

Submitter: Sharlea Walling

On Behalf Of: Blakey

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

My nephew Blayne {Blakey}, was only 26 years old when my sister found him dead in his bedroom. This 6'5" gentle giant was found to have a lethal dose of fentanyl in his system after he unknowingly took a pill with fentanyl in it. A one-pill-kill as it's called. One. Single. Pill. A tiny little pill stole everything from his future and took from his family the most caring, loving, funny, giving and kind son/brother/grandson/uncle/cousin/nephew. He had dreams of writing and producing music, starting a comedy podcast and eventually having a family of his own. All of that, gone, from a single pill. To take the most devastating moment of our lives and make it even worse - nobody will ever be held accountable for his death. The producers and dealers of these pills are free to keep killing people. Maybe your child will be next. Or your grandchild. Or your child's best friend. If Oregon continues on the path it's on, I promise you, not a single person will be left untouched by the decriminalization of drugs.

I strongly support HB 4002. We must begin to take back our state – from out of state activists who selected the state least equipped and most vulnerable to undertake a dangerous, lethal experiment.

Tragically, the experiment is leaving disaster in its wake: rampant drug use, addiction driven homelessness, and death.

HB 4002, as amended, is critical to addressing addiction and limiting access to lethal drugs:

Re-criminalizes possession, so law enforcement can partner with community providers to compel addiction treatment;

Strengthening laws against dealers, especially those preying on the most vulnerable;

And, ideally, investments in detox and sobering centers.

No other state is standing up and saying "we're next." Instead, they are pointing at Oregon's plummeting livability and staggering increase in overdose deaths as exhibit A in the case against decriminalizing hard drugs.