

April 20, 2023

Position statement in support of HB 3610

Honorable Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, Members of the Committee:

Lines for Life supports HB 3610. Lines for Life is a nonprofit whose mission is to prevent suicide, and substance abuse and promote mental wellness. Last year we took over a 150,000 calls, texts and chats across multiple crisis and helplines. Our oldest and original service is the Alcohol and Drug Helpline which have operated since 1993.

Over the decades we have spoken with tens of thousands of individuals on the Alcohol and Drug Helpline. Each year alcohol leads the list of substances about which callers to this line express as their primary concern. We have heard too many stories to count of ruined relationships, lost jobs and financial loss due to dependence on alcohol.

From a prevention perspective, we know that higher prices of alcohol are directly related to reduced consumption. While this may be seen as a negative for the alcohol industry, it is a net positive in Oregon where six Oregonians die every day from the impacts of alcohol. Oregon has the fifth highest percentage of individuals over the age of 12 who are dependent on alcohol. This is a problem that strikes every age from the young to the old.

Lines for Life has long advocated for the creation of policies that could fully fund prevention in Oregon. The Task Force on Alcohol Policy and Addiction Services is an important first step for this.

Lines for Life urges you to adopt HB 3610 to look into the issues of alcohol addiction and we would urge you to add studying how alcohol abuse can be prevented across the lifespan.

Sincerely,

David Westbrook  
Chief Operating Officer  
Lines for Life