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CONTACT:
Scott Winkels
Lobbyist
swinkels@orcities.org

Statement on Proposed HB 4002

Last fall, Oregon’s chiefs of police, sheriffs, district attorneys and city leaders outlined a roadmap to assist the Legislature in addressing Oregon’s severe addiction crisis. The tragic rise in fentanyl overdose-related deaths, and the detrimental effects the crisis is having on community safety and quality of life across our state is alarming. We believe this crisis will only be meaningfully addressed if all parties to the solution coordinate closely and have the necessary resources and tools to effectively engage. Find our recommendations [here](#).

“The details of this proposal will be very important, and while there are a few of the elements of the law enforcement framework included, like recriminalizing possession of a small amount of serious drugs, a C-Misdemeanor is insufficient,” said Umatilla County District Attorney Dan Primus, President of the Oregon District Attorneys Association. “In addition, limiting communities’ ability to charge this crime only if they have a qualifying deflection program is not a statewide solution. Unnecessarily complicating a C-Misdemeanor on the front end and back end threatens to strip all benefits of any recriminalization. Law enforcement needs clear, meaningful, and simple solutions to this crisis. The framework released today is a good starting point but is not there yet.”

“While we generally support the co-chair's proposed plan on HB 4002, we find the low-level C-Misdemeanor penalty and the requirement for officers to offer a deflection program instead of arrest to be a complex and resource-intensive approach that we are unable to support,” said Crook County Sheriff John Gautney, President of the Oregon State Sheriffs’ Association.

“The proposal outlined today lacks the necessary incentives for individuals struggling with addiction to actively seek help and places our law enforcement officers in the challenging

position of engaging without the tools necessary to be effective,” commented McMinnville Police Chief Matt Scales, President of the Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police.

“Oregon’s cities have little authority under Measure 110 to intervene to protect the lives of our residents suffering from addiction or address the community safety and livability issues that stem from rampant drug abuse,” said Hermiston Mayor Dave Drotzmann, President of the League of Oregon Cities. “The co-chair proposal released today has good components, but still requires cities to rely on a county or non-profit to provide deflections services before we can act-that’s not acceptable.”

The coalition understands the complexity of this issue and thank Co-Chairs Senator Lieber and Representative Kropf for their work and looks forward to additional conversations and details as we approach the legislative session.

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