

Dear Senator Floyd Prozanski and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Thank you for your time in hearing my testimony regarding M110 and for your dedication in serving people experiencing houselessness and addiction in our community. My name is Patrick Lakeman and I live within District 24.

I currently serve as the Men's Connect Transitional Shelter Program Manager at the Portland Rescue Mission, Burnside. I also earned an AAS in Addictions Counseling and CADCI after studying in Portland Community College after realizing how much addiction played a part in costing people chances for success. I have worked for five years serving the houseless population in Portland and have witnessed first hand the men in my program struggling to regain housing and employment after being in jail. Time in jail disrupts their lives by costing them their employment and housing. Felonies on their records (a majority of which are non-violent and drug related) keep them on the streets for longer and cripples the opportunities available to them. These are not men who are simply recidivist criminals, but rather those striving to improve their circumstances through legal means with little or no systemic assistance. I voted for M110 in hopes that our community could lift oppressive weight off of those struggling with addiction and provide instead treatment and community led partnerships.

It is not an exaggeration to say that individuals unable to access appropriate care are dying and deteriorating on our streets, calling out for help to whoever will listen. From my office on Burnside downtown I regularly witness men and women screaming into the air, injecting drugs out in the open, and rapidly age month to month as the streets and hard drugs wear them down to early graves. M110 is a long overdue response and now that it is here I hope it will only be a first of many efforts to wrap our marginalized communities with this care they desperately need. As an advocate and ally to those suffering houselessness, regardless of background, I urge this committee to honor the will of the voters and stand by full funding and full implementation of M110. Can we rely on you to uphold these critical services through M110?

Thank you for taking time to read my testimony and caring generously for our entire community. I can be reached at patrick.lakeman@pdxmission.org for contact or further questions. I look forward to hearing the results of this committee's decisions and the ongoing work you all do to care for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Patrick Lakeman