

## **Juanita Swartwood, Jerrod Murray, Nate Sickler**

February 22, 2024

Dear Oregon Lawmakers:

We are the three chief petitioners for IP 47 and 48, the initiatives to fix and improve Measure 110. We are a SE Portland grandmother helping her granddaughter overcome drug addiction, a Native American who leads a drug addiction clinic and an elected sheriff from Jackson County. On the surface, we have nothing in common. Yet, each of us is touched on a daily basis by the drug crisis overtaking the state we love. What unites us is a conviction that Measure 110 is doing more harm than good to the communities and the people we love.

Given the gravity of the drug crisis facing Oregon, we have said that we would prefer a legislative solution to Measure 110 *sooner* rather than a ballot measure solution to Measure 110 *later*. The recent CDC statistics of staggering fentanyl overdose deaths in Oregon only underscore the urgent need to fix Measure 110. With each passing day, lives are at stake. For that reason, nothing would make us happier than the House and Senate passing and the Governor signing bipartisan repairs and reforms to Measure 110 that would make a ballot measure unnecessary.

We are encouraged by the progress being made by legislators from both parties to reach an agreement on key changes to Measure 110. As you reach the final and most difficult stage of negotiations and votes, please do not give up. Oregonians cannot afford for you to fail. To that end, we urge you not to repeat a mistake of Measure 110; listen to and address the concerns of the Oregonians responsible for implementing the laws you pass, particularly local law enforcement and city and county officials.

It is a false choice to claim that Oregon's response to the drug crisis must either be public health or public safety. It must be both. The three of us are living proof of that reality. It is also true that while some would like to use the tragedy of drug addiction to divide Oregonians along racial lines, this crisis does not discriminate nor accept the racial and economic stereotypes that, sadly, too often dominate our politics today. Drugs kill, no matter who you are, where you were born, where you live or how you vote.

From the tragedy of this addiction crisis, we hope the legislative effort to fix Measure 110 will reset the debate over drug policy in Oregon. It need not divide us. Indeed, as polls consistently show, Oregonians are more united around the problems and preferred solutions to Measure 110 than any issue we can recall. But needed legislative changes are just the first step in a much larger and more difficult challenge facing Oregon – the need to keep people, especially our young people, from using these deadly drugs in the first place.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

**Juanita Swartwood**

**Jerrold Murray**

**Nate Sickler**