

Co-Chairs Lieber and Kropf and the Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of House Bill 4002. My name is Lucy Pierce (she/her) and I am a student at the University of Portland. I oppose HB 4002 and any proposed amendments because Oregonians deserve, and want, better. Addiction is not a crime, it is a healthcare issue; putting people in prison only increases harm to our communities. Punitive actions will not solve addiction, rather waste taxpayer dollars and cause insurmountable harm by putting people who use drugs through the criminal justice system. Not to mention how much these tactics will disproportionately affect Black, Brown, low-income, and other underserved communities. We need to invest money into housing initiatives, outreach programs, and quality healthcare services. Oregon citizens voted for M110 because we believe this crisis demands action but we cannot punish people for shortcomings by the State. M110 was never fully implemented and we must give the measure more time before returning to ineffective, expensive, and inhumane policies that perpetuate racist and biased practices. Criminalization is not a real solution to addiction and I adamantly oppose any action that will put people who use drugs in jail. That is why I urge YOU to vote with compassion, do the right thing, and vote NO on HB 4002.