From: Matt Slaby
To: dencc - City Council
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Support Supervised Use In Denver
Date: Monday, November 26, 2018 3:21:36 PM

To Whom it May Concern (which, I assume, is whoever is reading this email):

I am a longtime resident of West Denver. In the late 90s and early 2000s I worked as a firefighter and an EMT with an ambulance company that ran approximately 17,000 calls per year. On a busy shift, that amounted to about a dozen calls per ambulance. As a young man, that experience was both difficult and enlightening as each shift offered a front row seat into the many health and welfare challenges that people face. The calls that remain with me almost two decades later are the ones that could (and should) have been prevented. That includes things like car accidents at the same dangerous intersections, gun violence, and drug and alcohol-related incidents that were a regular feature of the system. The latter bothers me the deepest simply because the most common approach taken by emergency medical providers and law enforcement was to corner somebody and remind them that they had only two choices: stop using drugs or die.

Sadly, we know now that this approach simply does not work and has cost more than a million lives since the turn of the millennia. Our most valiant efforts at jailing, shaming, and tough-loving people who use drugs has resulted in a swelling prison population and overdose statistics that dwarf deaths from both firearms and car accidents combined. The status quo has failed epically.

I am writing today to wholeheartedly endorse a supervised use site here in Denver because I firmly believe that it is incumbent upon our policy-makers and citizens to meet the failed status quo with ideas that are clinically sound, tested, and proven to work. As many of you have been reminded, data on supervised use sites has been gathered for decades. In fact, of 102 sites operating in 63 cities around the world, there has yet to be a single fatal overdose on those premises. What's more, supervised use does what law enforcement and visits to emergency departments have never been good at: reducing chaos on the streets, connecting people with treatment and services, and providing a trusting environment for people to mitigate the harms associated with problematic drug use. These results are well-documented, financially sound, and life-saving.

In a state that sees almost three overdose fatalities each day, it's becoming common for people here to have known someone who has met this sad and preventable fate. I count myself among that unfortunate demographic and trust that many in the City Council seating area tonight will share this trait with me. I'm hopeful that each and every one of our local officials will show that they support science and compassion tonight in support of this important piece of legislation.

Respectfully,
Matt Slaby, Esq.

MATT SLABY Luceo

+1 212 249 9500 (Office)

+1 303 877 0273 (Cell)

www.luceoimages.com

mattslaby@luceoimages.com