

March 21, 2023

Dear Chair Bynum and the Honorable Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business:

My name is Kevin Jacoby and I'm an attorney in Portland specializing in cannabis law and regulation. I make these comments on my own behalf and not on behalf of my employer or any of my clients. I am writing to ask for your support for HB 3431, which represents a continuing funding commitment to the Economic Equity Investment Program.

In 2022, Senate Bill 1579 – the Equity Investment Act – created this program with a one-time appropriation of \$15 million from the state's general fund for grants to culturally responsive organizations whose mission is to build generational wealth for communities impacted by the War on Drugs. HB 3431 expands on the work done in the previous legislative session, with funding from Oregon's marijuana tax revenue.

Providing money to Black, Indigenous, Latinx and rural communities directly from tax revenue from the sale of legal marijuana sends a strong message that the War on Drugs is over and that the state is committed to ameliorating the harms directly to the communities that were most severely impacted. Righting the wrongs of the past, which systematically stripped wealth from these communities, cannot be done with one-time funding. HB 3431 represents an opportunity for the Legislature to tell the communities impacted by the failed War on Drugs that Oregon's commitment to righting those wrongs is resilient.

To those Members who are concerned that this allocation might interfere with the mission of Measure 110, I respectfully submit that the commitment of a portion of marijuana tax revenue to benefit economically disadvantaged communities is not inconsistent with the intent of voters in passing Measure 110. Measure 110 was about ending Oregon's War on Drugs across the board, which is a message Oregon voters have been remarkably consistent on. There is enough marijuana tax money to fully fund drug and addiction treatment while also supporting and uplifting the communities that were devastated by the War on Drugs.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter,

Kevin Jacoby