

Submitter: John-Brian White
On Behalf Of:
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 John-Brian White, and I work at 4D Recovery as an outreach supervisor. 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.

As an outreach worker, I see first hand the devastating effects of drug and alcohol addiction, and I know from lived experience that it can start at a young age. In my work as a recovery worker, I interact with underprivileged members of our community on a daily basis, many of whom have been negatively affected by drug and alcohol addiction, and many of whom began to use at a young age.

Personally, my addiction began around the age of twelve, and I believe that had I received help earlier I may have been able to offer a much greater contribution to our community. Delegating funds to adolescent prevention, treatment and recovery services would make a hugely positive impact on our youth, their families, and our community at large. The youth are the future. Please support a brighter future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

John-Brian White