

Dear Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response,

I'm writing to you today in support of Measure 110, because we know that the recriminalization of drug use will only exacerbate our drug crisis. We all heard in Monday's hearing that our communities need real solutions, real safety, and real healing when it comes to addressing the overdose and addiction crisis.

I have seen friends and family not just have their lives up-ended by what started as a coping mechanism, but so much worse. I have seen careers dive, housing opportunities destroyed, relationships end, and people I love DIE because they couldn't get help, couldn't even ask for it without fear of criminalization. This is personal to me, yes, and it is also an issue that affects us ALL. It is visible on every freeway onramp, every overpass, in the faces of our unhoused siblings, and in the secrets kept by people just like you and me. It is time we treat folks suffering from addiction and drug dependency like HUMANS and extend care rather than cruel punishment.

The war on drugs has been a catastrophic failure. Every state in our country is suffering from an overdose crisis. However, Oregon has a tool to address this crisis that no other state does: a path to treatment and hope rather than the revolving door of the carceral system. We're already seeing incredible success stories with Measure 110 funding.

We all agree that more needs to be done to address the problems of homelessness and drug use in our communities. But real solutions will involve the people most affected by those problems, not wealthy special interests who would rather jail people instead of actually solving the issues.

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 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 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

I urge you to reject calls to return to the failed War on Drugs that stole the futures of so many Black and Brown Oregonians. We have the opportunity to do better and we must do better. We cannot wait.

Sincerely,

Ms. Megan Trombetta

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