



1995 Third Street
Baker City, Oregon 97814

To the Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 782

When Oregon lawmakers passed House Bill 4002, which recriminalizes low-level drug possession starting in September, they called on counties to implement new deflection programs. These programs aim to help drug users avoid jail and criminal charges while guiding them toward treatment and recovery. Baker County accepted this challenge, and our deflection program became operational on September 1st.

The Baker County Deflection Program collaborates with the Baker County Sheriff's Office, Baker City Police Department, Oregon State Police, Baker County District Attorney's Office, Baker County Circuit Court, and New Directions Northwest.

We are focused on developing strategies to increase participation in the program and providing training opportunities for law enforcement officers. Raising the funding floor for deflection programs to \$500,000 will ensure sustainability and enable small counties to continue implementing and developing their deflection programs.

Sincerely

Shane M. Alderson

Baker County Commission Chair

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