

Prior to BM110, thousands of lives were saved from addiction through a drug treatment court in Multnomah County known as STOP Court. Like similar programs throughout the state, participants in STOP Court could earn dismissal of criminal drug possession charges by engaging in and completing treatment, a “conditional discharge” process permitted by ORS 475.245.

Countless STOP Court participants got their lives back on track, under court supervision, while avoiding a criminal conviction in this program.

BM110, however, completely undermined our drug treatment courts. Because drug possession is no longer a crime, the police cannot arrest addicts, prosecutors cannot incentivize treatment by offering dismissal for participating, and most important of all our judges no longer have the legal means to order addicts into treatment against their initial resistance. This has become a tragedy on our streets, as human beings who’s lives could have been saved through intervention are now left to overdose and live in squalor while we pat ourselves on the back and claim to act hi-minded by saying “addiction is a public health problem.”

The truth remains that the only legal way to compel an addict into treatment is through a court order in the criminal justice system. We then offset the law enforcement response by offering dismissal of charges to newly sober drug court graduates. This model worked. We must repeal BM110 and bring our drug treatment courts back.

Chris Shull
Portland, OR

Sent from my iPhone