

Co-Chairs Lieber and Kropf, and Members of the Joint Interim Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response,

Below is the sponsored letter initiated by Oregon Health Justice Recovery. I have also submitted a personal letter to the 2 co-chairs of this committee. In it I recapped our family experience and struggles with SUD with our son. We count ourselves as "lucky" that our son became ill with mental illness, then SUD, years ago and he was able to get services from Cascadia and that he is still a client. Many other people's sons and daughters aren't as fortunate and have to be on waiting lists for months and years.

SUD is a public health emergency. Treatment is needed. Not incarceration!

Monday's hearing confirmed that our communities need real solutions, real safety, and real healing when it comes to addressing the overdose and addiction crisis.

I am submitting a public comment to show support for rapidly expanding treatment services in Oregon. As you heard on Monday, the lack of a full continuum of care is a root cause for the problem in our state and people, communities, and families across our state cannot wait any longer.

The situation is urgent and we need action. We need effective solutions that can be done now to bring healing, not harm, to Black and Brown and all Oregonians, the people harmed the most by the failed war on drugs, as well as rural communities and people experiencing homelessness.

I'm submitting a public comment because I believe our leaders need to do more - and fast - to address the addiction crisis across our state.

We need:

- Housing
- Treatment services of all kinds
- More peer supports
- Street outreach and non-police emergency response to get people connected to care
- No going backwards to recriminalizing addiction and not returning to the harmful war on drugs that disproportionately harmed Black and Brown Oregonians

Recriminalization is a red herring and controversial and divisive proposals to repeal Measure 110 are not the answer. We can't arrest our way out of this. Nothing will change without more and better treatment options.

I urge you to listen to the addiction experts and people with lived experience.

Our communities are counting on you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

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