

OREGON

CREDIT UNIONS

February 7, 2024
Testimony on HB4002
Joint Addiction and Community Safety Response

Good evening,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Oregon Credit Unions and the GoWest Credit Union Association.

Credit unions' not-for-profit, cooperative structure inherently holds them accountable to the member-owners they serve. Oregon credit unions proudly serve 2.33 million members. Credit unions are not-for-profit cooperatives, organized to meet the needs of their members. Over 55% of Oregonians are member-owners of their credit unions, and you will see them in all walks of life — in communities large and small, rural, and metropolitan. Oregon credit unions strive to preserve a legislative climate that recognizes their unique structure and mission.

Credit unions are located in all counties in Oregon and serve your constituents. Our staff and employees work on main street from Portland to Ontario, Salem, Bend, Medford, and beyond. We have seen firsthand the challenges of Ballot Measure 110 in our communities. Of particular note to our industry, the current laws have led to the material increase in robberies, fraud, and crime that credit unions are seeing. This impacts the safety of our employees and our members, and we believe this issue needs to be addressed during this legislative session.

When the Governor released her Task Force report from the Portland Central City Task Force, we were pleased to see several critical recommendations including:

- Declare a tri-government Fentanyl emergency.
- Ban the public use of controlled substances and reduce barriers to prosecuting drug delivery.
- Expand Central City's homeless shelter capacity.

- Further elevate law enforcement response to Central City.
- Clean up the city.

We were honored to have our very own Rob Stuart, President/CEO of OnPoint Community Credit Union serve as the Co-Chair of the Community Safety Task Force.

Credit unions ultimately would like to see a bipartisan bill that includes meaningful solutions to drug use on our streets and the many issues that stem from it. We recognize that HB4002 may not be the final product and is receiving criticism that it does not go far enough or goes too far. Credit unions are looking to the legislature to find common ground and support legislation that will bring both sides together to finalize a comprehensive policy that works across the state. As we understand this particular legislation, it includes several provisions to improve public safety, works to improve access to behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, and addresses the issue of possession of controlled substances on our streets, which are all critical concerns that need to be addressed. Credit unions are committed to serving historically marginalized communities and understand that a 'war on drugs' disparately effects these communities We honor the work that so many organizations do each and every day to support our fellow Oregonians in need.

Not addressing this crisis is not an option. Oregon credit unions will support a final bill that brings together legislators willing to collaborate to solve our community issues and helps lead us on the road to recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Pam Leavitt

Sr. Vice President of Regional Grassroots and Political Programs/Legislative Affairs for Oregon

