

Submitter: Catherine Meyers

On Behalf Of: No to criminalization

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

I oppose HB 4002 and efforts to criminalize addiction.

Addiction is a healthcare issue, not a crime. We cannot address the addiction crisis with arrests and jails, which add barriers to stable housing and increase overdose deaths. Instead our communities need more investments in treatment, including outreach teams and peer mentor programs. People need help, not handcuffs.

As a recovering addict, I recognize the harm criminalization did first hand. I racked up over 10 felonies-most of them simple possession charges, while I was using. That didn't help me get clean, but it stained my permanent record & made things tough for me, including finding safe housing and decent paying jobs. Even perusing my dream of higher education was more difficult. Luckily the dream wasn't impossible, and today I proudly hold a Master's degree.

PLEASE vote NO on HB 4002!