

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to strongly urge the state legislators to reconsider and revise the failed Measure 110. A few years ago, I naively voted in favor of it, believing the promises made by its advocates. They assured the public that upon its passage, we would witness positive changes, with people struggling with drug addiction on the streets receiving the necessary help and a decrease in the societal impact caused by their presence. It appeared to be a win-win situation. However, I now regret my decision. Not only did the measure fail to do much to help those in need, but it sent a big batman-style signal to the rest of country that you can take drugs in public without any repercussions. I say to its supporters to save the argument that by it attracting people to our state misrepresents its intent - this doesn't matter - What truly matters is the perception that has become our reality, especially in Portland neighborhoods that have already borne a disproportionate burden of the social consequences of individuals battling drug addiction.

It's not necessary to discard the entire concept, but the legislation does need significant reinforcement. If an individual declines help upon being found in possession of illegal drugs, they should face legal consequences. Similar to a DUI offense where participation in an anti-drinking program is required upon being caught, refusing help should result in a criminal pathway.

This issue extends beyond the immediate concern—it touches upon the trust in our government. If we reach a point where our confidence in those tasked with finding solutions for our communities diminishes, or they lack the capability to implement these solutions, it shouldn't come as a surprise when people gravitate towards a populist style of governance.

Sincerely,

Donal McElligott
Portland, OR