

Submitter: Talon Gipson  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

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

My name is Talon Gipson, and I urge you to support HB 3197 to increase revenue for the prevention and treatment of youth substance use.

According to many reports, Oregon lacks resources to address our alcohol and drug crisis, especially for youth—untreated alcohol and drug 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.

My name is Talon Gipson and I am a member of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians. I am a member of the Tom Rondeau family.

I currently have 3 years 9 months and 27 days of recovery and that is due to being reconnected with my culture. Culture has been my anchor in my own personal recovery. It has given me purpose and direction and now I get the opportunity to share with others what has been given to me to help them on their own road to recovery. Culture has been a center point in my every day life. Going to sweat ceremony to pow wows and diving into cultural arts. Culture has shown me a new way to live. Having a peer support program in Roseburg that directly links natives to cultural related recovery has been a game changer. Every day I am able to connect someone to culture in multiple ways. Smudged and prayer, Sweat Ceremony, Drumming and singing, Beading, Leather working, and connecting tribal members to

the land. We also host Red Road to Wellbriety meetings which have attendance numbers from 30-80 people.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share some of the great opportunities that we do in this program.