

Submitter: Judith Bentley  
On Behalf Of: Correction of previous testimony - I oppose  
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Measure: HB4002

"I am a constituent who 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.

I've opposed HB 4002 from the start but I'm particularly frustrated by the -24 amendment, including the special interests behind it.

HB 4002 -24 sets deflection programs in select counties up to fail - in the same way Oregon failed to implement Measure 110. For lower income Oregonians, the shortage of public defenders means cases will be dismissed with no connection to care, but leaving people with arrest records. And HB 4002 -24 recriminalizes addiction long before deflection programs will be set up.

HB 4002 -24 also falls short of investing in Oregon's woefully under resourced mental health and drug addiction treatment services. The status quo of providing just 50% of the capacity necessary to meet the substance use disorder services needed is unacceptable. People are desperate for treatment services. That's punishment enough - putting them in jail doesn't help anyone.

We must do better. And we must do better than HB 4002 -24

At the end of the day, addiction is a health issue. Not a crime. The addiction crisis demands action, but HB 4002 -24 does more harm than good. I urge you to press the lawmakers behind HB 4002 to do better and consider the harm this legislation will unleash upon Black and brown Oregonians, and people struggling with addiction."