

I'm a mom with a child at Cathedral School in Northwest Portland. I'm writing because I see what's happening around our kids' school every day, and it's not okay.

We have drug dealers operating right outside the school grounds. We see people openly using, passed out on the sidewalks, and we find needles where kids walk and play. I've personally picked up used needles and drug paraphernalia near where my child learns. That's not something any parent should have to do — and it's not something any child should have to see.

And I want to be very clear: the days after the mobile 'harm reduction' unit comes through are dramatically worse. There are more discarded needles, more trash, and more people using openly. It's like they leave a trail of chaos every time they come to 'help.' They are actively making our community worse, not better, when they show up.

What's really frustrating is hearing people who oppose this bill act like they're the ones cleaning up the mess or keeping the community safe. They're not. They come into our neighborhoods pretending to help, acting like what's happening is totally fine, like it's 'normal' or 'cool' to have people using right next to a school. But it's not their child stepping over a pipe on the way to class. It's ours.

This isn't about being against harm reduction. I understand the need to help people who are struggling. But there has to be common sense. You can't put these programs right next to schools and expect parents to be okay with it. SB 1573 doesn't ban these services — it just says they shouldn't be set up within 2,000 feet of a school or childcare center. That's reasonable.

We can care about people in addiction and still protect our kids. Those two things don't have to conflict.

But right now, the balance is completely off — and our kids are paying the price.

Please, I'm asking you as a mom who sees this every day: don't prioritize drug users over children.

Protect our schools. Protect our neighborhoods. Support SB 1573.

Thank you for listening.