

Submitter: Roger Johnson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4036

Members: State of Oregon Legislature HB 4002, Measure 110

Throughout the past 60 year of observing human behavior, it has become obvious to a prudent person that the only remedy for drug abuse is to impose very strict criminal penalties on those individuals involved in the production, distribution, and sale of all drugs. Users should also have stricter penalties. As a decorated US Army (Airborne) Combat Infantry Captain, MACV, (1967-1968) Vietnam War, and having served 1 1/2 years as an Infantry Lieutenant with the US Army 101 Airborne Division (1966-1967) I have personally witnessed the negative effects of illicit drug use in combat. Soldier and unit behavior negatively changes and puts lives at risk in combat when drug use is involved. Soldiers die! Civilians die! Unit discipline deteriorates along unit morale, causing reduced combat effectiveness. This negative behavior applies in peace time as well as in war time conditions.

All responsible research shows that marijuana usage leads as a gateway to cocaine usage, heroin usage, fentanyl usage and other addictive drug usage. HB 4002 should impose a mandatory jail sentence of a minimum of 6 months. Mandatory drug treatment must be required while held in prison for 6 months. Possession of hard drugs should be a serious crime, not a misdemeanor.

Our society is at risk of decline and decay if reasonable laws are not upheld and enforced. Ineffective laws, and a lack of accountability, ENCOURAGES and FACILITATES future bad behavior. Meaningless laws encourage drug users to come to our state, and drug producers to target our young and other citizens. Drug users become a danger and a financial burden on our society. They destroy the quality of life of our communities, degrade our economies, make our cities and towns third world class environments. Portland is a classic example. Friends no longer visit Portland. Conventions avoid coming to Portland, and our State. In the past decade, Portland has spent over \$1 billion on the homeless issue and on drug abuse usage, and the situation is worse today than a decade ago. Tax revenues were down \$1 billion in 2022. Businesses are closing or moving elsewhere. It is common to see women and men defecate and urinate in the streets and sidewalks. Does this not open your eyes as our elected representatives? What more does it take FOR YOU to get enough COURAGE to act as responsible adults and elected officials?

Yes, we must take care of our less privileged as a society! Please open your eyes! Put your idealism of utopian solutions where they belong. Be realistic and responsible in addressing the difficult but necessary solutions.

Sir John Glubb wrote essays on empires. Of the 6 stages of empires, the Fifth Stage is one of opulence, self-indulgence and narcissism. Putting oneself, or one's cause, before the good of society or the good of others. The Sixth Stage is the Stage of Decline.

Please, for the sake of our families, friends, communities, citizens, and the State of Oregon. **BE RESPONSIBLE! DO THE RIGHT THING! BE STRONG!**

Roger L. Johnson  
Fifth Generation Oregonian