

Dear legislators,

I am Jerrod Murray, a Native American in long-term recovery and the Executive Director of Painted Horse Recovery. Measure 110 funded great programs but the ticketing system is not helping those addicted to drugs and alcohol get into treatment. While many people in our community see Measure 110 as a total failure and seek to repeal it completely, I am fighting to amend it.

That is why I am a chief petitioner to amend Measure 110, an approach that brings sensible and practical public safety interventions back to Oregon. I believe that multiple interventions are needed to interrupt substance abuse, not just police based ones. I myself was intervened on by the cops and it saved my life because I was pushed to treatment. I am advocating for a treatment model where health care and public safety work together to keep our communities' drug and crime-free while providing those with drug addiction treatment, requiring it if necessary. The ticket system has not worked and more people are overdosing than before the ticket system has been implemented. Implementing misdemeanors for possession with rapid expungement can help our communities tremendously. There will be a system in place to help push people into treatment and peer services with multiple ways to get their record expunged.

As a Native, I value abstinence. Using harm reduction as a leading strategy can create ceilings and trap communities of color in drug use. Having an abstinence based approach for extremely dangerous and addictive drugs provides people the window to make life changing decisions. I am not advocating for a war on drugs approach where people are sent to prison for small possessions of drugs, but I believe intervening early will help ensure people do not commit more serious crimes, which will in turn ensure they do not end up in prison.

I understand the need to address criminal justice discrimination, but I do not see how removing interventions with a demonstrated success accomplishes this. In fact, I see this as a lazy strategy. If we want to increase effective and equal public safety practices, we need to hold those institutions accountable for change, not remove them from the equation.

I want to see an Oregon where police respond equally to all people, and people of color and poor people are treated the same as wealthy white people, but decriminalization did not fix this. Just as recriminalization alone won't fix our addiction crisis. Along with interventions we need resources or those pushed to treatment will have nowhere to turn. This is your job as elected officials, it is your job to make our community safe and healthy. Please bring considerable resources to preventions, treatment, and long-term recovery support.

You can help intervene and push communities of color and poor whites with addiction into peer services and treatment with rapid expungement where they are more likely to live healthy and thriving lives, just as I have.

Thank you,

Jerrold Murray