

Submitter: Kaliko Castille

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4036

Subject: Urgent: Oppose HB 4036 and Support Health-Centered Approaches to Addiction

Dear Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response,

As a concerned resident of Oregon and resident of Milwaukie, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 4036, SB 1555, HB 4002 or any other measure that threatens to reverse the progress made under Measure 110. This bill not only undermines a voter-approved initiative but also poses significant risks to our communities, particularly to those most vulnerable to the consequences of criminalization.

Evidence from across the globe consistently shows that criminalizing drug possession does not lead to decreased drug use or overdose deaths. Instead, it exacerbates public health crises. Oregon's own history and data from states and countries with health-centered drug policies illustrate the benefits of treating addiction as a healthcare issue rather than a criminal one.

The re-criminalization proposed by these bills threatens to perpetuate and deepen systemic inequalities. Black and brown communities in Oregon, already disproportionately affected by drug law enforcement, will face further harm and injustice. This approach contradicts our state's commitment to equity and social justice.

By diverting crucial resources to the criminal justice system, these bills puts at risk the funding for addiction services that Measure 110 promised. These funds are vital for expanding access to treatment, recovery, and harm reduction services — proven strategies that actually address the root causes of addiction.

Our public defense system is already stretched to its limits. Implementing these bills would further strain this critical service, diverting resources from defending the indigent to prosecuting drug possession cases. This shift not only undermines justice but also wastes taxpayer dollars on ineffective measures.

Addiction should be addressed with compassion, evidence-based interventions, and support, not with incarceration. I urge you to consider the real, human costs of all three bills and to support alternatives that truly address Oregon's addiction crisis. We have the opportunity to lead by example, showing that health-centered approaches

are both effective and humane.

I strongly urge you to vote NO on any bill that seeks to reverse the will of Oregon voters who passed Measure 110 by a wide margin. Let's continue to move forward, not backward, by supporting policies that treat addiction as a health issue and by investing in the well-being of all Oregonians.

Thank you for considering my views on this crucial matter.

Sincerely,

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