



Monday, February 26, 2024

Co-Chairs Senator Lieber and Representative Kropf and Members of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response:

The Washington County Chamber is in strong support of HB 4002. We stand behind the proposed measures aimed at addressing the challenges posed by substance use disorder while enhancing public safety and improving the overall livability for all Oregonians.

HB 4002 presents a comprehensive approach to reform, and we specifically endorse the following key provisions:

**Recriminalization of Hard Drugs:** We support HB 4002's proposal to recriminalize hard drugs, offering up to 6 months in jail or mandatory, supervised drug treatment. This balanced approach provides individuals with the opportunity to receive necessary treatment and support while also ensuring accountability for harmful behaviors.

**Mandatory, Supervised Drug Treatment:** We endorse HB 4002's initiative to replace voluntary drug treatment with required evidence-based treatment as an alternative to jail. By mandating supervised drug treatment, we can effectively address the underlying causes of substance use disorders and facilitate individuals' paths to recovery and rehabilitation.

**Empowering Local Governments:** HB 4002's provision to give local governments the tools to ban the use of drugs in public is crucial for safeguarding community well-being. Additionally, providing police and prosecutors with stronger tools to target drug dealers and traffickers is essential for combating drug-related crime and ensuring public safety.

**Monitoring Implementation:** As amended HB 4002 would require the Criminal Justice Commission to closely track the implementation of this new approach. Having data available to lawmakers and the public will help ensure that these policies can be implemented in a way that avoids a return to the failed decades-long war on drugs. If, as some advocates have warned the new system has a disproportionate impact on communities of color it will be incumbent upon us all to revisit these conversations and refine the policy with a renewed emphasis on equity.

It is noteworthy that HB 4002 is supported by a broad coalition, including law enforcement, cities, counties, local businesses, Democrats, Republicans, and 73% of Oregonians. This widespread support underscores the urgent need for reform and reflects a shared commitment to addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by substance use disorder.

The Washington County Chamber urges legislators to swiftly pass HB 4002 to enact meaningful reforms that will enhance public safety, support individuals struggling with substance use disorder, and strengthen our communities. By supporting HB 4002, we can create a safer, healthier, and more resilient Oregon for all.

Thank you for considering our position and for your dedication to addressing this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deanna Palm". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D" and a stylized "P" for "Palm".

Deanna Palm  
President/CEO