

Submitter: Robert Gandy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1583
Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in opposition to SB 1583. My perspective comes not only from my work in the community, but from lived experience. I am a person in long-term recovery from substance use — I quit using substances well before Measure 110 existed. Because of that, I remember clearly what Oregon’s system looked like before these reforms, and I know how limited and punitive the options were for people who needed help.

Today, I dedicate my time to helping others avoid overdose, connecting people to resources, and supporting individuals who are trying to stabilize their lives. The services funded through Measure 110 have become essential tools in that work.

It is important to ground this discussion in evidence. Oregon, like the rest of the country, experienced a sharp rise in overdose deaths in recent years — but research shows this increase was not caused by Measure 110. A 2025 Portland State University study concluded that decriminalization “had little to do with rising crime and overdose deaths,” identifying the COVID-19 pandemic and the rapid spread of fentanyl as the primary drivers of the surge. Similarly, a 2024 analysis published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that Oregon’s increase in overdose mortality was attributable to fentanyl entering the drug supply, not to Measure 110’s policy changes.

These findings matter. Providers and communities have spent years building capacity and trust — trust that is essential for people who are often navigating stigma, fear, and crisis. SB 1583 would destabilize the systems of care built under Measure 110 by shifting oversight and funding in ways that disrupt treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and deflection services. Abrupt structural changes make it harder to deliver consistent care and risk leaving people without the services they rely on — including the very supports that help prevent overdose deaths.

Oregon should focus on strengthening existing programs and improving data systems, not creating instability through major governance shifts. The people we serve cannot afford setbacks in access, continuity, or trust.

I urge you to oppose SB 1583. Thank you for considering my testimony.