

Dear sirs,

As a parent of an addict, I have decades of experience with fighting OxyContin and then heroin addiction; I am not impressed with returning to incarceration as a helpful technique in combatting addiction. Nor am I impressed with the current state of rehab programs, state or private, in this state. Nor am I impressed by the "increasing rates of death" being attributed to 110 rather than the actual problem of fentanyl.

I do favor 30 day holds on addicts but not in the nasty jails or the chaotic state rehabs. There needs to be a place that doesn't pull the addict down to hell but that kindly detox's them and then perhaps offer a real rehabilitation. Effective rehab calls for extensive cognitive behavioral therapy and didactic counseling. It must strive to build up the addict as a human being and not as the contemptible human trash that the old system tended to reinforce.

Actual access to rehab has been awful; a thirty day wait list, and by then your addict is long gone. And the programs have been weak. They seemed to think you can lay out the principles of good living and that is adequate. No one is going to talk someone out of being an addict. And it isn't going to happen in thirty days. If you are unwilling or unable (or too stingy) to address the real effort it takes to help an addict, then maybe you could just shoot them.

Also, since every addict is a dealer, you need to separate the big players from the actual victims of their avarice. No support for loading more punishment onto addicts.

And don't forget the alternative medical treatment for addiction; you could make that a much more easily obtainable tool in the fight against addiction. (Bear in mind that suboxone has proven to dissolve teeth, another blow to the recovering addict.) I think you need to look at evidence based treatment, not some weak standard (like from Serenity Lane that lauds its success IF addicts remain in treatment) .

Certainly what we were doing before did not free many addicts.

Certainly, we need public use standards and we need to take into account what law enforcement requires. You are quick here to support the police point of view here, but so many in this country feel that it's okay for the public to be able to outgun law enforcement, and I'm pretty sure police don't like that, so good luck to them.

So tweek the law but don't just drop back into the old punitive model that multiplies suffering.

I would also suggest that you invest more into the mental health of young people. Cognitive behavioral therapy and, for those who need it, didactic therapy, would be so much more helpful to young lives rather than waiting until they crash and burn. So more mental health dollars spent, again, on evidence based therapies.

Maybe also incarcerate fewer people and make jail a place where people come out chastened rather than hardened.

Thank you for your attention to these problems and for trying to come up with solutions.

Sheila Hudson