

Submitter: Mark Harris MA CADCI MAC
On Behalf Of: 2089
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure: HB2089

I have worked in the prevention, treatment, and recovery fields in Lane County since 1984. I am currently supervising two Community Health Workers, of color, working out of the Eugene Springfield NAACP, for HIV Alliance. It was a president of the NAACP in 1989 who asked me to look into the issue of Disproportionate Minority Contact. I focused on Youth of Color with Substance Use Disorder related offenses. According to Lane County data, NO youth of color received ANY prevention, treatment, or recovery services, even though the Department of Youth Services, successfully applied for and received Federal, State, and County monies to specifically address those issues. I've tracked the problem since then. I have correctly referred populations "most affected by the war on drugs", to publicly and privately funded treatment and support services, only to see them deliberately medically neglected, and enter the criminal justice system, and remain untreated for a medical problem: SUD. I've appealed to city, county, and state agencies, who received monies to address SUD issues among those populations, only to see city, county, and state agencies, fund budget deficits, without actually devoting any effort to funds dedicated to reducing actual health disparities. As a treatment person, and a tax payer, I oppose this bill, because it diverts BM 110 funds, away from treatment, towards entities who have continually medically neglected, and incarcerated "populations affected by the war on drugs". They should not be rewarded for employing ineffective strategies, which result in health disparities. Diverting funding away from treatment and harm reduction services, is making a choice to continue to fund health disparities, which is not the purpose of government. Using treatment and harm reduction funds to backfill budgetary deficiencies, in non-health care related purposes, should be fulfilled by other means. We are seeing, good work being done, within communities of color most affected by the war on drugs. Let's continue that good work, and lets not divert funds, from this good work to lesser purposes, without those city, county, and state agencies, being held accountable, for their past and current neglect.