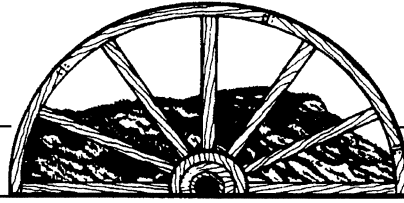

CITY OF



LA GRANDE

THE HUB OF NORTHEASTERN OREGON

OFFICE of the MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL P.O. BOX 670 LA GRANDE, OREGON 97850 Phone (541) 962-1309 FAX (541) 963-3333

December 2, 2022

Office of Governor-Elect Tina Kotek
900 Court Street NE, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor-Elect Kotek,

As the elected representatives of the City of La Grande, we wish to express our unanimous concern about the impact that Measure 110 has had on our community. Although we recognize that the intent of this measure was to help those suffering from substance abuse disorders, we have observed some unintended and undesirable consequences of its implementation. While we commend Governor Brown for her efforts to alleviate substance abuse in our state, we feel that Measure 110 has already proven to be ineffective as a solution to this complex issue. As Governor-Elect, we ask that you make addressing this issue a priority, not just for La Grande and Union County, but for all Oregonians.

As the agency providing Advanced Life Support ambulance services to La Grande and Union County, the La Grande Fire Department has seen the number of calls for narcotic overdoses and deaths rise sharply in the months since Measure 110 took effect. At a recent City Council meeting, one of our firefighter paramedics, Dusty Alam, stepped forward and shared that since Measure 110 was implemented, he had personally given more doses of Narcan than during his previous eight years as a EMT combined. He also noted the amount of Narcan being given to a patient had increased significantly. These calls are tragic for the patient and families, put a strain on the EMS system and add to the stress of our responders.

The overdose related calls for service into our 911 center have increased 360% from 2020's total through the first ten months of 2022. This increase in overdose calls for service does not include the overdoses that present into our local hospital's emergency department, to public health, or are self-treated. Our law enforcement officials consistently report that those cited for possession of illicit substances overwhelmingly choose to not seek recovery assistance through the provided hotline. Seeing no substantial consequences for their actions, these individuals lack motivation to pursue treatment for their harmful behaviors.

The lack of criminal penalty for illicit drug use has emboldened some of our citizens to use these substances openly in our public downtown spaces, creating significant safety concerns for residents and adversely impacting nearby businesses. We are also concerned about the consequences for our youth in light of two recent incidents involving possession of illicit substances by elementary school students. In both cases, the children obtained these substances from homes which is consistent with trends of higher drug use in our community.


Our small community lacks the treatment services and law enforcement resources necessary to cope with the effects of Measure 110 and we are concerned that additional funding may be inadequate to solve the new problems that it has created. We plead with you for a better solution which will help those affected by substance use disorders while also providing appropriate consequences for harmful behavior to deter repeat offenders and first time users alike.

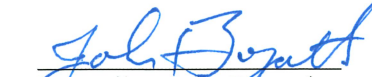
We appreciate your attention to these matters of significance to our beautiful community as we work tirelessly to make La Grande a great place for all to live and visit.

Sincerely,

La Grande City Council


Mayor, Steve Clements


Mayor Pro Tem, Gary Lillard


Councilor, John Bozarth


Councilor, Dave Glabe


Councilor, Nicole Howard


Councilor, Mary Ann Miesner


Councilor, Justin Rock

cc: Governor Kate Brown
Senator Bill Hansell
Representative Bobby Levy