

Submitter: Erin Anderson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4036

My name is Erin Anderson. I am in my 34th year as a Police Officer.

I don't shed a tear often at work but I'm here tonight to tell you of the most recent time. It was near the end of a night shift in August of 23. At around 6am, I was dispatched to a home in inner southeast Portland. There, a mother had discovered her 15 year old son unconscious and not breathing. She called 911, and began CPR. Mom also administered 2 or 3 doses of Narcan.

The life of this 15 year old boy wasn't trouble free. He had a history of running away from home and drug use. He'd also overdosed a few weeks prior but was found in time and transported to a hospital, but, his addiction refused to let him stay there. Because of that, his mom kept Narcan in the house and had taken to waking up in the middle of every night to check on her boy.

On this particular morning, she rose a bit later than usual and made the terrible discovery of her son overdosed and unresponsive. My partner was the first of us onscene and we could all hear the urgency in his voice as he broadcast that he was taking over CPR and that 4 doses of Narcan had been administered, with no effect. I arrived a moment later and was relieved to see EMS crews had preceded me.

I hurried upstairs in the house and joined my partner, 4 fire fighters, 2 ambulance paramedics, and that mother. All of our attention was on the 15 year old boy who lay on the floor, motionless and blue. For the next 30+ minutes those medics used every tool and skill in their tool box to attempt a miracle. 2 more cops joined us.

At the 30 minute mark, the lead paramedic expressed to the mother how grim the situation was and that he was going to administer 1 last dose of epinephrine in an effort to stimulate the boy's heart. A moment later 4 cops, 4 fire fighters, 2 ambulance paramedics stood so silent we could have heard a pin drop. That 15 year old life had passed through our fingertips. We all had silent tears on our cheeks. We let that mother embrace her son one last time as she wept openly.

The ensuing investigation would uncover more fentanyl and knowledge that the boy had hopped on his bicycle the prior evening to make the 2 mile journey into downtown Portland, as he did frequently, to buy his drug of choice from some street dealer.

The following day would have been this young man's 16th birthday. But, that

landmark was stolen from him and his family by a drug dealer.

I can never forget that day. None of the 1st responders who were there ever will. I hope you won't either.

I implore you to please, embrace the courage, common sense, and decency it takes to pass this bill into law. It is time for accountability; Time to save lives rather than enable and incentivize crime.