

I'm David Reid, Executive Director of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce which represents 600 local businesses, organizations and institutions.

It is clear to us that Measure 110 has failed spectacularly as implemented. The intended value message from a fair majority of the electorate seems to have been "we value addiction treatment over incarceration".

Two problems quickly became apparent once Measure 110 became law. First is the error in the underlying assumption – namely that we were incarcerating large numbers of people simply for drug use. The truth is that the arresting authority led to earlier intervention and gave law enforcement tools to direct more people to help than the simple neglect that followed enactment of Measure 110. Today, our county jail is the de facto site of first treatment for many of those experiencing addiction but does so without any Measure 110 funding and, because of decriminalization, only sees these citizens when they are already far enough along in their addiction to have committed a personal or property crime – in other words, only once their problem has become someone else's as well.

The second problem is deeper.

The value statement we sent wasn't "we value treatment over incarceration", it was "hard drug use is neither a big deal nor anybody's business but your own – good luck with that". That's a terrible message to send to an adult and a horrific one to send to a kid. Its danger to our society is obvious with enormous impact to first responders and healthcare workers and associated property and personal crimes that come with extended addiction. There is nothing compassionate about this stance, nothing progressive about this value.

I've heard the testimony this morning about the efficacy of treatment and the need for vastly increased access to it. Frankly, that sounds more like the outcome intended and expected by the voters in 2020. It is, however, not a system we can build overnight, and while it goes unbuilt all these problems will grow, community livability will decline for everyone, and people will die.

My stakeholders are almost exclusively in Clatsop County, which has been aptly described as a rural county with urban problems. Namely we have a homelessness rate twice the statewide average and the highest in Oregon. We have addiction and drug abuse rates and consequences far beyond our ability to manage, particularly given limited and shrinking funding systems. And we have housing shortages at all income levels and critical restrictions on where new housing can be built.

If the solutions to the shortcomings of Measure 110 are going to rely heavily on increased treatment facilities, housing, and services, then recent and repeated history tells us that we in Clatsop County will be among the last to have those services funded and stood up. The result will be exactly what we've seen with homelessness response, where urban funding and infrastructure come first while the problem grows in rural communities, both because the trendline isn't interrupted and because those experiencing the issue most severely migrate to rural communities where they expect to be left alone.

So, I strongly encourage that any and all solutions be applied statewide simultaneously. It is more than a matter of equity, it's a matter of efficacy. I further encourage that we do not abandon the tool of

misdemeanor enforcement until and unless we can replace it with a funded, accessible, and effective treatment model. To do otherwise simply condemns rural communities to decay and loss while we wait for our place in line, which history makes clear, will be a long time in coming.