

Dear Oregon Recovers Supporters:

We are writing to share with you that Oregon Recovers is opposed to Ballot Measure 110, the [“Drug Decriminalization & Addiction Treatment Initiative”](#) While it sounds appealing, we sincerely believe it will have a deadly impact on too many Oregonians suffering from active addiction and will reduce access to treatment for kids and adults who need it.



www.oregonrecovers.org

We urge you and/or your organization to oppose Ballot Measure 110 as well. [Click here to add your name to the opposition.](#) If you have already endorsed the measure, we hope you will reconsider.

Decriminalization of addiction—not just drug possession—is hugely important. But how you implement decriminalization is likewise hugely important. Measure 110 is so poorly written it will lead to additional unnecessary deaths, further destabilize Oregon’s fractured and incomplete behavioral health system and will reduce enrollment in treatment centers across the state. It dismantles one system of intervention before building a new system. It’s similar to the effort 40 years ago to address our growing mental health crisis by closing the outdated mental hospitals without first building the outpatient services that were needed.

We appreciate that some supporters of Oregon Recovers have put their heart and soul into passing Measure 110. **We respect their decision to do so and it pains us that our recovery community will be unnecessarily divided by advocates from New York.**

Measure 110, as promoted by its political consultants, is full of false promises. Despite campaign rhetoric targeting communities of color, the truth is that the ballot measure sets no racial nor restorative justice goals. Additionally, it offers no specific guarantees that Oregonians suffering from addiction will have access to the culturally-specific support which is critical to an individual's recovery. We can all agree that no one should be saddled with a criminal record due to their addiction. But nor should any Oregonian be saddled with active addiction and Measure 110 will remove the possibility of rapid access to treatment for more than 3700 Oregonians each year.

Had Black, Indigenous & People of Color (BIPOC) and community specific treatment providers been involved in crafting Measure 110 it would undoubtedly have included a reduction in criminal consequences while increasing pathways to recovery. But they

weren't. And it doesn't. Despite claims you may have heard from the Yes campaign, the measure is devoid of any accountability to BIPOC, Queer, rural or formerly incarcerated communities. More so, it transfers cannabis funding [intended to fund culturally specific county mental health programs](#) to the control of a newly formed citizen commission which will NOT be required to achieve equity focused goals and objectives.

Oregon is in the throes of an addiction crisis, made increasingly worse by a global pandemic. The current overdose rate for African Americans and Native American Oregonians is dramatically higher than for white people. The absence of concrete treatment and recovery outcomes within Measure 110--and its failure to align with the states new [Addiction Recovery Strategic Plan](#)--lays bare that its sponsor's primary objective is to notch a win, not the larger challenge of ending Oregon's addiction crisis. **Allowing a 16 year old caught with a pocket full of heroin or meth to pay \$100 in lieu of providing her/him/them rapid access to treatment is not a solution--its compounding the problem.**

It's important for you to know that Measure 110 was written by political consultants who work for the Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) in New York City--not by addiction & recovery experts familiar with Oregon's addiction crisis. Virtually all of the \$5 million DPA promises to spend to secure a "win" in Oregon comes from New York. Truth be told, DPA has done important work combatting the destructive "war on drugs" but they have no background--[or articulated interest in](#)--addiction recovery. Hence, Measure 110 is not aligned with the larger systems change work that many of you have been a part of over the last few years and intentionally diminishes the importance of building a new recovery-oriented continuum of care. One clear example of this is that Measure 110 effectively eliminates the sobriety requirement for Certified Peer Mentors.

You should know that Oregon Recovers [tried to work with DPA to mitigate the damage](#) caused by Measure 110. Along with nine stakeholder organizations, Oregon Recovers tried--and will continue to try--to collaborate with the Drug Policy Alliance to align the "Yes" campaigns messaging so as not to undermine Oregon's stakeholder-driven effort to build a new addiction recovery system of care. Unfortunately, stakeholder efforts to date have consistently been rebuffed and the Yes on Measure 110 campaign continues to make misleading claims about what the measure will accomplish.

The Drug Policy Alliance has virtually unlimited funds and may very well purchase a victory here in Oregon. Sadly, lives will be lost if that occurs. As the leading voice for the recovery community in Oregon, Oregon Recovers has an obligation to speak truth to power to achieve the goal of ending the addiction crisis and the truth is that Measure 110 is bad policy. Should the measure pass we are committed to working with Oregon stakeholders and legislators during the

2021 legislative session to repair the worst parts of the measure. **But lives will be lost prior to the enactment of those changes--and that is a tragedy Oregon Recovers cannot support.**

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