



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 26, 2024

To: Co-Chairs [Sen Lieber](#) and [Kropf](#) and Committee Members
[Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response](#)

Re: [HB4002-24](#) - Relating to the Addiction Crisis in this State - **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports [HB 4002-24](#) which would classify low levels of drug use as a Drug Enforcement Misdemeanor while providing options for deflection and for expunging the charge.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon recognizes that substance abuse/addictions are public health issues, not crimes. The League supports reliance on evidence-based research in decision-making about law enforcement programs and policies. Further, the League supports:

- **Training police to identify individuals with mental health conditions, disabilities, or substance abuse/addiction, so that officers will request support from appropriate medical and mental health professionals, with the goal of diverting those individuals into treatment instead of jail.**

- **Considering community-based treatment programs and other alternatives to incarceration when appropriate.**

It appears that HB 4002-24 offers a reasonable solution. While it would increase the current penalty to a Drug Enforcement misdemeanor, arrest would not necessarily lead to incarceration. People can participate in a treatment program as part of probation. Further, it offers paths to expungement of the record, and it provides for collecting data which will permit appropriate solutions. We appreciate that the bill would make grants available to fund deflection programs and to fund treatment of people in jail custody.

We also urge you to consider adding some sections of amendment -10 to the final version of the bill. Based on the LWVUS Principle:

The League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement, and well-defined channels for citizen input and review.

We believe that the state would benefit from having an Office for Drug Prevention and Treatment which coordinates programs.

Because the League believes in

A focus on humane treatment and rehabilitation with the goal of promoting the successful reentry into communities of those who have been incarcerated.

It would be good to include that a Group Recovery Home may not discriminate against a tenant, based on their involvement in medication-assisted treatment.

Based on the LWVOR position:

The League supports policies, programs, and funding at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children.

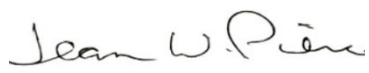
We support the Oregon Youth Authority developing a juvenile residential services substance use disorder treatment and recovery plan.

The League supports adequate funding to implement the provisions in this bill.

While we wish there were more time to gather accurate data to fully evaluate Measure 110, we believe that HB 4002-24 with the recommended additions has the potential to address the problems without creating lasting problems for people possessing low levels of drugs.



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