

Submitter: Sean Murray

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

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My daily bicycle commuting route runs north/south from OMSI to the Steel Bridge via the East Bank Esplanade and then east/west across old town to the Pearl District. With almost 8-years of following this route I have seen a marked change in this area of Portland's Streets.

In 2017, when I started riding this route it was a vibrant corridor with families, tourists, and other commuters sharing the path. The surrounding landscape was clean and well kept, and the retaining walls, buildings, and structural elements were largely free of graffiti. Recent landscape investment in Flanders Street crossing Old Town/China Town had cleaned up the streetscape, increasing visibility and safety in that area.

In the time since, the surroundings have deteriorated into squalor and filth with garbage, graffiti, and illegal encampments cluttering this one time jewel of Portland.

On an almost daily basis I witness open drug dealing and use, public urination and defecation, impaired people staggering around or passed out, and tents and open fires scattered across the landscape blocking the public right of way in these areas.

The docks and waters of the Willamette are also crowded with boats and other floating structures that appear to be used as long-term habitation.

While I understand that there are complex economic and social issues which contributed to this situation, the biggest driver which I see is the lack of drug enforcement allowed by Measure 110 and the corresponding reduction in police activity in these areas.

Despite the promises of Measure 110 providing humane treatment and counseling for people caught in this web of addiction, this situation continues and appears to be getting worse. It is well past time to change the failed policies of Measure 110 to not only clean up the squalor and crime which it has brought upon our City but also begin to move in new directions to identify and support the ignored addicts who occupy and suffer in this hellscape.

I implore you to please support repeal or changes to Measure 110 to provide real consequences for illicit drug use and enforceable actions to both help those in need and clean up our streets.

Thank you for your work on these matters – Sean Murray