

Submitter: Sam Schuler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1573

Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in opposition to SB 1573.

As someone who works at a non-profit that offers some harm reduction services in Southern Oregon I know firsthand that the primary access to lifesaving care such as naloxone, treatment programs, peer support, syringe exchange services and more, is through mobile outreach and syringe exchange programs. Syringe service programs are also the only systems set up in most areas (especially many rural areas of which Southern Oregon has many) to collect syringe litter. In our outreach events we regularly collect hundreds of used syringes and even go out on our own time to high-traffic public areas to find and safely dispose of syringe litter. Setting arbitrary boundaries and gumming up the justice system with frivolous, accusatory lawsuits won't help anyone - business owners, citizens, syringe exchange program participants, etc. The threat of such legal actions will only serve to stifle SSPs during a time when Oregon needs safe syringe exchange and disposal more than ever before as our state is ranked the 3rd worst in Hep C fatalities:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/erd/pages/oregon-third-worst-for-hepatitis-c-deaths-in-u.s.-according-to-reports.aspx>