

## **Message to Representatives**

Dear Chair Representative Nancy Nathanson, Vice Chair Representative E. Werner Reschke, Vice Chair Representative Jules Walters, and members of the Oregon House Committee on Revenue.

I am a person in long-term recovery, meaning I have not used drugs or alcohol since July 19th, 2012. After finding freedom from addiction, crime, and homelessness in 2012, I dedicated my life to helping others recover.

This commitment was born from gratitude, gratitude for my new life and those who played a role in creating it, including treatment and criminal justice professionals, and most importantly people in recovery who showed me a new way to live.

My new journey led me to college, student government and the founding of a non-profit recovery services organization targeting youth – 4D Recovery – which I am the proud executive director of. In the early early years of my non-profit career there were little funding available for addiction treatment and recovery, so I co-founded an advocacy organization Oregon Recovers to bring awareness and resources to this issue and later became Chair of our States Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission.

After years of organizing the drug policy alliance brought Measure 110 to the Oregon voters, and it passed, decriminalizing addiction and injecting millions of dollars into long-term recovery supportive services, including 4D Recovery.

While I was personally an open critic of the measures architecture, I was, and still am, in absolute support of increasing funding to life-saving recovery services and that is why I am in opposition to HB 2089.

A recent Gaps Analysis report from the Oregon Health and Science University estimates that Oregon's ability to prevent and treatment substance use was 49% under capacity, meaning we need to double our overall investment into substance use and addiction services. I have provided a copy of the report to your staffers. Additionally, I have included a recovery center research brief and client success highlights from services 4D provided paid for by M110.

We understand there are many issues facing Oregonians, but for too long Oregon leadership has neglected solving our substance use problem and the consequences are devastating. While untreated substance use leads to loss of economic productivity, increased foster care, homelessness, and burden spending in health care and criminal justice costs.

Most devastating is that we lose thousands of people to drug and alcohol related causes, with the Oregon Health Authority recent stating that 3 Oregonians are overdosing from drugs every day.

Measure 110 provides some of the services needed to address this issue, but it is only one step towards victory. Taking any money away would be taking a step backwards – and we can't afford to lose anymore loved ones.

Please reject HB 2089 and any notion to reduce funding to the substance use services this session.