



February 26, 2024

Joint Interim Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Testimony – oppose HB 4002**

Co-Chair Representative Kropf, Co-Chair Senator Lieber, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony today. My name is Emily-Grace Cropper-Russel, I use she/her pronouns, and I work as the Donor Engagement Officer with the ACLU of Oregon. I live in Newberg and have worked in social services for the past 10 years.

**I urge you not to move forward with HB 4002.**

Before working at the ACLU, I worked at Habitat for Humanity in Yamhill County. Through this work, I saw firsthand how Oregon's addiction crisis and affordable housing crisis coincide. We know that stable housing is imperative in addressing addiction. A loss of housing can contribute to the cycle of addiction and services are harder to access without a home.

HB 4002 will exacerbate the already looming issues with housing in addition to criminalizing poverty and homelessness. Criminalization creates obstacles for people to be in stable housing; formerly incarcerated people are nearly 10 times more likely to be homeless.<sup>1</sup> Social issues like these need social services not punishment. HB 4002 was drafted by prosecutors and others who have no expertise in the recovery field. We know that the war on drugs has been ineffective in addressing or preventing drug addiction. Trying more of the same methods will continue to lead us deeper into the downward spiral of institutionalized racism, inflicting disproportionate harms on Black and brown communities. For these reasons, I urge you to vote no on HB 4002.

HB 4002 will make things worse for Oregonians.

**Thank you,**

Emily-Grace Cropper-Russel  
Donor Engagement Manager, ACLU Oregon

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>