



**Testimony Against SB 1541**

**Khanh Le**

**February 7, 2022**

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Khanh Le, Executive Director at Unite Oregon, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of our organization in opposition of SB 4016. Unite Oregon is led by people of color, immigrants and refugees, rural communities, and people experiencing poverty, and we work across Oregon to build a unified intercultural movement for justice.

Over the past two years, Unite Oregon has been a leader in the effort to pass, fully fund and implement Measure 110. This issue is crucial to our communities across the state. People of color, specifically Black, Indigenous, Tribal, Native and Latinx communities, and low-income Oregonians, continue to be disproportionately harmed by Oregon's failed approach of treating addiction like a crime, rather than a health issue. Our communities are underrepresented in the healthcare system, while being overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

Thanks to this landmark law, people are no longer being arrested and jailed for possession of small amounts of drugs, which can saddle them with criminal records that create lifelong barriers to employment and housing. Instead, they are being connected to health and recovery services, including peer support, housing assistance, and harm reduction services to help them on their paths to recovery. We are now beginning to see the positive effects of Measure 110. In just six months, the \$31 Million that the Legislature granted in emergency M110 funding has helped over 16,000 people across Oregon access critical addiction recovery services.

SB 1541 would take this funding and some, a total of \$120 Million, directly from Measure 110 services to utilize for illegal cannabis enforcement. While we recognize that addressing illegal cannabis operations across the state is important and deserves attention, we do not support the funding being taken from M110 services to do so. We know that this issue affects our communities, especially in southern Oregon where we have our Unite Oregon Rogue Valley Chapter. However, we believe that this issue must be addressed with another funding source, rather than taking funding away from M110 services.

We urge the committee to oppose SB 1541. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Khanh Le  
Executive Director of Unite Oregon