Submitter:                                          Jim Wikel

On Behalf Of:

Committee:                                          Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:          SB1583

Testimony in Opposition to SB 1583

To the Esteemed Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

My name is Jim Wikel, and I serve as the Director of Peer Services at Painted Horse Recovery. Painted Horse Recovery is a vital resource in our community, dedicated to providing culturally specific peer support services to Native Americans who are seeking recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). I appear before you today to voice my strong opposition to Senate Bill 1583 (SB 1583).

My work consists of collaborating closely with dedicated outreach teams, certified recovery mentors, treatment providers, and a broad network of community partners. Together, we are committed to supporting all Oregonians who are struggling with substance use disorder, providing hope and pathways to healing.

The passage of Measure 110, while imperfect, has been a critical catalyst for positive change. It has allowed communities across Oregon to begin the essential, difficult work of building a more comprehensive and coordinated continuum of care. This emerging system is deliberately holistic, encompassing a range of services from accessible treatment and robust peer recovery support to essential harm reduction strategies and effective deflection services that divert people from the criminal justice system and into care.

The Destabilizing Effect of SB 1583

SB 1583, in its current form, represents a profound threat to this fragile, but growing, infrastructure. The bill proposes a significant shift in both the oversight and the funding mechanisms for these essential services. This structural disruption would not merely be an inconvenience; it would actively destabilize the systems that providers and communities have labored tirelessly to establish.

Building trust and capacity, especially within communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, or disconnected from mainstream healthcare—such as the Native American community we serve—is a process that takes years of consistent, reliable engagement. Trust is the foundation upon which recovery is built. When the structural supports for services are abruptly altered, the consequences are immediate and devastating:
Creation of Uncertainty: Sudden governance and funding changes generate profound

uncertainty among providers, leading to staff turnover, stalled programs, and an inability to plan for the long term. This instability trickles down directly to the individuals in recovery.

Weakening of Collaboration: The current continuum of care relies on complex, carefully cultivated networks of collaboration between different agencies—from tribal organizations to state-funded programs and local nonprofits. Shifting oversight risks fracturing these essential partnerships.

Risk to Consistent Services: Most critically, abrupt changes risk leaving vulnerable people without the consistent, reliable services they have come to depend on for stability and survival. For someone in active recovery, a break in service can be the difference between maintaining sobriety and relapse.

A Call for Strengthening, Not Overhauling

Instead of creating this instability through major governance shifts, Oregon should focus its energy and resources on strengthening the framework that is already in place. We must prioritize:

Improving Accountability and Data Systems: We should ensure that Measure 110 funds are being spent effectively by enhancing transparency and data collection, allowing us to track outcomes and identify areas for improvement.

Continued and Dedicated Investment: The state must continue to invest robustly in the programs that are demonstrably helping people stabilize their lives and achieve long-term recovery. This includes expanding the peer workforce, increasing access to culturally appropriate treatment, and scaling up successful harm reduction initiatives.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Respectfully,
Jim Wikel
Director of Peer Services
Painted Horse Recovery