

Dear Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation, My name is Benjamin O'Neill and I am a recovered Opioid addict. I am currently a happily married Vegan Chef and certified Yoga Instructor.

Along with my own personal experience, I have watched family members struggle with addiction, and I can tell you that jail time does not help anyone get sober. There are multiple avenues in which to gain access to opioids and other controlled substances in the correctional systems.

In our Jackson County community we have little or no access to treatment and recovery services.

People are dying from drug overdoses every day, while one in 10 Oregonians struggles with Substance Use Disorder.

People of color, specifically Black, Indigenous, and Latino communities as well as low-income Oregonians, continue to be disproportionately harmed by Oregon's failed approach of treating addiction like a crime, rather than a health issue. They are underrepresented in the healthcare system, while being overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Every day we wait, the more we perpetuate a broken system.

Addiction is fueling many of our state's serious problems like houselessness and poverty.

The pandemic is only making things worse; new data from the Oregon Health Authority shows that drug overdose deaths in Oregon were up 70 percent this spring compared to that same time last year.

Can we count on you to support funding for these critical community services that voters approved in Measure 110? Lawmakers must ensure that the law is fully funded, without delay. Will you uphold this new law that voters voted on?

Thank you.

Sincerely, Benjamin O'Neill.