

Submitter: Doug McVay  
On Behalf Of: Criminalizing drug use has never worked  
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Measure: HB4002

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 4002. This bill will overturn Measure 110, making possession of small amounts of controlled substances a misdemeanor punishable by jail time, a fine, or both.

Criminalizing drug use has never worked to reduce overdose deaths or help people get the care they need. More than a century of experience in the US has proven that treating drug use as a crime does not solve any drug problems, and indeed often makes them worse.

HB 4002 takes 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.

Drug use in itself is a healthcare issue. It should not be a crime. Oregon can and must do better than HB 4002 to address the the problems of drug use. HB 4002 is an inadequate and harmful approach that will neither solve our addictions crisis nor prevent overdose deaths. Instead it will waste taxpayer dollars.

HB 4002 will result in more people being arrested, more people being harmed, more people being displaced, more families being disrupted, more people dying from overdose and the toxic unregulated drug supply.

The legislature needs to focus on real solutions that will help our communities instead of returning to failed policies of the past that simply don't work.

I urge you to please vote no on HB 4002.