

Submitter: Christopher Gonzalez

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

My name is Chris Gonzalez. I co-run the Mother Oak Community Garden with Christ UMC. I am writing in opposition to HB 4002, which only serves to back away to treating the addiction crisis with the public health approach it requires. Burdening public defenders even more than they are, keeping poor people trapped within the carceral system, spending resources on bureaucracy and prosecution rather than treatment. Treatment also shows to be a much cheaper option overall. We see the effects of inadequate treatment of those in custody when inmates die of overdoses in their beds.

The behavioral health provisions of HB 4002, expanding access to treatment services I do support, and it is an example of the direction we need to move. Withdrawal management and detox spaces have served well in similar times.

I live downtown, and see the effects of our lack of treatment services every day. My relatives, who are lucky have housing, have suffered from addiction to medication and I would only wish they had care if they didn't have a safe space - often it only came about from chronic pain or surgery.

Please vote no on any measures including recriminalization of drug possession.
Thank you.