

February 8, 2023

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Walters and Reschke, and members of the committee:

My name is Larry Turner. I am the Founder and President of Fresh Out Community Based Reentry Program. We serve formerly incarcerated African American individuals by providing housing assistance, employment support, addressing food insecurity, providing peer mentoring, and offering harm reduction services. We work with incarcerated individuals while they are still in prison, building relationships to help them envision a hopeful future for themselves and learn how to access the tools to help them be successful after release. Immediately upon their release, Fresh Out continues to work with them, providing peer support and vital financial assistance. These interventions have been proven to reduce return to drug relapse and return to criminal activity.

We first received Measure 110 funding in June of 2021 to help us sustain and expand our services. Thanks to funding from Measure 110, we were able to serve 202 individuals between June and December of 2021 — without a single person from our program returning to jail or prison. We received additional funding from Measure 110 that enabled us to help an additional 200 individuals, only two of whom returned to incarceration.

Most recently, Fresh Out has received Measure 110 funds to be part of one of three Measure 110 Behavioral Health Resource Networks (BHRNs) operating in Multnomah County. Working in collaboration with other providers, we're able to provide culturally-specific treatment to the African American community, and will happily work with anyone who walks through our doors, to help them achieve their recovery goals.

For the first time ever, thanks to Measure 110, the communities most harmed by the war on drugs are among those leading the effort toward healing our communities. Our communities have been criminalized and traumatized by our country's racist drug policies for multiple generations.

Now, just as programs to help facilitate this much needed healing are being stood up across Oregon, our funding has now been threatened because of this bill. Providers like me are counting on Measure 110 funds to be able to continue offering the vital services we provide to some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Just as we're beginning to hire more staff and expand programs, HB 2089 brings more uncertainty to an already challenging workforce situation. Please, stand with Oregon voters and the communities most harmed by the war on drugs; oppose HB 2089. Now is the time to stay the course on Measure 110.

Sincerely,

Larry Turner  
Fresh Out Community Based Reentry Program