

Submitter: Julie Blackman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

I oppose HB 4002 as it lacks sufficient deterrents to the use of the drugs that have destroyed the lives of so many Oregonians while shredding the quality of life of those who live in the region and are faced with the ongoing and increasing effects of rampant SUD and addiction on a daily basis.

Strengthening the penalties for drug use and requiring treatment as an alternative to jail - rather than as a suggested alternative to a fine - is necessary in order to get our current problems under control. What we've seen to date will seem like utopia compared to the results of allowing the current situation to snowball.

The Legislature must heed the advice of law enforcement officials from around the State arguing for classification as a Class A misdemeanor rather than Class C. This is not a punitive step, it is not 'refilling the prison pipeline' nor is it likely to negatively affect the lives of those so charged. Instead, it would give them the opportunity to get clean and rejoin society as a functioning and contributing member.

Enabling Oregonians to die on the street for less than the cost of a cup of coffee is NOT compassionate.

I sincerely hope that the testimony of those of us who see the effects of Measure 100 playing out in our neighborhoods, businesses and families will sway those who are tempted to offer a watered-down, pointless revision to Measure 110. We can and must do better.