

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs, and distinguished members of the House Committee on Economic Recovery and Prosperity.

My name is Robert Sanders; I am a person in long term recovery from substance use disorder - and the current Director of the O'Rourke Center at 4D Recovery. I am writing this testimony with a heavy heart. Just days ago we received notice from the **National Survey on Drug Use and Health**, that our state ranks 50th in Access to treatment - while having the 2nd highest rates of Substance Use disorder. Nearly 1 in 5 Oregonians suffer from substance use disorder.

I fear that without proper training - and external motivation - repurposing funds that are slated for the Behavioral Health System into the tried system of Police Involvement - will lead to no decrease in these facts. Since the implementation of Measure 110 - We have seen community based organizations begin to combat the growing epidemic and loss of life that has occurred throughout the pandemic to members of our community. I don't know a person within the recovery community that wouldn't be able to tell you about a friend or family member that they had lost in the last two years - but I can testify that the work M110 has funded over the last year has begun to change that story. As M110 continues to come to fruition - it seems appalling to me that we would consider unraveling the fabric that makes the instrumental work possible that is taking place. Shortly, we will begin to see the establishment of BHRN's across every county in Oregon - and there is already a higher need for funds than what has been slated. These BHRN's will establish a low-barrier pathway for people to enter the continuum of care and get the services they need.

Last year the Oregon voters spoke and made a declaration that we no longer wanted to respond to Substance Use Disorder through the Criminal Justice System - if we are to act within the consensus of our state - I believe we have an obligation to see their will through and fund the programs that will continue this work to heal our fractured system.

M110 Continues to produce intuitive results through the hard work by our Oversight & Accountability Council - these results look like culturally-led and delivered recovery services, low barrier access that reduces harm and increases public health. The -3 Amendment to HB4016 threatens the expansion of these programs, and prevents Measure 110 from having it's intended impact.

With respect,  
Robert M Sanders