

February 6th, 2023

Dear Legislative Community,

I am writing to oppose funding of the police from the cannabis tax pool.

In the early 90's, AIDS and breast cancer were out of control. In the United States, we responded to these crisis by inventing managed care. Today, people living with these chronic diseases enjoy living longer, healthier lives.

While many crises like HIV/AIDS and breast cancer were brought into managed care successfully, mental health and substance abuse treatment were left to politics. Tax payers funded the criminal justice system and police in the hopes that a war on drugs would solve our mental health and substance abuse issues.. Today - 30 years later, these epidemics are only worse.

The criminal justice system and the police have become one of the root causes of this continued downward spiral. Under the police and criminal justice system, these services are unmanaged, uncoordinated, fail to produce positive results, create stigmas, despair and barriers around services that should be life saving. All and all the police and the criminal justice system have become a system that increases and feeds the crises.

We need solutions to end the epidemics in mental health and substance abuse. Funds from the Cannabis tax pool need to be invested in healthcare and positive healthcare outcomes. Substance abuse and mental health services need to be integrated into the world-class healthcare system that Oregon State has created.

Funding the police will only waste taxpayer money and fortify the downward spiral of mental health and substance abuse.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Anna Ford
Ashland, Oregon