

Submitter: Kara Colley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

Please reclassify possession of hard drugs as a Class A misdemeanor crime, not the lowest level Class C as is being proposed. On a daily basis, I see people using and abusing hard drugs regularly as I walk around Couch Park and the Stadium Fred Meyer. Because of this daily experience, I believe that people abusing hard drugs need some kind of incentive or punishment to change their behavior. Making possession of hard drugs a class A misdemeanor does not mean that the person will go to jail for 364 days. Making it a class A misdemeanor means that law enforcement has leverage to influence the person's behavior. I want the person abusing drugs to get help, but many times they refuse that help. Making it a class A misdemeanor gives law enforcement a strong tool in their tool belt to discourage use of hard drugs.

I support the re-criminalization effort that you are making, but the penalties need to be stronger. A Class C misdemeanor is not strong enough.