

Submitter: Joshua Morrisett

On Behalf Of: NO to Criminalization

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

Date: Wednesday, February 7, 2024

To: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response From: JOSHUA MORRISETT

Oppose HB 4002 - NO to Criminalization

Co-Chair Lieber, Co-Chair Kropf, and Members of the Joint Committee:

My name is Joshua Morrisett,

Treating addiction as a criminal act is far more expensive than using a public health approach. People cycle between jails/prisons, homelessness, ER services, and treatment facilities. The cost is absurd! Tacking on criminal records to people makes the small amount of affordable housing even less accessible, forcing even more people into desperate situations.

Our public defenders can't handle the work load as it is. Adding in the criminalization of substance use will do nothing but harm their efforts to fairly represent Oregonians, as is their Constitutional right.

I oppose HB 4002 and efforts to criminalize addiction.

When I leave my housing complex, I see the impact of the massive need for housing stock. The street is lined on both sides with the RVs and vehicles of my homeless neighbors. Once a month or so, a whole new group moves onto the street as the police come and do sweeps, forcing everyone to re-locate to a different street in the city of Portland. Everytime that happens, all of the outreach workers now have to search the city to maintain contact with folks. It becomes an endless cycle of suffering and trauma for people.

I oppose HB 4002 and efforts to criminalize addiction.

People suffering from addiction need investments to the continuum of care. They need successful peer outreach and mobile crisis programs to help move people into housing and services. And we need for law enforcement and service providers to work together to connect people to services is the direction that our state should head.

Oppose HB 4002. I urge you to lean into your compassion and shared humanity.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joshua Morrisett