

To: Joint Interim Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

Our communities are suffering and we cannot wait any longer for lawmakers to fully fund behavioral health systems. The crisis has reached a breaking point.

Discussions about rolling back Measure 110 are the wrong approach. We need more treatment services and we need them NOW. That is what will help our communities.

Oregon has had a 23% increase in homelessness. When people talk about needing to “clean up the streets,” instead of demanding everyone who needs it get treatment, they talk about punishing people in crisis. This will not solve the problem. We need our leaders to do better and we need them to take action fast.

With increasing homelessness and despair in our communities, the last thing we need is to criminalize addiction, which would decrease people’s ability to get jobs, get housing, and thrive. Measure 110 has increased access to treatment services but that alone is not enough. It will take investments in a full continuum of care so no one is turned away who needs help.

Please ensure everyone who seeks addiction recovery services can receive them quickly, easily, and in a way that meets their unique needs — especially the Black, Latinx, Indigenous, tribal, Native and other communities of color disproportionately affected by the war on drugs and do not go backwards on Measure 110.

Patty Wentz
Portland, Oregon