

Opinion: Measure 110 will take away addiction treatment and is bad for kids

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Edmo is a descendant of the Shoshone-Bannock, Nez Perce and Yakama Tribes, and co-chair of the Oregon Recovers advocacy group led by people in recovery from addiction. Jefferis is executive director of the Oregon Council for Behavioral Health, a substance use and mental health treatment provider association.

Measure 110 would decriminalize the possession of potentially lethal doses of addictive drugs—including heroin, meth, and cocaine—for children, teens and adults in Oregon, in the midst of our addiction crisis. On top of this, it would take away an estimated \$56 million from addiction treatment and prevention, and \$90 million from schools over the next three years. And despite lofty promises, it would not guarantee the creation of a single new treatment bed.



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Which is why we were so disappointed to see a “yes” endorsement from The Oregonian/OregonLive Editorial Board, grounded in a misunderstanding of the measure’s basic provisions.

The [text of Measure 110](#) reveals that it does not require the creation of any actual inpatient or outpatient treatment services. It only requires the creation of 16 deceptively named “Addiction Recovery Centers” that will not provide treatment nor recovery services. Instead, they provide five non-treatment services: triage, health assessments, referrals, peer support, and outreach.

Screenings are not treatment. Referrals are not access to treatment.

Oregon does not have a shortage of health assessment and referral centers. We have a shortage of residential treatment beds and outpatient programs. Measure 110’s unnecessary referral centers will just add people to treatment waitlists that are already weeks, if not months, long.

If Measure 110 were truly about more treatment, it would have set clear goals for more real treatment, such as more sobering centers and detox facilities, more residential treatment beds, more outpatient care, and more certified drug and alcohol counselors.

Not only would Measure 110 decriminalize addictive drugs, it could also cost lives by taking away the only pathway to addiction treatment and recovery for many Oregon youth and adults: diversion programs.

If Measure 110 passes, a 15-year-old could get caught with just under 1 gram of heroin, 2 grams of meth, 2 grams of cocaine, 12 grams of psilocybin, 40 user units of oxycodone, 40 user units of methadone, 40 user units of LSD or 5 user units of MDMA in their pocket—and the only consequences would either be paying a \$100 fine or getting a health assessment.

They could hide either from their parents.

Whereas right now, in some counties, if a kid—or an adult—gets caught with drugs in Oregon, they are offered state-funded treatment. This is crucial because most people struggling with addiction can't stop using drugs on their own. If they could, they wouldn't be addicted. However, many people in long-term recovery credit the motivation of court diversion programs with “saving my life” or “rescuing me from myself.”

Measure 110 would take that crucial intervention away—without guaranteeing any new proven pathways to treatment. And that will cost lives.

We would rather see our loved ones directed into treatment than get lost further in their addiction and overdose, cause harm, or worst of all: die.

We both want a solution to Oregon's addiction crisis that treats addiction as the chronic disease that it is, and expands access to a comprehensive continuum of care: prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery. But we believe Measure 110 won't do that. It utterly fails to address the fundamental problems in our treatment and recovery system.

We oppose Measure 110 because Oregon deserves better. Our loved ones struggling with addiction deserve better.

Join us in voting no on Measure 110.