

To: Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

Local landlord urges your support for HB 4002

Dear Oregon Lawmaker,

As locally-based residential landlords in Portland, we are writing to urge you to support HB 4002 and recriminalize hard drugs, requiring supervised drug treatment or a mandatory jail sentence for their use.

Since the passage of Measure 110, we have seen its devastating impact on our tenants and their neighborhoods. Open drug use is now common in parking lots and public spaces at many of our apartments, despite our best efforts to police these areas. Outdoor spaces that were once enjoyed by our tenants and their children for recreation, gardening and gathering are now often too littered with used drug paraphernalia and debris (left by non-residents) to be safely enjoyed.

Additionally, we have had both buildings and garbage containers set on fire by non-residents smoking drugs in the entryways and sidewalks next to our buildings. In one instance, a dozen of our tenants were forced to evacuate their homes in the middle of the night and unable to return to their apartments for several days. The fire permanently damaged a historic neighborhood landmark, and it is a miracle no one was seriously injured, although many of our tenants lost personal property. Such incidents result in costly clean-up bills and extreme rate hikes in our insurance premiums – over 500% in the case of the building which caught fire.

Finally, interactions with substance abusers have become a daily and at times dangerous part of our lives and those of our employees. We routinely get calls about folks either using or under the influence of drugs in building stairwells, open laundry rooms and exterior porches. On many occasions, these individuals have directly threatened residents and destroyed property – smashing windows, destroying fire prevention equipment, and storage and mailboxes. The challenge of keeping everyone safe has become overwhelming, for us but also the police with whom we now interact all too frequently.

We really need some help, and today you can provide it by supporting the passage of HB 4002. Because the issue here is not just about how we help people struggling with substance abuse - this is about everyone's right to live in a safe and secure home.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Hill
Portland, Oregon