

Chairs Lieber (Lee-Burr) and Kropf (Crup-Fff), members of the Committee, for the record my name is Sylvan Le Savage, I am a disability justice activist in Portland, Oregon, and a member of Portland Drug Users Union.

We of the union bring many voices together, current users, former users, as well as allies. My experience within the union, as well as a disabled person living in this state of Oregon, is that we are in a crisis, a housing crisis, a healthcare crisis, a compassion crisis. Without attending to these crises first, we will never stop drug use and the overdose crisis. It is important to note that there is an overlap of people who use drugs, and people that have a disability; these disabilities are often mental illnesses, chronic illness, and chronic pain. Drug criminalization and drug use is very much a disability rights issue. Personally, drug criminalization has affected me by not being able to receive adequate medical care, because criminalization results in stigma by healthcare professionals of people presumed to be drug users, whether this is indicated in their medical records or not; it also leads to the restriction of medications that improve the quality of life for disabled people. This has a ripple effect on everyone, no matter your status when it comes to drugs. When Measure 110 was passed my hope was that soon we would have doctors and health care professionals that would be able to serve more people with less stigma. Unfortunately, the kind of services people who use drugs need have not been given the time they need to grow. Do not be mistaken, House Bill 4002 will harm disabled people, and many other vulnerable groups living in Oregon. It will result in more overdoses, not less. Do not scapegoat drug users for the very same problems our state shares with the rest of the nation—the struggles of a world attempting to recover from a pandemic that's far from over.

Thank you for your time.