illegal. It is still illegal to harass, steal, and trespass. You are holding those who need your help more accountable than those you pay to protect our city, you our legislatures must hold the line on what your constituents have voted for and not give up on the most marginalized that have already been targeted by racist policies and consistent neglect. YOU CANNOT CRIMINALIZE POVERTY.

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,

Julianne Jackson

Keizer, OR