

Dear Chair Prosanski, Chair Kropf, Co-Chair Manning, and members of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response,

My name is Elton Frice, and I work at 4D Recovery as the Director of Development. I **urge you to support HB 3197 to increase revenue for the prevention and treatment of youth substance use.**

At 4D Recovery, our mission is to provide—in partnership with systems, communities, and individuals—comprehensive services that help adolescents, young adults, and families recover from substance use disorders. Our vision is a future where systems, communities, and individuals work together to ensure that all people receive the support needed to find and sustain recovery from substances. HB 3197 is a crucial step toward making this vision a reality by ensuring that Oregon's youth have access to the necessary prevention and treatment services to support long-term recovery.

Oregon lacks adequate resources to address our alcohol and drug crisis, especially for youth—untreated substance use results in harm to individuals, families, communities, and businesses. Additionally:

- Most people who develop a substance use disorder begin using alcohol or drugs before the age of 18.
- In Oregon, youth are more likely than the national average to start drinking or using substances early in their lives.
- Oregon ranks among the worst states for youth access to addiction and mental health services.
- Schools, families, and communities are struggling to manage rising mental health needs, while waitlists for youth treatment programs are long or nonexistent in rural areas.
- Research shows that for every \$1 invested in prevention, up to \$10 is saved in healthcare, criminal justice, and lost productivity.
- Youth who get help early are less likely to experience homelessness, incarceration, or overdose later in life.

- The Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission is finalizing a Youth Strategic Plan that will have options for immediate and long-term strategic impacts to address the growing crisis.

[Insert paragraph describing why this is important to you, examples below]

I started using drugs and alcohol at the early age of 13 years old. Alcohol was the very first substance I ever tried. I know firsthand what it feels like to be an adolescent with substance use disorder- with absolutely no idea how to find help. Not to mention, I had never seen anyone my age in recovery. I didn't find recovery until the age of 23. My first program was full of older adults who were court-mandated because of a DUI- I was 13. I was the only teenager. I felt disconnected and like I wasn't being taken seriously. My family desperately tried everything they could to find me support, but consistently felt overwhelmed, defeated, and hopeless. There just wasn't anything in our area that would take a child. I often was sent out of state. Out-of-pocket costs were outrageous, and my parents sending their child out of state brought on its own emotional toll. I believe that if I had been intervened on, it would've helped save me from the negative impacts that I experienced for the next 10 years before finding abstinence.

Fast forward to me today, sitting with 7 years of abstinence based recovery, I am now a stepmother of 4 children. Two of whom are teenagers in Oregon's David Douglas School District. They've heard their peers talk about drugs and alcohol, the disease runs in their bloodline, and they've even seen the affects of this disease in their family. I pray that if they ever need support- there will be something local for them to access. I pray that interventions and prevention programs are integrating in schools and that recovery for young people is being normalized and talked about.

I am grateful that they've had a role model like myself who has shown them recovery is possible, but it's not enough. It's easier to find drugs right now than it is to find help. Oregon must step up and prioritize our children.

As the Director of Development at 4D Recovery, I see firsthand the transformative impact of access to recovery support. By investing in prevention and treatment, we not only save lives but also build stronger, healthier communities where young people have the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

*Eltonrae Frice*