

I am writing to you as a citizen, taxpayer and voter who lives in Portland, on the edge of Old Town, and witnesses daily the ongoing disaster of the current pro-drug addiction incentive structures that our current legal regime has created.

I am sure Measure 110 was passed with the best intentions. On first examination, the idea of focusing on treatment instead of incarceration seems very appealing. Unfortunately, the good intentions behind the measure are no match for the hyper-addictive, inexpensive and widely-accessible drugs now available.

The consequences of this failed policy are born by the people who might not have become addicted if accessing drugs were harder and carried the risk of jail time; they are born by every single person who can't walk in a park because the park has been taken over by drug addicts dazing, if on fentanyl, or ranting, when on meth; they are born by children who also can't use those parks; they are born by every single person whose grocery bill has increased as a side-effect of the rampant shoplifting that takes place by those living on the streets.

In addition to creating an atmosphere of that, effectively, encourages addiction, Measure 110 has failed because it was predicated on the provision of well-run, effective, rapidly implemented services to help addicts. Needless to say, none of that has happened and, instead, all we've gotten is a generally much worse quality of life for the citizenry and higher taxes.

It's time to change direction. At minimum, possession and usage of hard drugs must be made illegal once more; interdiction and incarceration of dealers must be also be prioritized. The combination of those two changes will both reduce demand and raise the cost of supply.