

Submitter: Caitlyn Bergerson

On Behalf Of: No on recriminalization

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

My name is Caitlyn Bergerson and I am a constituent of Senator Lieber. I am writing to you to let you know that I am in opposition to HB 4002 and that I hope you vote against the recriminalization of drug possession and use.

Addiction is a disease, it is not a choice. HB 4002 seeks to criminalize drug use with the aim of keeping "our streets clean" but the reality is that it will disproportionately harm Black and brown communities and houseless communities more than any help will be done. I am white and I have the privilege of living in my home and being able to use and abuse any substance I choose at will simply because I own my home. This is made very clear when we look at the very real opioid epidemic that our country and state is facing; the majority of people who are addicted to opioids are white yet they make up only a small percent of those arrested for drug use. This is not the case for the large houseless community, of which is disproportionately Black and brown, we have in our city. I think any person who struggles with any disease has a right to treatment yet HB 4002 takes away that right.

HB 4002 is criminalizing houselessness NOT drug use. This, as the war on drugs has already proven for decades now, is undoubtedly harming the BIPOC communities and not actually solving any issues. If we want to solve or at least make progress on the drug epidemic facing this country and state, then voting NO on HB 4002 is the first step. We need to invest more into measure 110 and recovery and houseless programs so that people can afford to get help and stay clean rather than threatening them with incarceration which only creates more of an issue. Vote no on HB 4002.