

County Commissioners
Kevin Cameron, Chair
Danielle Bethell
Colm Willis



Chief Administrative
Officer
Jan Fritz

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 7th, 2024

Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
Representative Jason Kropf, Co-Chair
Members of the Committee

Subject: Support for HB 4036 and SB 1555 to Address the Negative Impacts of Measure 110

Dear Co-Chair Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair Representative Kropf, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 4036 and Senate Bill 1555, which aim to increase penalties for possession of a controlled substance and using a controlled substance in public. As a County Commissioner and resident of Oregon, I am deeply concerned about the negative impacts that have arisen since the implementation of Measure 110 and the decriminalization of drug use in Oregon.

Since the implementation of Measure 110, we have witnessed a concerning rise in public drug consumption, contributing to increased instances of drug-related crime and safety hazards within our communities. The decriminalization of drug possession has strained resources for addiction treatment and prevention efforts, while simultaneously exacerbating challenges in addressing substance abuse disorders effectively. As a result, Marion County has faced significant hurdles in promoting public health and ensuring the safety and well-being of its residents in the wake of Measure 110.

House Bill 4036 and Senate Bill 1555 present crucial measures to address these issues by strengthening penalties for possession and public use of controlled substances. By imposing stricter consequences, we can deter individuals from engaging in drug-related activities in public spaces and help connect them with treatment to address their addiction, thereby improving public safety and community well-being.

Furthermore, these bills complement ongoing efforts to provide comprehensive support and resources for individuals battling substance abuse disorders. By creating a deterrent to drug use in public and directing individuals towards treatment and rehabilitation services, we can work towards a safer and healthier Oregon for all residents. Marion County is deeply committed to this work and need the law to back our efforts.

I urge you to give careful consideration to HB 4036 and SB 1555 and to support their passage through the Oregon Legislature. Together, let us take proactive steps to address the challenges posed by drug misuse and safeguard the well-being of our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Danielle Bethell", written over a horizontal line.

Danielle Bethell
Commissioner