

Hello,

I live in Portland, OR, and I support M110 and continued efforts to increase access to drug and addiction treatment throughout Oregon. I work at the Oregon Justice Resource Center, and many of our clients have been pulled into the criminal legal system due to their struggles with addiction. Measure 110 recognizes that the criminal legal system is ill-equipped to provide our community members with the support necessary to work on their substance use issues. What Oregon needs is more treatment services for people with substance use disorders. M110 is a step in the right direction, but it cannot solve this crisis alone.

The goal of your work should be to ensure everyone who seeks addiction recovery services can receive them quickly, easily, and in a way that meets their unique needs — especially Black, Latine, Indigenous, tribal, Native and other communities of color disproportionately affected by the war on drugs. We urge you to reject calls to return to the failed War on Drugs that harmed our communities and stole the futures of so many BIPOC Oregonians. We have the opportunity to do better and we must do better.

We know that harsh drug laws don't prevent drug use and addiction: 32 states have higher overdose rates than Oregon, and all of them have harsher drug laws. Locking up people struggling with addiction isn't going to solve the problems we face.

I want to thank the committee for the thoughtful approach you are taking in addressing the addiction crisis in our state, looking at the entire system and the dire needs in our community.

Sincerely,

Carleene Houk  
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