



Joint Committee on Addiction on Community Safety Response

Oppose M110 Recriminalization Bills: No on HB 4002, HB 4036, SB 1555

February 7th, 2024

Chairs Leiber and Kropf and members of the committee,

My name is Isabela Villarreal and I am the Policy and Communications Director at Next Up Action Fund. Our organization has been around since 2002, and our mission is to build political power with diverse young people to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon. We're an organization led by and working with predominantly Black, Indigenous, and youth of color, disabled, low-income, and LGBTQ+ youth. What we want most is a world that values and invests in them. Accordingly, we are extremely disturbed to see the legislature bringing back a policy that will directly harm them, and as such we are strongly against HB 4002.

We talk about wanting young people to live long and fulfilling lives - giving them an arrest record, putting them in jail, and fining them will not accomplish that goal, and at the end of the day it will not solve the addiction crisis. HB 4002 proposal disqualifies people from expungement options if they have relapsed in the past, even though most people attempt recovery multiple times [before success](#). 60% of people who start treatment in a given year do not complete it, whether treatment is voluntary or mandated. This could mean that a significant number of young people - who would be disproportionately Black, brown, poor, queer and trans, and disabled youth - would be incarcerated and have life-damaging criminal records because they relapse.

Let's be clear, addiction is not a crime, it is a public health issue. We know from decades of research and experience that criminalization does not solve addiction issues, and it will not solve the overdose crisis at hand - if anything it will worsen the crisis, and disproportionately harm Black, Indigenous, communities of color, poor people, and disabled people. Today, even after Measure 110 was implemented we see the racial biases at play in the criminal legal system, currently [Black Oregonians are issued M110 citations at double the rate of their population](#) and [Portland police have the 5th highest arrest rate disparities in the country](#). The War on Drugs tore predominantly Black and brown families apart, caused irreparable generational harm, more overdose deaths, and at the end of

the day, did not solve the addiction crisis - so i ask, why do you want to repeat this.

At the end of the day, we want young people to have a long life filled with opportunity, stability, and the ability to thrive. Arresting them and putting them in jail is the antithesis of this vision - please invest in prevention, education, and expand care for young people.

Please vote no on all bills that recriminalize addiction including HB 4002, HB 4036, SB 1555.

Thank you,

Isabela Villarreal, she/her

Policy and Communications Director