



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission

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To: House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee  
From: Jill Gray, Acting Director, Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission  
Date: January 30, 2023  
**RE: Testimony on HB 2395 -2 Amendment**

Chair Nosse and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer comments about HB 2395 -2. The Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission (ADPC) is not taking a position on HB 2395 -2, but rather offering these comments for Legislators' information.

In early 2020, ADPC submitted a statewide strategic plan for improving substance use services to the Governor and to the Legislature. The plan was approved by both, and it is now Oregon's Strategic Plan for Substance Use Services. Two of the ultimate goals of this plan are to reduce substance use disorders and reduce substance use-related deaths.

Oregon has some of the highest substance use disorder rates in the country, and overdose deaths have surged in recent years. Three Oregonians die each day from unintentional drug overdoses, and the number of Oregonians dying from an opioid overdose has now surpassed the number of Oregonians dying from a methamphetamine overdose. Fentanyl overdoses increased 600% between 2019 and 2021, and in 2022 fentanyl likely accounted for nine out of ten opioid overdose deaths. Native Americans are three times as likely to die from a drug overdose compared with the population as a whole and Black Oregonians are twice as likely to die from a drug overdose.

These are distressing statistics, but the good news is there are actions we can take to help Oregonians. Many of these actions are outlined in Oregon's Strategic Plan, and HB 2395 -2 aligns with the plan and supports its goal of reducing substance use disorders and substance-use related deaths by:

- Increasing access to short-acting opioid antagonists, such as naloxone;
- Decriminalizing fentanyl test strips and other harm reduction supplies that reduce injuries, illnesses, and overdoses;
- Reducing barriers to minors seeking treatment for a substance use disorder; and
- Strengthening overdose data reporting and collection.

To be clear, HB 2395 -2 does not solve all the challenges Oregon is facing regarding substance use-related deaths. But HB 2395 -2 contains important steps we can take today to save lives. Again, thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments, and I'm happy to answer any questions committee members may have.