

Submitter: Phoenix Oaks
On Behalf Of: Please reject cruel misguided and rushed HB 4002
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response
Measure: HB4002

Please reject cruel, misguided, and rushed HB 4002. It would undermine the expressed will of Oregon voters by overturning Measure 110.

Making possession of small amounts of controlled substances a misdemeanor punishable by jail time, a fine, or both is cruel and counterproductive. Criminalizing addiction has never worked to reduce overdose deaths or help people get care. Please listen to addiction treatment experts on this issue, not those out of touch with the experience of those facing addiction.

HB 4002 would take us backwards by:

- Treating addiction as a crime;
- Inflicting more government harm and violence on Black and brown communities;
- Putting Measure 110 funding at risk. Diverting funding to the criminal system that could be used for addiction services;
- Further overburdening the public defense system, which is already over capacity;
- Wasting taxpayer dollars;
- Making it more difficult for many unhoused folks to get into housing and find employment.

Addiction is not a crime; it is a health issue. Oregon can and must do better than HB 4002 to address the addictions crisis. HB 4002 is an inadequate and harmful approach that will not solve our addictions crisis and will instead waste taxpayer dollars. HB 4002 will result in more people going to jail, more people being harmed, more individuals being displaced, more families being disrupted, more people dying from overdoses. The legislature should focus on real solutions that will help our communities instead of returning to the failed policies of the past that simply won't work.

I strongly urge you to please vote no on HB 4002.

Thank you."