

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Good afternoon Chair Bynum, Vice Chairs Morgan and Nguyen, and members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Diana Nunez and I am testifying on behalf of the Health Justice Recovery Alliance, an advocacy coalition consisting of more than 75 organizations from across the state. I am providing this testimony as “neutral” rather than “opposed” because we absolutely support ongoing funding for the Economic Equity Investment Program and we are urging to please identify an alternate funding source for HB 3431.

I oversee HJRA’s technical assistance program, which provides capacity and administrative support for community-based providers of Measure 110. I have been working with many providers for the last six months to help set up organizational operations and financial systems to support their work on Measure 110 services. These providers are just getting their programs off the ground and ramping up their services to care for those communities that have been most harmed by the war on drugs. There is such high demand for these critical services that, even with new funding from Measure 110, many of these organizations already have waiting lists again. People urgently need and want the help that Measure 110 services provide.

For culturally-specific, community-based providers, cuts in Measure 110 funding would be particularly devastating. The passage of Measure 110 represents the first time that Oregon communities of color have seen funds invested specifically for addiction recovery services and these providers are now facing a 25% cut in funding due to the latest cannabis tax revenue forecast shows a significant decrease in funds for future funding cycles.

These providers have been advocating for culturally specific services for decades and House Bill 3431, as currently written, would further reduce Measure 110 funds by half. These providers are counting on having Measure 110 funds to help provide and heal the tremendous need in their communities.

Securing an alternate source of funding for this policy other than Measure 110 dollars would benefit both programs, and ultimately the communities we serve.

Oregon voters passed Measure 110 in 2020 by a 17-point margin. I urge you to stand with Oregon voters and the communities most harmed by the war on drugs by finding an alternate funding mechanism for HB 3431. Please don't put our communities in a position to have to compete for funds.

Thank you for your time.

Diana Nunez, Technical Assistance Hub Program Consultant, the Health Justice Recovery Alliance

