

Submitter: Tom Espinosa

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: SB1555

My dear Oregon Legislators,

I would humbly like to address the provisions of SB 1555

It is undisputed that substance abuse is a pressing and prevalent problem. That persons in the throes of their addiction and abuse need help. Additionally, in the interests of public safety and the greater good, assistance to these individuals may take the forms of sequestration for a time to facilitate their recovery.

I don't think this is unreasonable that ORS 153.039 (3) (detention for violations) could be amended to add 153.039 (3) -(d) to determine the intoxicating substance, its half-life and safe disposition of the affected individual.

This would enable enforcement officers and community outreach persons to remove individuals who are endangering and to place them in a facility that could provide monitoring and recovery services.

As a retired RN practicing in the ICU for nearly 30years, I see increasing the penalties on substance abusers as a liability. They have neither the resources to pay or to successfully rehabilitate. They will become wards of the State. This is costly and unhelpful.

I am here to advocate for amendments as above and as highlighted text below,

SECTION 3. ORS 743A.168 amended to read:

"Provider" means:

(A)

A behavioral health professional or medical professional licensed or certified in this state or who has met the credentialing requirement of a group health insurer or an issuer of an individual health benefit plan that is not a grandfathered health plan as defined in ORS 743B.005 (Definitions) and is otherwise eligible to receive reimbursement for coverage under the policy;

The purpose of this suggestion is to broaden the pool of available behavioral health professionals in the state by allowing insurers and or health plan providers to train and qualify front line staff to address the immediate needs of our communities. Understanding of course that State certification and or licensing is the highest standard. To provide a path where sincere individuals may begin a career to become licensed while simultaneously providing entry level practitioners to answer a demonstrated need.

All things fail till they succeed. While we must not reward failure, we must reward success and that starts by making success possible. Steeper punishments do not engender success.

Sincerely, Tom Espinosa