

Submitter: Victor Reppeto

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB3258

This measure proposes the use of a hammer to address the issue of addiction. Some people would propose the use of the carrot instead. If you take the time to read what I propose you will find that it is something in between the two extremes of that Spectrum, along the lines of prevention. In a book written by Dr. Ross W green he says that there is a time for each of these strategies but I would say to you that none of them should be neglected. People are Oregon's greatest asset. Invest in these people and they will not let you down.

For many years I have been asking for help with maintaining my sobriety. Communication workshops and practice groups like Motivational Interviewing, Collaborative Problem Solving and The Empowerment Dynamic simply don't exist in Marion or Polk County. Not even group counseling is available. I live in a housing project branded as Supportive Housing. It is anything but supportive. The Arches staff here act more like jail guards than social workers. They take deliberate steps to interfere with our attempts to help each other. The instructors at Chemeketa behave the same way. Passing around a sign up sheet for homework groups is enough to set them off.

Communication is the problem and communication is the solution. If we look at problems like gun violence, suicide and addiction, mental illness, poverty and mass incarceration, we will find a lack of communication skills as a root Cause for these problems and others. Attending communication workshops annually and continuing with practice groups consistently help us to build skills like frustration tolerance and emotional self-regulation. These workshops and practice groups represent a vaccine and a treatment when we begin to look at these problems as a social health issue instead of a reason to punish people. In order to support goals like restorative justice these workshops and practice groups need to be mandatory for everyone but especially for teachers in the school systems. We are preaching to the choir by teaching these skills to People that attend these events voluntarily. These skill sets are the Cornerstone upon which we build an unassailable Fortress of compassion and empathy.

I have been asking for support for a long time. As a stay at home parent of special needs children I know what that support looks like. My resume can be viewed at [vreppeto.wordpress.com/about/](http://vreppeto.wordpress.com/about/). My pleading seems to fall on deaf ears. It does not seem to matter if I'm talking to administrators at Arches or Chemeketa or the Courts, I am met with a deafening silence. In other words, I cannot do this alone. I need support and influence from leadership. Please hear what I have said and act. Please take a moment to respond and tell me what else I can do to promote this kind of training, for people like myself who pursue recovery, for lawmakers, for law

enforcement and for those in the helping profession and for teachers. For this I plead,  
please help.

Peace,

Victor Reppeto

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--Communication is the problem and the solution