

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

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the committee:

I am writing as a resident of Astoria to express my strong and unequivocal opposition to SB1573. In a city like ours--where services are centralized in a very small downtown core--this bill creates a completely unjustified and unnecessary conflict between childcare services and proven public health practices, both of which are urgently needed in our community. The fundamental premise that syringe services represent a danger to children (at all, much less within an arbitrary 2,000 ft radius) is baseless and, in my view, driven by little more than emotion and prejudice.

Further, SB1573's inclusion of an enforcement provision allowing private individuals to file suit against syringe service programs (regardless of any impact to the individual), as well as its ridiculous presumption that any needle found within 2,000 feet of a covered facility should automatically be blamed on the nearest service provider, are absolutely unacceptable. This is not about the safety of children; rather, it is clearly of a piece with many other reactionary efforts to wage culture war via private litigation (for example, the same playbook has been used against abortion providers in other states).

This is not a well-intentioned bill with some unfortunate flaws, it is a terrible bill in its fundamental impetus. SB1573 is plainly contrary to the Oregon Health Authority's core values, and represents a genuine threat to sensible operation of evidence-based public health services here in Astoria. Personally, the text of this bill leads me to firmly conclude that it was not motivated by child safety at all, but rather represents a conscious and intentional attempt to hamper proven syringe services in Oregon for no reason other than ideological prejudice against the very existence of those services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony,

Daniel Hubner
Astoria, OR