From: rascally rabbit
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2022 12:36 PM
To: CLK-CityClerks <CityClerks@winnipeg.ca>
Cc: Rollins, Sherri Gilroy, Cindy
Subject: May 18 motion - decriminalization

May 16, 2022

Re: City Motion - 4 pillars + Indigenous Harm Reduction Policy Brief incorporation into city mandates

I am writing this letter, as a person who pays taxes in the city of Winnipeg, to show my support for the May 18th motion that highlights a 4 pillars approach to harm reduction - specifically supervised consumption sites, decriminalization of possession, safe supply, diversion. I further support the city adopting the Indigenous Harm Reduction Policy brief as a guiding document that highlights; decolonizing and indigenizing, holistic and wholistic approaches, inclusivity, and innovative and evidence based solutions.

I recognize that current drug law and drug policy adversely impacts BIPOC populations as being overly represented in possession charges, arrests, and convictions. The failed war on drugs has caused great harm to people who use drugs (PWUD), and continues to funnel PWUD into the justice system rather than the healthcare system, despite problematic substance use being a health issue. It has wasted resources and tax dollars on policing, court costs and corrections, when these funds could be used to strengthen harm reduction and public health initiatives, mental health services, community programming, and housing initiatives; all which are evidence-based interventions that support relatives that have problematic substance use or substance dependence.

I also ask that as a next step the city explore a Winnipeg wide exemption for possession as a step in the right direction toward moving drug policy out of a criminalized sphere and into the realm of health and social services. This shift would also remove many of the barriers associated with creating safe consumption services, drug testing services, safe supply, and a variety of other harm reduction measures that are desperately needed to address the toxic drug supply epidemic that is ravaging our city; a crisis that has resulted in 407 overdose/ drug poisoning deaths in the province of Manitoba in 2021 - The highest recorded number to date.

I support this initiative and am committed to working closely with the city to ensure that the community consultations will follow, include, and prioritize the expertise of people who use drugs. Further, we continue to ask our municipal and provincial leadership to work with the community to collaborate on creative and evidence-based solutions together.

Sincerely,
Jonny Mexico