

March 9, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs Prozanski and Kropf, Members of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response:

My name is Brenda Mejdell, and I am writing to express my strong support for first HB 3321, HB 2502, and HB 3375. I work with primary school-aged children, and what I see and hear everyday about the normalization of substance use is deeply concerning. Too many of our youth perceive these substances to be safe—simply because they have not received consistent, evidence-based education or messaging to the contrary. Oregon has lost sight of safeguarding our youth when it comes to substance use prevention. Without a robust investment in primary prevention, we will never truly stem the damage that substance misuse inflicts on individuals, families, and our communities.

I appreciate the Legislature's efforts to develop and implement a primary prevention state strategy (HB 3321). This is essential. Additionally, conducting a clear and thorough assessment of youth substance use prevention, screening, intervention, and treatment is vital for supporting recovery high schools (HB 3375, HB 2502). Finally, the Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission must strengthen its role to include distinct and regular reporting focused on youth and primary prevention regarding plans and outcomes (HB 2502, HB 3321, HB 3375, and ultimately HB 2929).

I understand that the bills may be merged, but I respectfully request that the definition of primary prevention remains robust and that a clear, strategic approach to primary prevention is not compromised. Additionally, I urge the Committee to consider explicit youth and primary prevention reporting requirements as a distinct pillar within HB 2929. Thank you for your leadership on these critical issues. By supporting these bills, you will safeguard Oregon's youth, strengthen families, and promote healthier communities across our state. I appreciate your consideration and respectfully request your "Do Pass" and "Yes" vote on these measures.

Sincerely,
Brenda Mejdell
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