

Chairs Lieber and Nosse, and Members of the Subcommittee,

My name is Chad Kuske and I am a retired Navy SEAL from Clackamas County. I spent 18 years in service, mostly in combat deployments. I am here to speak in support of the OHA budget and specifically the allocation to support the implementation of the psilocybin therapy program voters created when they passed Measure 109.

My years of service took a toll on me. After being medically retired in 2017, I realized I was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. I had severe depression, anxiety, trauma and an addiction to drugs and alcohol. For two years, doctors tried to help me with pills and talk therapy, but nothing worked. I felt dead inside, unable to connect with others and simply going through the motions of life. I wouldn't wish the way I felt then on anybody.

Finally, I found an organization dedicated to helping veterans access psilocybin therapy in a regulated and controlled setting, under the watch of a trained and certified facilitator. After just one psilocybin therapy session, my life forever changed for the better. Thanks to psilocybin therapy, I have a newfound appreciation for life. I can actually be happy again.

It may sound strange, but I believe psilocybin therapy saved my life.

I supported Measure 109 because I believe there are many people like me who suffer from depression and other mental health conditions, who have not yet found a treatment that can help. Oregonians deserve access to psilocybin therapy in a controlled setting that maximizes safety. I know how beneficial it has been to me and my life, and how beneficial it will be for others.

Please support the Governor's proposed budget to allow OHA and the Psilocybin Advisory Committee to review research, partner with diverse communities, hear from experts and ultimately develop rules and regulations that can bring this important therapy to people who need it.

Thank you.