

Representative Nathanson
Chair Representative Reschke
Vice-Chair Representative Walters
Vice-Chair House Committee on Revenue Oregon State Legislature

Re: Support for House Bill 2089

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

As a founder and the main fundraiser for M91 I have been opposed to M110 from its inception.

During the course of the legalization campaign we allocated a significant amount of resources towards qualitative and quantitative research to formulate a communications strategy and convince a majority of Oregonians to support legalization. We did this by investing millions in advertising (to get out the vote) and highlighting how racist cannabis laws targeted Black and Brown communities disproportionately, and promoting the promise that the canna tax revenue funds would be redirected to those communities supporting equitable programs to help rebuild those communities.

During the drafting phase I lobbied heavily to have education be the main benefactor of cannabis tax revenue. I did this in part because my suggestion to add a provision to allow low-income and minority Oregonians to be first to the table to apply for cannabis licenses was turned down because it was deemed unconstitutional and ultimately a threat to allow the Oregon legislature to throw out the entire initiative if passed.

My wish to have 100% of canna tax revenue directed to education was whittled down to 40% which is how it was when it passed.

Additionally, despite the countless number of Oregon activists and drug law reform orgs I was able to bring to the table, there was still a majority of proponents at the table who agreed to allow for 20% of canna tax revenue to go to LE (not me, BTW). So, to see many of these same advocates be opposed to money going to LE is hypocritical, IMO. It shouldn't be surprising to know that LE is not happy with continually being defunded, especially after being brought to the table for the drafting of M91, and many of the advocates acquiescing to their demand for a portion of the canna tax revenue.

M110 continues to be a failure in a vast amount of ways. The high-profile campaign team was able to create the illusion that Oregon communities were supportive of M110 by getting the buy-in of large minority-led organizations. And in fact behind the scenes many supporters afterward feel like they were duped.

Perhaps the biggest failure of all is that M91 promised to help rebuild communities by using the plight of Black and Brown people to sell the initiative to the masses, yet very little has been done to actually do that. Sadly, M110 took the majority of money away from education by capping how much actually ends up there (a pittance), and re-directed it to addiction treatment and recovery (with little success thus far) away from the people it was promised to. (had the funds not been from canna tax perhaps I would be supportive)

Prioritizing addiction and treatment above opportunity for kids, families, and education is morally reprehensible. Running legalization campaigns that promise to benefit children with no measurable outcome 9 years later is also morally reprehensible.

There is no measurable impact from M110, or for rebuilding communities as promised by M91. A child who was 9 in 2014 when M91 was passed has seen no benefit, and that needs to change.

Sincerely,
Travis Maurer