

Dear Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation,

My name is Toni Naranjo-Rivera and I am a Community Organizer for The Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act at nonprofit Unite Oregon. We are partnering with the Oregon Health Justice Recovery Alliance because we care about seeing SB755 implemented fully and without delay.

I live on the coast in Nehalem in Tillamook County. For years I have watched loved ones and my community members struggle with addiction, and have struggled with my own substance abuse issues as well. There is such a negative stigma attached to addiction that this becomes a huge barrier for individuals feeling safe and comfortable when seeking support. By collectively shifting our approach to a health-centered one, as opposed to criminalizing and shaming people suffering from addiction, we can begin to offer the necessary and effective tools for healing our communities across the state.

There is very little access to treatment and recovery services here in my coastal community. People often have to travel hours away from their homes, families and support systems to have access to any services. I have spent hours helping friends try to find available treatment services in our area, to no avail. The impact of substance abuse does not only affect individuals, it affects their loved ones and our community as a whole. We desperately need effective treatment and recovery services that are accessible for folks in need here in our rural coastal community.

Oregon is experiencing an addiction crisis. Everyday that we continue to lose folks to addiction due to a lack of available services, that loss is felt and impacts all of us. I urge the Committee to uphold the voices of the voters and support implementing these critical life saving services that will benefit Oregonians statewide, fully and without delay.

Thank you,
Toni Naranjo-Rivera