

Oregon Recovers is a coalition of people in recovery like myself, friends and family members of people experiencing addiction and the folks in the workforce who are on the front lines of the addiction crisis providing critical treatment and recovery support services. Our mission is to end Oregon's addiction crisis by transforming the state's fractured and incomplete addiction recovery health care system into a recovery-based continuum of care that recognizes addiction as a chronic health condition that requires a lifetime of support.

Oregon Recovers strongly supports HB 3111 and urges the committee to vote yes. Prior to the pandemic Oregon was facing one of the worst addiction crises in the nation that is, in large part, the result of a fragmented and incomplete behavioral healthcare system that spends most of its money on residential treatment, largely ignoring the other part of the continuum of care: recovery support services. This is an acute response to a chronic disease and there are many people here today that can speak to how critical having access to recovery support services is to succeed. I was an IV drug user for six years, yet I was only in residential treatment for two weeks. That was very important to stabilize me physically, but the year thereafter of daily engagement in recovery support services was the formative experience that saved my life and put me on a track to long term recovery.

Since the pandemic, the limited number of recovery community organizations that exist in Oregon have been forced to close their doors or reduce capacity. Overnight, people in recovery lost access to the single most important resource they have to maintain their recovery and, at the same time, overdose rates and excessive alcohol use rates have skyrocketed in the state. We are facing an unprecedented addiction and mental health crisis in Oregon in the coming months and years and we must act now.

Recovery support services are cost effective and have a high degree of success. The 2016 US Surgeon General Report, Facing Addiction in America, states that if someone engages in recovery support services for the first sixty months of their recovery, their relapse rate drops to 15%. There is virtually no other chronic disease with that type of success rate.

Ensuring that folks who are seeking recovery from their disease, whether they just got discharged from a treatment center or they wandered in from the street, should not be a luxury that only people who reside in the Portland metro area are afforded. By creating a statewide network of recovery community organizations that serve cities and counties across the state, we are investing in the lives of the 391,000 people in active addiction and the 386,000 people in recovery in Oregon, as well as their families.

Lastly I want to express my sincere desire that we are able to work with the Measure 110 oversight and accountability council and their consultants to fund recovery community centers like these throughout the state.

Please join Oregon Recovers and Chair Sanchez in investing in the success of hundreds of thousands of Oregonians and their families as they seek to recover from the disease of addiction and vote yes for HB 3111.