

Submitter: Gillian Leichtling
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1573

Dear committee members,

I urge you to vote no on 1537.

Syringe exchange services are an evidence-based practice that reduces infectious disease transmission, increases safe syringe disposal, and facilitates linkage to treatment. Positive effects are well-documented on both public health (decreasing syringe litter and disease transmission) and behavioral health (building trust and opening doors to treatment and recovery support).

Mobile and temporary syringe services are essential in rural Oregon and are the only safe disposal option in many rural communities. This bill would effectively eliminate access to syringe exchange services in rural communities throughout Oregon. Further, 1537 enables enforcement through bounty hunting by private citizens, placing the burden of proof on syringe services programs that any syringe found within the geographic parameters was not provided by the SSP.

An appropriate response to concern about discarded syringes is to allocate funding for publicly accessible drop boxes. Instead, 1537 creates a mechanism to close valuable health services under the pretense of protecting children.

Thank you for voting no on 1537.

Gillian Leichtling