

To: The Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety  
Response  
From: Carol Greenough Ph.D.  
Re: HB 4002

Thank you for the very hard work you have done to find next steps in combatting the challenging crisis of addiction. I have listened to the hearings and read much of the testimony and feel that almost everything has been said. Yet, we still are struggling to find the answers to what we must do. So, I just want to summarize some of the themes that stand out to me based on over 40 years of working as a psychologist in behavioral health settings.

- While we need to respond to the severe crisis of those already addicted and suffering, we also need to make prevention central to our work, particularly working with young people.
- Someday, I hope that prisons are little needed because people have the supports they need in the community. And, when used, that prisons are places where people come out in better shape than they went in - with good health, job skills and links to a real job, housing, education, and a renewed sense of themselves as capable, valued members of our community.
- We must find ways to make jobs in behavioral healthcare attractive enough to fill the need for workers at so many levels.
- It is important that we prepare for the next wave of drugs as well as responding to the current crisis. When I opened a mental health center in a small town in Alaska in 1977 - we were worried about alcohol and heroin. That concern shifted to seeing stimulants as the biggest problem, then to over the counter opioids, then to fentanyl, and now to poly drug abuse. At each stage, we seemed to focus on treatment for the drug of the day. I am sure you share my concerns that the current treatments for opioid use disorder don't work well to treat

fentanyl/methamphetamine polydrug use. We need to keep innovating.

- You have counseled patience as we go on this route - I agree. Programs developed under Measure 110 are starting to show impact. Whatever comes out of this current legislation will also take time to make a difference. For people on the front lines providing services, frequent changes in levels of support, reporting, and programmatic demands make it hard to do the everyday tasks of helping people to heal.

Again, thank you for all you are doing.

Carol Greenough, Ph.D.  
retired clinical psychologist