

Submitter: Doro Reeves  
On Behalf Of: Police have no business doing Dr or therapist work  
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 addiction has never worked to reduce overdose deaths or help people get care. 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 overburdens the public defense system, which is already over capacity.

Like many Oregonians, I am deeply concerned about the public suffering we are seeing in our communities. I also am outraged about proposals to roll back Measure 110, and recriminalize drugs. These proposals will fail to address addiction, homelessness, public drug use, and other conditions on the street. And they are an abuse of power. Enough already!

Criminalizing people struggling with drugs, making drug possession a misdemeanor subject to fines and jail time, deploying more police to respond to people in crisis, are disastrous drug war tactics that will only make things worse. Police have no business doing the work of doctors and therapists. This is what fascism looks like, cycling people in and out of jail for victimless "crimes" amounting to no more than private behavior that victimizes no one. And how are these draconian bully tactics supposed to address root causes or conditions on the street?! To the contrary, they will undermine any effort to support people in crisis. This is disgusting and without justification.

It hardly takes a clairvoyant to predict how this unwarranted war against drug users will, yet again, be targeting black, brown and Indigenous Americans, along with those experiencing poverty. It hardly comes as a surprise that, even after Measure 110, Black Oregonians are issued M110 citations at double the rate the rest of us are targeted. If these lawmakers have their way, and reinstate Measure 110, black, brown & indigenous communities shall bear the brunt of punishment and abuse. Convicted, incarcerated, and saddled with criminal records, they'll be burdened with additional lifelong barriers to life's necessities: employment, housing and education. So what is this supposed to accomplish?

We can't arrest and punish our way out of the suffering that leads to addiction. If one is actually addicted, rather than merely using recreationally, treatment and therapy are what is needed. How long must we keep repeating this simple fact? What we're talking about here is a personal issue and a medical issue, not a criminal

justice issue. When are these so-called lawmakers going to stop abusing and persecuting these people?!

Legislators like you have the power to enact real solutions. The drug war has been an outrageous overstep, an abuse of the power & authority entrusted to these legislators. I beg you to put a stop to this nonsense. Please reject criminalization and punishment! It solves NOTHING. Instead we need a full system of care, with services and supports proven to help people who struggle with addiction. This means addiction services and treatment, overdose prevention centers, rapid response behavioral health services, resources for local communities, and accessible housing and shelter. Why is this too much to ask of those appointed to serve public interests?

Lives are at stake. I am counting on you to do the right thing, and put an end to this insanity. Please vote no on HB 4002 and oppose any attempts to re-criminalize drugs! Instead focus on real solutions that will save lives and keep communities safer.

Thank you. I'll be watching, and I vote.