

To the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety:

Thank you to the committee for seeking real solutions to addiction and community safety.

My name is Sally Joughin and I have lived in Portland since 2009. I have been working for criminal justice reform for over 25 years with community organizations in both Connecticut and Oregon. Currently I am leader for the Criminal Justice Study Group at Multnomah Democrats, and also am active in a grassroots group, Justice Advocates.

Ending the so-called "war on drugs" has always been a focus of my activity. Why? **Because criminalizing drug use and putting users in prison was never successful in either ending addiction or ending drug production and selling. The public was not made safe from either crimes or conditions that resulted from drug use and trafficking.** Like with alcohol, prohibition doesn't work. Moreover, I learned years ago, from both treatment providers and former users, that coercing treatment or abstinence is usually not successful. Added to the failures of the "war on drugs" has been discrimination against people of color and poor people by the legal system.

Oregon's Measure 110 has been a bright spot in the effort to treat addiction as the **health issue** that it is, and to greatly increase the availability of treatment and expanded approaches that also include addressing problems that can lead to drug use, such as individuals' lack of housing, poverty, discrimination, lack of opportunities, despair and other psychological issues. These are not problems that can be or should be addressed by law enforcement or the criminal justice system.

By decriminalizing possession of personal-use amounts of addictive substances, we are not wasting state funds on prosecutions or ineffective detentions of users, and hopefully could direct more funds to underlying causes of addiction. **The goal of M.110 is to direct addicts toward help, which also requires that the help is available all over our state** and that it is culturally relevant. When personal use is decriminalized, crimes by users will definitely be reduced, creating more public safety. When more users decide to seek help, there will be more public safety. Previously Oregon was at the bottom of the national list regarding availability of treatment, so the fact that M.110's expansion of treatment got off to a slow start is a reason to increase those efforts, not shut them down!

As in Portugal, this new health approach on a statewide level takes both money and time before we can evaluate its success. Oregon can continue to be a leader; **keep M.110 in place**, and don't return to the unsuccessful "war on drugs" approach!

-Sally Joughin
2715 SE 34th Ave, Portland 97202