

Submitter: Liam W.

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1573

Dear Chair Reynolds and Members of the Committee,

My name is Liam. I was born and raised in Portland, and I am writing in strong support of SB 1573.

Unregulated harm reduction programs are causing real and visible harm in our communities. When services operate without standards, oversight, or accountability, they stop being public health interventions and become public safety failures.

In multiple Portland neighborhoods, needle exchange pop ups have appeared near parks, schools, and residential areas without notice to residents, without clear operating rules, and without any plan for cleanup or follow up. When these sites disappear, they leave behind discarded needles, public drug use, and unsafe conditions that residents are forced to manage on their own. Parents, seniors, and people with disabilities pay the price. Communities are left angry, frightened, and exhausted.

Any program that distributes medical waste must be held to basic, non negotiable standards. That includes responsible siting away from schools and playgrounds, defined cleanup and disposal obligations, coordination with local authorities, and transparent reporting. We would never allow any other medical or social service to operate without these requirements. Needle exchange programs should not be exempt simply because they use the language of compassion.

I urge you to pass SB 1573.