

Submitter: Mina Gilson
On Behalf Of: 4D Recovery
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

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

My name is Mina Gilson, and I work at 4D Recovery as The Oregon State Recovery Services Director. 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.

My addiction began at a very young age. I started experimenting with alcohol and marijuana, and it didn't take long before I became dependent on both. Looking back, I truly believe that if someone had intervened earlier, it could have saved me from progressing to substances that carried even more severe consequences.

I tried countless times to break free from the chains of addiction, but it wasn't until I entered treatment and engaged in 4D services that I finally learned how to live a productive, healthy, and drug-free life. 4D not only guided me through my personal recovery journey but also opened the door to new opportunities, including employment. Through their support, I eventually became a mentor, and I'm now able to give back the same help and guidance I received.

I have witnessed firsthand the power of treatment and recovery services in helping individuals overcome addiction. If we come together to provide these vital resources to adolescents, we can give them a better chance at a future full of health, safety, and opportunity. The fight for our kids' well-being starts with the support and services we provide.

As the Oregon State Recovery Services Director 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.

Sincerely,

Mina Gilson
Oregon State Recovery Services Director
4D Recovery