

Submitter: Julie England  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services  
Measure: SB1547

I am writing to express my strong support for Oregon Senate Bill 1547 and its initiatives to address substance abuse issues among youth. As a concerned citizen, I believe that change is imperative, and legislative action such as SB 1547 is crucial in ensuring that our youth have access to timely and effective treatment for substance use disorders.

One of the key provisions of SB 1547 that I wholeheartedly endorse is the ability to admit a minor for inpatient substance use disorder diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment for up to 14 days with parental consent when the minor objects to the admission. This provision recognizes the urgency of addressing substance abuse issues among youth and ensures that those in need of immediate treatment receive it without unnecessary delay.

Additionally, I fully support the inclusion of cannabis use disorder treatment in health benefit plans, especially for minors who are at risk of habitual use and potential escalation to the unlawful use of controlled substances. By acknowledging cannabis as a substance that can lead to addictive behaviors requiring medical intervention, we are taking a proactive approach to address the evolving landscape of substance abuse among youth.

Furthermore, the proposal for a virtual opioid dependency pilot program, providing on-demand intervention and treatment for individuals with opioid use disorder through the 9-8-8 suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis hotline, is a vital step towards ensuring that help is readily available to those struggling with opioid addiction. Immediate access to treatment is essential in preventing overdose deaths and facilitating long-term recovery.

It is essential to recognize that existing standards for identifying addictive substances may not accurately reflect the realities of substance abuse, particularly concerning cannabis. By acknowledging cannabis as a potentially addictive substance and providing avenues for treatment, we can intervene early and prevent the escalation of substance use disorders to more dangerous behaviors or substances.

In conclusion, I urge you to support Oregon SB 1547 and its efforts to address substance abuse issues among youth. By providing immediate access to treatment, acknowledging cannabis as a substance requiring medical intervention, and implementing innovative intervention programs, we can make significant strides in safeguarding the well-being of our youth and communities.