

Submitter: Ann Rasmussen

On Behalf Of: Addiction is not 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. This bill will overturn Measure 110, making possession of small amounts of controlled substances a misdemeanor punishable by jail time, a fine, or both. This subverts the will of the 58.5% of voters who approved this bill in 2020. Three years later, Measure 110 is barely starting to function as intended due to delays in making addiction treatment resources available, and overturning this referendum is legislative overreach.

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.

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, and more people being harmed. 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.