

Submitter: Dean Shold  
On Behalf Of: FentCheck  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: HB2395

April 11, 2023

RE: SUPPORTING HB 2395 OPIOID HARM REDUCTION POLICY PACKAGE

Dear Senators:

Measure 110 has decriminalized possession of personal amounts of drugs - including cocaine. Yet, Oregon law still has artifacts from the 1979 Drug Enforcement Administration's Model Drug Paraphernalia act that doesn't allow the possession or use of equipment (e.g., test strips) that will test for fentanyl (as it is a controlled (scheduled) substance. This must be fixed with HB 2395. We must normalize drug checking to stop the spread of 'accidental overdoses' in our communities. Anyone choosing to partake of a substance of non-pharmaceutical origin must have the opportunity to check it for fentanyl.

Last month, in California, Governor Newsom announced an additional \$79 million for the DHCS Naloxone Distribution Program. The proposed plan for the OHA to provide similar support is critical. In the same plan, he also announced \$4 million for the distribution of fentanyl test strips.

Fentanyl Test Strips stop people from overdosing accidentally from substances they didn't know they were about to consume. With these strips, accidental overdoses can be prevented or the safety of the environment changed to support a fentanyl overdose.

While we are all focused on the number of deaths from accidental fentanyl overdoses, we must also remember that there are multiple overdoses that are reversed through Narcan (an opioid antagonist) that are never captured in the reporting often shown. Fentanyl Test Strips are overdose prevention. Narcan is death prevention.

The non-profit organization I represent has distributed over 50,000 test strips in states where it is legal over the past few years. Each and every one of these test strips has provided an individual the knowledge of a potential adulterant in the substance and given them the ability to make a decision with informed consent around ingesting the substance. We can no longer accept abstinence as the only solution. We can no longer "wish" that our children won't be subject to the reality of tainted substances. What we CAN and MUST do is give everyone the ability to

understand the implications of the substances they are about to consume.

Please - pass this bill and with its emergency enactment, we can keep our colleagues, friends and families safer. In your hands lies the ability to change the trajectory of accidental fentanyl overdoses. Please vote to move this bill forward.

Respectfully,

Dean Shold

Alison Heller

Founders, FentCheck™