



Co-Chairs Lieber and Kropf and committee members,

I am Sandy Chung, Executive Director of the ACLU of Oregon. The ACLU of Oregon is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to defending and advancing our democracy, civil liberties, and civil rights, with more than 27,000 members statewide.

Our members reside in communities across our state. They have been contacting you through many calls and emails to your offices.

Our members are asking you this: please address drug addiction and homelessness but do so with real solutions, not political theater and a repeat of the disastrous and violent war on drugs.

Experts and everyday Oregonians know the real solutions to drug addiction and homelessness: treatment, housing, prevention education, non-police mobile crisis teams like CAHOOTS and Portland Street Response, and community revitalization programs.

For decades, lawmakers have fed the monster that is the criminal system with unconscionable amounts of money and actual human beings. And here we are – with crisis levels of addiction, homelessness, and a dysfunctional and unstable criminal system.

Indeed, a couple months ago, the Oregonian reported that drug use is soaring in Oregon's prisons and state officials are struggling to stop smuggling and provide treatment.¹ When the state is unable to address addiction among 12 thousand people in the state's enclosed prisons, why are you exporting this ineffective, dysfunctional, and massively expensive criminal approach to all of Oregon?

Senators and representatives, we need you to make decisions that create thriving communities across Oregon – now and into the future. We **cannot** have thriving communities **and** more jails and prisons. Please lead our state with the courage, care, and real solutions that all Oregonians deserve and need

We urge you to vote NO on all bills to criminalize - including HB 4002-1, HB 4036, and SB 1555.

Sandy Chung (she,her)
Executive Director, ACLU of Oregon

¹ [September 2023 Oregonian article - "Drug use soars among inmates in Oregon's prisons; prison officials struggle to stop smuggling"](#)