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RE: SB 775

Dear Chair Prozanski and members of the Committee on Ballot Measure 110 implementation,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning in support of SB 755, funding for the Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act.

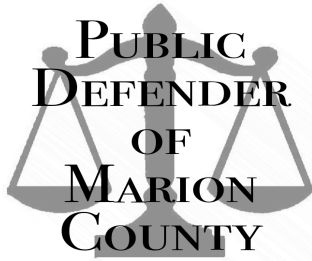
My name is Jessica Kampfe; I am the Executive Director of the Public Defender of Marion County. The overall mission of the Public Defender of Marion County is to provide high quality, cost effective criminal defense to persons who qualify for our services while maintaining the confidence of the clients that they are receiving zealous and proficient legal representation.

In my role as Executive Director I oversee the public defenders' office and collaborate with state and local public safety stakeholders to improve criminal justice systems while protecting the rights of the accused.

As a trial attorney I have represented hundreds of clients charged with misdemeanor and felony offenses, and represented people struggling to recover from addiction. Based on my experience, I have seen how treating addiction as a crime is counter-productive. My work has shown me time and time again that when a person with addiction is arrested and criminally convicted for possessing a small amount of drugs, their work to build a safe, healthy life in recovery becomes harder. From difficulties finding a job or employment, to barriers in obtaining professional licenses or a credit card, I've witnessed how even a misdemeanor drug charge carried harsh consequences that could last a lifetime.

I have also seen how the criminal justice system disproportionately harms people of color, who despite using drugs at the same rate as white people in Oregon, were three times more likely to be arrested for drug possession before Measure 110. People of color were also sentenced more harshly than white people. The Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act will decrease, if not completely eliminate, racial disparities in drug arrests and convictions in Oregon. But the truth remains that people of color have been overrepresented in the criminal justice system, while being underrepresented in the healthcare system. This is a further inequity that must be addressed.

Today marks one month since the decriminalization portion of Measure 110 went into effect. This step is significant, one that should be celebrated, but we can't stop there. We must also fund the addiction recovery services as outlined in the new law. **People**



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**struggling with addiction need help. They need access to treatment and recovery support to help achieve sobriety, find supportive housing, and get back to work.**

Before COVID-19, Oregon was already in the midst of an addiction crisis, with one to two Oregonians dying from a drug overdose every day<sup>1</sup>, and one in 10 Oregonians struggling with Substance Use Disorder<sup>2</sup>. **The pandemic is making the addiction and overdose crisis worse all across the country.** Here in Oregon we see that services are being shuttered and treatment center staff laid off during a time when people need these services now more than ever before.

Thankfully, we have a solution: the Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Act. With increased funding for addiction recovery services through this new law, we can greatly expand access to drug addiction treatment and services, reducing long wait lines, and making those services available to all who want and need them. The recovery services we need to invest in already exist; they just need more funding so that they can meet the demand. That is what SB 755 will put in motion, and I urge you to act quickly to pass this piece of legislation. Every day we wait, more loved ones and members of our community who struggle with addiction fall through the cracks.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you have.

Sincerely,

Jessica Kampfe  
Public Defender Marion County

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<sup>1</sup> [OHA](#)

<sup>2</sup> [SAMHSA](#)