



February 26, 2024

**TO:** Members of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

**FR:** Derek Sangston, Oregon Business & Industry

**RE:** Support for HB 4002 with the -24 Amendments

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Co-chairs Lieber and Kropf and members of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Public Safety Response. For the record, I am Derek Sangston, policy director and counsel for Oregon Business & Industry (OBI).

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 80% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4002 as it would be amended by the -24 amendments. Throughout this discussion, OBI and other members of business community have urged this committee to take bold action to give law enforcement and local governments the tools they need to combat Oregon's drug crisis during the 2024 session. Together we asked for you to enhance Oregon's much too relaxed drug laws, invest in law enforcement, and expand addiction services.

Businesses need such bold action from the Legislature to combat Oregon's drug crisis because we – in communities small and large – encounter the symptoms of this crisis daily. Examples include the open use and sale of drugs, retail theft and property crime, and constant threats to the safety of customers and workers.

The changes the -24 amendment would make to HB 4002 would create the tools that are necessary to begin combating Oregon's drug crisis. Importantly, the bill would now create an unclassified misdemeanor that would impose a maximum jail sentence of six months for possession of hard drugs, would make it easier for law enforcement to prosecute drug dealers, and would invest in the state's behavioral health systems.

For those reasons, OBI urges this committee to pass HB 4002 as it would be changed by the -24 amendment. Thank you for your consideration.

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