

December 6, 2023

Dear Joint Interim Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response:

RTI International is an independent, nonprofit research institute dedicated to improving the human condition. We write to submit testimony in support of the Committee's informational meeting on December 4, 2023. Specifically, we wish to share research regarding the implementation and impact of the Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act ("Measure 110"). RTI International, supported by Arnold Ventures, is completing a 4-year impact evaluation of Measure 110 that has included qualitative interviews with law enforcement, people who use drugs, and peer recovery workers; quantitative surveys with people who use drugs and harm reduction organizations; and secondary analyses of crime data, 911 calls-for-service data, overdose mortality data, and substance use disorder data.

As the Committee evaluates research, including RTI's, and other materials related to Measure 110, RTI wishes to point you to a [manuscript in the peer-reviewed literature](#) written by a large group of drug policy scientists including Dr. Alex Kral from RTI and published on the first anniversary of Measure 110, which laid out principles and metrics for research evaluating the measure. In addition, we would like to call attention to two important considerations:

- 1. It is important that the Committee consider research that compares outcomes in Oregon to those in other regional states rather than research that solely compares outcomes in Oregon prior to and after the enactment of Measure 110.** It is not scientifically valid to evaluate Measure 110 based on what has happened in Oregon before and after February 2021 and attribute it to Measure 110 due to impacts of concomitant, unrelated environmental factors. Examples of such factors could include ongoing impacts related to COVID-19 policies, social unrest following the death of George Floyd, increases in housing costs and associated increases in homelessness, and the mass introduction of fentanyl into the unregulated drug market.
- 2. The Committee should take into account that research evaluating the impacts of Measure 110 prior to August 2022 does not capture the full implementation of the Measure and thus only can only speak to the Measure's drug decriminalization aspect in the absence of increases in needed services.** While the decriminalization aspect of Measure 110 was enacted in February 2021, the Oregon Health Authority did not issue grants for the majority of its nearly \$300M of Measure 110-related services until August 2022. As such, Measure 110, as it was intended and voted, was not implemented until August 2022.

With these important considerations in mind, RTI International urges the Committee to continue to evaluate the impact of Measure 110 based on the most rigorous, evidence-backed research. Examples of such research include:

- [An evaluation](#) published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Psychiatry* and conducted by a team from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, New York University, Outside In, and The Network for Public Health Law (Joshi, Rivera, Cerdá,

Guy, Strahan, Wheelock, and Davis). This study found that there was no difference between Oregon and other states' overdose mortality rates.

- [A paper](#) published in the *International Journal of Drug Policy* and conducted by researchers from New York University (Davis, Joshi, Rivera, and Cerdá). This research found that in the first year of Measure 110, “there were no significant changes in overall arrests, non-drug arrests or arrests for violent crime in either state, relative to control” states. This paper also noted significant decreases in drug arrests, consistent with the intent of Measure 110.
- [A paper](#) published in the *International Journal of Drug Policy* and conducted by RTI International (INSERT CITATION). This study found that most law enforcement officers had serious concerns about Measure 110, in part because they felt “that it made it harder for them to use drug possession as a ‘tool’ for investigations to pursue and build cases, establish probable cause, and impose what they believed necessary for social order.”

As these papers note, it is too early to make decisions about the success, or assess the full impact, of Measure 110. In the meantime, we thank the Committee for its continued oversight of this Measure and commitment to the health and safety of the people of Oregon. To assist in this effort, RTI International will be hosting a **Measure 110 Research Symposium in Salem, Oregon on January 22, 2024**. During this symposium, scientists from Oregon and elsewhere will present data on overdose mortality; substance use disorder treatment; housing, harm reduction and family services; and law enforcement. Legislators and staff will receive invitations to this event later this week.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this issue and for your consideration of this material. Should you need any further information, please contact Alex Kral and James Hunter via the contact information included below.

Sincerely,

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