
Subject: The problems with going back to the war on drugs

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From: ACLU of Oregon

To: ACLU of Oregon

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As lawmakers prepare to convene at the Capitol in February and March for the legislative session, lawmakers are drafting legislation to criminalize addiction, homelessness, and poverty – even though health care workers, researchers, and experts from Oregon and across the country, and data from 50+ years tell us this will very likely repeat the exorbitantly expensive failures and government violence of the war on drugs.

Yesterday, lawmakers held a hearing without public testimony and input. [We need you to message your lawmakers now before it's too late.](#)

Why are lawmakers playing politics with people's lives and pushing forward with false stunts and fake promises, not real solutions? It appears they're bowing down to pressure from a billionaire-funded corporate interest group led by the former head of the Oregon prisons.

Funnily, this interest group doesn't mention that their former prison chief failed to create lasting, real solutions to drug addiction in Oregon's prisons. A couple of months ago, the Oregonian reported that drug use is soaring among incarcerated people in Oregon's prisons and officials are struggling to stop smuggling and offer treatment. Nor do they mention recent OHSU research that opioid overdose risk is 10 times greater for those recently released from prison, and almost half of people in rural areas who used drugs were in prison or jail in the last six months.

What should lawmakers be doing instead? If they actually cared about **all** Oregonians – not just those who have the deep pockets and connections to directly pressure them – lawmakers would focus on creating **REAL SOLUTIONS, NOT FALSE PROMISES.**

We all know the real solutions Oregon desperately needs. Rapidly expanding affordable housing and treatment. Creating work programs for trash clean-up and neighborhood revitalization. Expanding programs that send crisis counselors, instead of police, to respond to 911 calls about people having mental health or addiction crises.

Troublingly, lawmakers don't want feedback from everyday Oregonians. They held a last-minute, until recently, **secret hearing** this Tuesday, with little to no opportunity for the public to participate.

WE NEED YOU to tell lawmakers to work on REAL SOLUTIONS, NOT FALSE PROMISES. [Tell them to focus on housing and drug treatment instead of jail time so people can get the help they need.](#)

TAKE ACTION



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