

Submitter: Alyxann Attaran

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety
Response

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

My name is Alyxann, and I am writing to you not only as a concerned citizen and parent but also as someone who has lived through the devastating effects of substance abuse. I am currently in recovery, and I work as a mentor to teens in recovery, but my journey to get here was far from easy. In fact, it's a miracle that I'm here today to share my story with you.

When I was a teenager, I struggled deeply with addiction, and like many young people, I had no resources or guidance to help me navigate my pain. The lack of access to support and treatment led me down a dangerous path. I turned to selling drugs to survive and, eventually, I found myself trapped in the vicious cycle of opioid addiction. My life spiraled out of control, and I found myself in a place so dark that I nearly lost everything.

I ended up in the hospital with septic pneumonia, unconscious and in a coma for a month, teetering on the edge of death. I was facing the terrifying reality of possibly leaving my children without a mother. It was the wake-up call I needed. Thankfully, I survived, and I am now in recovery. But the road to recovery was long and painful, and I was forced to confront the immense gap in support services available. I had to fight through it alone.

It's in part because of my own experiences that I now serve as a mentor for teens and young adults who are in recovery. I see their struggles firsthand, and I witness the lack of resources available to them. If I had had the right support when I was their age, I may not have had to go through what I did. I want them to know that there is hope, that recovery is possible, and that they don't have to end up where I did.

That is why I strongly support the proposal to tax alcohol, with the tax proceeds earmarked to provide funding for programs specifically designed to help young people with substance abuse issues. This is not just a financial issue—it's a life-and-death matter for countless young adults and teens in our communities. Every day that we don't act, more young people are falling into addiction, often with no way out. This tax could provide the critical resources and services that could save lives.

By investing in these programs, we can prevent future generations from experiencing the same pain, trauma, and loss that I went through. We have a responsibility to give young people the tools they need to build a better future, one where they don't have to turn to substances to cope with their struggles.

I urge you to consider the profound impact this tax could have. It's not just about finances; it's about saving lives, offering hope, and investing in the well-being of our youth. Please take action to ensure that no young person has to face addiction without the support and resources they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Alyxann A.