

Submitter: Ben Eichenberger
On Behalf Of: Cathedral School
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1573

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ben, and I live in Portland and my elementary aged children attend Cathedral School in Northwest Portland. I am writing in support of SB 1573.

I want to be clear: this bill is not about opposing harm reduction services. Many of us support helping people who are struggling. What this bill asks for is thoughtful implementation that prioritizes young children and school environments first.

Those of us speaking in support are not sharing hypothetical concerns. We have lived in these neighborhoods and witnessed the impact firsthand—daily. We have seen open drug use near schools, discarded needles and paraphernalia on sidewalks, and an increase in trash and unsafe conditions in areas where children walk, play, and gather.

Opposition to this bill often focuses on defending harm reduction programs themselves. That is not what SB 1573 is about. The bill does not eliminate these services. It simply establishes a reasonable buffer around schools and childcare facilities and introduces accountability for cleanup and safety.

This is a common-sense approach. School zones should be safe, clean, and focused on children. Services for adults in crisis should be located in places that do not unintentionally create risks for young students.

Please support SB 1573 and help ensure that children's safety is prioritized while services continue to exist in appropriate locations.

Thank you for your consideration.