

Submitter: Cienna Simmons  
On Behalf Of: Addiction is no a crime  
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Measure: HB4002

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 4002.

Housing security, access to medical care, mental health, addiction, and parenting resources are all far more effective in curbing addiction crises, not to mention thriving wages and opportunities for affordable hobbies outside of church or the bar.

This bill will overturn Measure 110, making possession of small amounts of controlled substances a misdemeanor punishable by jail time, a fine, or both. The bill has been clumsily implemented thus far and needs more time to demonstrate its effectiveness now that the addiction treatment centers have finally been established.

Criminalizing addiction has never worked to reduce overdose deaths or help people get care. HB 4002 takes us backwards by:

- Treating addiction as a crime;
- Inflicting more government harm and violence on Black and brown communities;
- Putting Measure 110 funding at risk. Diverting funding to the criminal system that could be used for addiction services;
- Further overburdens the public defense system, which is already over capacity.

Addiction is not a crime, it is a healthcare issue. Oregon can and must do better than HB 4002 to address the addictions crisis. HB 4002 is an inadequate and harmful approach that will not solve our addictions crisis and will instead waste taxpayer dollars. HB 4002 will result in more people going to jail, more people being harmed, more individuals being displaced, more families being disrupted, more people dying from overdoses. The legislature should focus on real solutions that will help our communities instead of returning to the failed policies of the past that simply won't work.

I urge you to please vote no on HB 4002.