

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reshke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tera Hurst; I am the Executive Director of the Health Justice Recovery Alliance. We are a statewide advocacy organization that represents nearly 100 community-based organizations and addiction recovery service providers across the state. We work to improve Measure 110 implementation policies and practices, and to ensure that the law's funding focuses on healing and restoring the communities most harmed by racist drug war policies: Black, Indigenous, Latino, tribal, and other communities of color.

The Health Justice Recovery Alliance is proud to testify in strong support of HB 3431 with the -5 amendment. I want to thank the bill sponsors especially Representative Bynum and Sosa for working with the stakeholders to find a way to invest in behavioral health AND building generational wealth for communities most harmed by the war on drugs. Recognizing the need for keeping M110 service funding whole and growing the EEIP is an important step in the right direction in healing and supporting our communities most harmed by the war on drugs.

Continued funding for the Economic Equity Investment Program will help to create intergenerational wealth-building opportunities among Oregon's most economically vulnerable communities. Policies like HB 3431 are crucial for promoting social justice, reducing poverty and homelessness, enhancing economic stability, fostering inclusive communities, improving health and well-being, strengthening educational opportunities, and ultimately building wealth for most impacted communities.

This fund is urgently needed. With the rising cost of debt, housing, along with cuts to public assistance, and ballooning childcare expenses, communities of color face even more roadblocks to wealth creation and pathways out of poverty. We know that the war on drugs not only exacerbated the wealth disparities for Oregon's Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities, but also broadened the extreme economic inequality that exists between communities of color and their white peers. HB 3431 is part of how we begin to heal these harms and help the communities most targeted by racist, harmful drug war-era policies to thrive. We must strengthen Oregon's future by investing in historically underserved communities.

Respectfully,

Tera Hurst  
Executive Director

