

Submitter: Michael Goodman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response
Measure, Appointment or HB2005
Topic:

Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michael Goodman. I live in Southwest Portland in Senator Lieber's district, and my daughter attends Cathedral School — a PreK through 8th-grade in NW Portland, in Representative Isadore's district.

I'm here to strongly support this bill — and to urge this committee to give it real teeth and accountability.

I'm not here to debate harm reduction. I'm not against harm reduction. But what's been happening in our neighborhood — around my kids school — has nothing to do with thoughtful public health. It's reckless. It's unregulated. It's dangerous.

For months this year, we fought to remove a group of anarchist-aligned individuals who were openly distributing needles and crack pipes within a school zone under the guise of harm reduction. The older kids at school started calling it "Fentanyl Fridays" — because that's when these groups would show up, hand out paraphernalia, and leave. Basically just chumming the waters for drug dealers and crime to follow.

When we finally got local media involved and public pressure mounted, the group didn't stop — they just moved closer to a different block! City leaders, the DA, and County officials have told us their hands are tied. There are no rules. No guardrails. This is all part of harm reduction.

That's why I'm here. I'm asking — really, begging — for some adults in the room to step up and stop acting like our kids don't matter.

We need A basic, common-sense boundary: no open-air drug paraphernalia supply operations within 2,000 feet of a school, and clear deterrents if that boundary is crossed. I don't understand why that's controversial — but somehow, it is.

Yes, we live in a city. But our kids shouldn't be threatened by drug-addled strangers outside their classrooms. No 12-year-old girl should be told, "Get the F out of my way, you little whore," by an addict while she's waiting for her mom after school. They shouldn't have to watch open dealing and use or witness addicts camping and/or passed out next to the front door of the school. You see..., distributing crack pipes and needles just steps from a school encourages anti-social, dangerous behavior. Who would have guessed?

The groups handing out these materials don't live in our neighborhood. They don't answer to anyone. They show up, hand out crack pipes and walk away — leaving the overdoses, the needles, the crime, and the trauma for us to deal with. This isn't harm reduction. It's harm displacement.

Please take this bill seriously. Strengthen it. And finally, give communities like ours the ability to say:

Go ahead — do harm reduction. Just don't do it next to a school. Not next to our kids.

Thank you.