

Hello there, I want to thank you for taking the time to read this letter and see what I have to say about the implementation of Measure 110. My name is Mia Biggi. I am a student of Social Work and an intern organizing with Unite Oregon.

I grew up in Beaverton, and now live in Portland. My whole life has taken place here in this great state. But for as long as I can remember, the effects of addiction have been ingrained in my life. As a kid, I lived with a parent who struggled with alcoholism, a grandfather who died from alcoholism, and have seen my friends and peers fall into the cycle of relying on medications to cope. It was made clear to me at a young age that Oregon had an addiction crisis, and it's only become more and more apparent as I've grown. Just since Winter of 2020, I have known two people under the age of 20, who experienced a drug overdose. Both were hospitalized and fought for their lives while in the isolation of a hospital room with no visitors of familiar faces to keep them company. Nobody should have to go through something like this.

While the decriminalization of drug possession is a huge milestone and indicator that our state is moving in the right direction, we have to remember that the treatment and recovery services included in this bill are equally vital to honor and implement. People are dying every day from overdoses. These people are our friends, family, neighbors, and community members. Providing greater access to addiction resources spans across our entire state, it will permeate through the barriers of economic status, racial identity, and housing stability. It will better the lives of our parents and friends, our educators and services providers, our religious leaders and legislators.

Since the start of COVID, overdose deaths have gone up by 70%. While that increase in rates cannot be entirely attributed to the pandemic, we know that the isolation that comes with social distancing exacerbates the issue of addiction and mental health problems. Addiction is extremely treatable. So much so that it is just as effective as treating someone with asthma. If I, with the health issue of asthma, am able to see a doctor and receive proper treatment for my issue, so should an individual struggling with the health issue of drug addiction. It is simple- Oregonians need more access to effective treatment resources

Again, thank you for taking the time to read through this. I appreciate the work you are all doing to ensure the proper implementation of The Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery act. It is of extreme importance that the life saving services that come with this bill are fully funded and implemented, or else the situation of our crisis may persist. The resources are needed not just by those who are addicted to hard drugs, but also to people like my parent who have struggled to get by.