

Submitter: CJ Smith

On Behalf Of: Myself

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

I fully support HB 4002. I understand the argument that drug addicted citizens should be routed into drug treatment options rather than criminal justice. However, at what cost to the public? Should drug addiction mean law abiding citizens have to pay for security to make sure no drugged up person is sleeping in their business entry blocking customer access every morning (as we are forced to do), do law abiding citizens have to expose their children to witness open drug use in our communities all so addicted persons can freely carry on and increase their addiction, and die miserably on our streets and public parks?

Law abiding citizens are tired of paying to clean up their trash, we are tired of our businesses being robbed, our children being exposed to degradation and open drug use when they leave their homes and schools.

Does the drug addiction now mean addicted citizens have more rights than law abiding citizens? We tried something new and it has only made the problem worse. We have been patient enough. It is time to return to enforcing the law to prevent or curb illegal behavior and addiction. We deserve protection from those who choose addiction over health. Drug addiction and mental illness are diseases. We need to treat the disease, not allow it to spread and ruin our communities and public spaces.

I believe this problem is a direct result of the state deciding mental health is not their responsibility by removing hundreds of treatment beds when half of the state hospital was closed and razed. While you repel this failure, you might also repeal the "right to fail" that resulted in this problem. Go back and fix the whole problem, not just this piece. Thank you for this opportunity to voice my frustration.