

**Subject: Support HB 3197**

Dear Chair Prosanski, Chair Kropf, Co-Chair Mannix, and members of the Joint Committee

My name is Sara Barger, and I serve as the Director of Public Affairs and Relations at 4D Recovery. However, today, I come before you as just me... a person in long-term recovery, a mother of adult children who have struggled with alcohol and substance use addiction, and a grandmother to four grandchildren.

I urge your support of HB 3197 to allocate funding to youth prevention and treatment.

Substance use disorder is often a generational disease, a reality I know all too well. My father struggled with addiction and ultimately lost his life due to alcohol-related health issues. He was my father- a daughter's hero. I grew up in an environment where daily drinking was normalized. At the age of 14, I began drinking regularly, which led to the use of other drugs. I didn't enter recovery until the age of 37. Some of that time, I was "functional"—until I wasn't anymore. There are a lot of things I regret.

I have also witnessed my sons battle addiction, starting even younger than I did. Unfortunately, their substance use was often treated as a behavioral problem rather than something treatable. Never was there an intervention or care that addressed their need, or our families' need to address the underlying issue which was alcohol and drug use. If comprehensive prevention and treatment resources had been available for youth and families, our story might have been different. We could have avoided immense personal suffering and reduced the burden on various public systems impacted by untreated addiction.

It has been a long journey for our family, but today, I am proud to say that I have been sober for nearly 13 years—an anniversary I will celebrate on May 4th, which also happens to be my oldest son's birthday. I am equally proud that my sons are breaking the generational cycle while their children are young- my hope is, If my grandchildren do go down that path there is support for them- for us, here in Oregon.

I strongly believe that Oregon must invest in prevention, treatment, and recovery for youth. While HB 3197 may not solve every aspect of the crisis we face, it is a critical step towards funding meaningful change. It will help save lives, strengthen families, and create a brighter future for young people across our state.

I respectfully urge you to support HB 3197. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Sara Barger**

