



City of Ontario
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An open letter from the City of Ontario to:

Oregon Governor Kate Brown
Former Oregon House Minority Leader Christine Drazan
Former Oregon State Senator Betsy Johnson
Former Oregon Speaker of the House Tina Kotek

The City of Ontario needs your help.

The passage of Ballot Measure (BM) 110 in 2020 has disastrously impacted our community. As a border town with the State of Idaho, Ontario has seen a significant increase in crime and homelessness in the past few years. During a presentation to the Ontario City Council by Ontario Police Chief Michael Iwai, he noted the negative impact of BM 110 and the decriminalization of hard drugs in our community. Ontario is attracting individuals from outside of our community specifically due to this decriminalization.

We acknowledge BM 110 does provide for some additional funding to assist with addiction treatment. The City of Ontario would rather reverse the decriminalization of drugs and return the addiction treatment funds (which according to Police Chief Iwai will result in a grand total of seven new beds in all of Malheur County). Our local police feel overwhelmed by the increase in crime and homelessness resulting in a request of more police resources – not the decrease in police resources as envisioned with the passage of BM 110.

The City of Ontario understands that BM 110 was passed as a grand experiment by the people of Oregon and not by the Oregon Legislature (BM 110 failed in Malheur County 61% to 39%). The community of Ontario believes that the experiment has been a catastrophic failure. BM 110 is negatively impacting our citizens' quality of life and we ask that you do all you can in your power to overturn this misinformed policy in any way you can including sending this back to the voters for reversal or allowing Ontario to be carved out from its implementation.

Ontario is a proud and compassionate community and we do not want a handout from the State. However, as a rural border community of 11,080 we can no longer afford to bear the burden of being the drug use destination of our neighboring state and expect to continue to maintain the quality of life our citizens expect and deserve.

The City of Ontario needs your help, and we thank you for your consideration.

Mayor Riley Hill

Council President Ken Hart

Councilor Michael Braden

Councilor Eddie Melendrez

Councilor Sam Baker

Councilor John Kirby

Councilor Susann Mills