

Dear Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation:

My name is Dr. Gia Naranjo-Rivera, and I am a resident of Eugene, Oregon. I recently completed my PhD in Public Health from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and run a small conscious consulting company that collaboratively transforms systems by offering services at the nexus of social justice, health, education, and research.

I am writing to ask you to support Measure 110 because I grew up in an innercity community and have many friends and family members who have suffered with addiction. For example, one of my 'neighborhood brothers', a boy I grew up with as if he were a sibling, died of a heroine overdose by the age of 25. leaving behind two children. Other 'neighborhood siblings' still grapple with turning to alcohol, crack, cocaine, or methamphetamines to cope with the daily stressors of poverty, urban violence, and sparse opportunities. I was lucky to find opportunities through school and a way out of these common traps, and my heart is still with my communities. It is heartbreaking to be waiting for the next Facebook message for five or ten dollars from a neighborhood brother who is thinly veiling a request for me to fund his next score. Recently, after several of these requests, one of my brothers shared some of the childhood traumas he faced, including being sexually abused as a child and witnessing someone being shot, that he believes are fueling his housing and mental instability (as well as addiction).

As a leading trauma researcher, I understand that trauma is, "A wordless story our body tells itself about what is safe and what is a threat," as Resmaa Menakem so aptly describes. These wordless stories, often transmitted intergenerationally and reverberating throughout communities in destructive synergies, lead to great dis-ease, attempts to cope, survive, and thrive, and ultimately illnesses like mental health problems, addiction, and risk behaviors--which often co-occur.

I believe the historic Measure 110, passed in November 2020, should be passed to address addiction: creating humane public health policy, offering robust treatment and recovery services, and healing hurt--rather than criminalizing people suffering from addiction. One in 10 Oregonians struggles with Substance Use Disorder, and Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people, as well as low-income Oregonians, are disproportionately affected by addiction and lack access to services. Addressing this issue by supporting Measure 110 is, therefore, also addressing racism and classism.

I ask that you please fund these services that will lead to a more equitable Oregon.

Thank you for caring,

Dr. Gia Naranjo-Rivera