

Submitter: Todd Burwell  
On Behalf Of: Black and brown Oregonians deserve better  
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Measure: HB4002

I am a constituent who has a brother suffering with alcohol addiction. As I watch him struggle and fail to recover I've come to understand that his addiction is not a product of poor choices or defective moral turpitude. He is addicted to alcohol because he has mental illness. In alcoholics anonymous they say that addicts are either locked up, covered up, or they sober up. HB 4002 -24 Will make the first two outcomes more prevalent while doing nothing about the underlying problem.

is extremely disappointed and saddened to see state leaders pursue harmful criminalization policies instead of taking meaningful action to increase access to treatment services and housing for Oregonians.

Just like the hundreds of Oregonians who submitted testimony earlier this month against harmful criminalization proposals, including HB 4002 and HB 4036, I strongly urge lawmakers to follow the evidence and the data: decades of the failed war on drugs tell us that sending people to jail for having an addiction only ruins lives.

The latest version of HB 4002 -24 also creates massive inequities between counties. People who live in counties without a deflection program will face immediate HB 4002 arrests while people living just a few miles away will be offered connection to treatment. Your zip code shouldn't determine your ability to access treatment services. If this is a statewide bill, it needs a statewide solution, including funding.

I've heard legislators call HB 4002 a treatment-first approach, but that's simply not true. The bill as written will send people struggling with addiction to jail and saddle them with criminal records. HB 4002 fails to meet the tremendous need for detox and treatment services across our state and represents a costly and damaging return to the war on drugs - no matter what you call it.

Oregonians deserve better than HB 4002.