

Submitter: Maureen Palaoro Palaoro  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services  
Measure: SB1547

Dear Senate Committee On Human Services.

I am writing to you in support of SB 1547. As a parent, an educator and a Youth Substance Use Prevention Coalition Chair, I wholeheartedly am in favor of SB 1547. Here are the reasons why I believe in SB 1547:

\*When someone wants/needs treatment - they should receive it immediately and efficiently, and the virtual immediate treatment described in this bill is something youth desperately need.

\*If a youth gets immediate triage and refuses treatment, it is critical that the parents have the ability to intervene to compel their child to inpatient treatment for substances.

\*The other imperative part of this bill is that it is critical to recognize cannabis as a substance that creates addictive behaviors that need medical treatment, and health benefit plans should reimburse the cost of treatment for cannabis use.

NOTE: Standards to identify whether a substance is addictive currently being used don't represent the reality of what is happening to our children, especially with cannabis. It's also important to recognize cannabis in the standards before the child finds alternative high-risk behaviors or more deadly drugs.

This bill will admit a minor for inpatient substance use disorder diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment for up to 14 days with parental consent when the minor objects to the admission.

A health benefit plans should reimburse the cost of hospital expenses and should reimburse the cost of inpatient treatment for cannabis use for an enrollee who is a minor if prescribed by the enrollee's mental health care provider based on a determination that the enrollee's use is habitual and likely to lead to the unlawful use of controlled substances.

The State of Oregon is in need of a virtual opioid dependency pilot program to provide on-demand intervention and treatment for individuals with opioid use disorder through the 9-8-8 suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis hotline.

In my community our youth's perception of harm around the use of marijuana has decreased. That is a concern as access to this substance is pretty high. We have had several drug busts in our town, two of which were within feet of our schools. Our youth are facing a much more complex world than youth have in the past. The risk of substance use has grown due to their increased stress, anxiety and the change in landscape of substances. I see the changes in our youth and what they face as a 28 year veteran teacher and parent of two children, ages 20 and 15. Additionally, mental

health resources are difficult to find and have consistency with, therefore, increasing the risk of a youth turning to substances to cope. We need to protect our youth and we need treatment to be more available and easy to access for families so that they can support their child.

Please pass SB 1547. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Maureen Palaoro  
Chairperson Oregon City Together