

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

I am a business owner, parent, and Democrat living in Portland. My family and my business have been severely impacted by unchecked drug use in our community.

Last year, RVs moved onto our block and our home was burglarized. Last month, armed individuals struggling with meth addiction squatted next door, requiring an extended, costly, and deeply stressful response. Because the police were constrained in their abilities to evict and arrest the squatters (despite the ongoing criminal activity, stolen cars, etc), the neighborhood was forced to come together to take action to resolve the situation. We had multiple frightening confrontations that took a real toll on our family during an already vulnerable time after the birth of our child, significantly affecting my wife's mental health.

My business location on Hawthorne has also been repeatedly vandalized and employees harassed. Drug paraphernalia, including meth pipes supplied by harm reduction providers, have been left behind.

I have seen firsthand how harm-reduction services concentrate vagrancy and drug activity in specific locations, creating unsafe and stressful conditions for residents and children. Addressing this is a reasonable and necessary first step to restoring safety in our community.

I offer my support as a compassionate and pragmatic Democrat who believes Portland's current approach has failed both the broader community and those struggling with addiction. We need a stronger and more empowered police force, a DA that prosecutes, fewer policies that enable self-destruction and community harm, and real consequences paired with treatment and accountability. I believe this approach better serves everyone, including both those working hard to contribute to our city and those that need meaningful help to recover and reenter society. Despite my party affiliation and broader political values, I am indifferent as to which party brings solutions to the table and will vote in alignment with my principles. This is my primary issue as both a voter and passionate member of the Portland community.

If we do not see meaningful policy changes and improvements in livability before our child reaches school age, we will leave Portland and relocate our business.