



February 2, 2023

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Tabitha Jensen and I represent New Avenues for Youth to testify in opposition of HB 2089.

New Avenues for Youth is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, community-based organization in Multnomah & Clackamas Counties. Our services for young people (ages 9-24) focus on the individual—their experiences, identities, needs, and goals—and helping them make positive change in their lives. This help includes Measure 110-funded peer support services for young people in the Portland Metro area who experience housing instability, child welfare involvement, trafficking, and other sexual exploitation. Nearly all of our participants have histories of significant childhood trauma and abuse, and many are actively using substances as a coping mechanism for challenging life circumstances.

New Avenues leverages trusting relationships to encourage young people to consider harm reduction practices, walk alongside youth as they move through stages of change, and provide linkage to treatment services once a participant is ready to explore a different way of life. Our Measure 110 peer services are focused on connecting youth to the most culturally-responsive recovery and prevention supports available, either within our organization and or through our Behavioral Health Resource Network (BHRN) partners. New Avenues also provides culturally-specific recovery and prevention supports for LGBTQIA2S+ youth and young adults through our programs The Living Room and SMYRC.

Although we are early in our work, New Avenues deeply believes in the promise of Measure 110 services. To the contrary, **HB 2089 threatens the implementation and promise of Measure 110** and would destabilize recovery supports for organizations like New Avenues for Youth and our BHRN partners, particularly because it stands to significantly decrease funding that has already been awarded.

The rollout of Measure 110 services has been a challenging experience, due to administrative delays with grantmaking, contracting, and workforce capacity. Nonetheless, we are finally building momentum and making positive change for an increasing number of community members at risk. It would be unconscionable to reverse course and to ignore the will of Oregon voters who continue to support Measure 110's trauma-informed, person-centered, public health approach to substance use in Oregon.

New Avenues for Youth endorses a fully funded behavioral health system for all citizens – including youth and young adults - in Oregon, including the support services provided through Measure 110 dollars; we urge you to protect this funding.

Respectfully,

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