

My name is Sally Joughin, and I have been opposing the "war on drugs" for many years, because prohibition doesn't work. Fortunately, Oregon is a leader in promoting real solutions.

People voted for Measure 110 because they understood that users should not be treated as criminals and that addiction should be treated as a medical or mental health problem. There would be no point in approving decriminalization of user-amounts of substances, if we didn't also make available not only drug treatment but also the other services that are needed by drug users to redirect their lives. Marijuana taxes beyond the amount that was already directed elsewhere was the perfect source for funding this necessary treatment expansion and other services. Oregon had not been providing sufficient treatment opportunities, especially in rural areas, so this funding was essential for expansion. It has taken time to get the programs up and running, but it is happening now, and succeeding. Not only is this helping many individuals with substance-use problems, but this will also increase public safety. And by not arresting and punishing users, the state will be saving money.

All this is what people wanted and voted for, so it makes no sense to sabotage the Measure 110 program either by taking away its necessary funding or by re-criminalizing a health problem. It takes many years to accomplish the intent of Measure 110. Members of the House Revenue Committee should not approve HB2089 or any other bills that want to destroy this important program. If cities and counties and State Police and other entities need more support, Oregon should provide it, but not by taking support from an important program that is already underway to significantly provide recovery from addiction.