

Do not think that anti-drug legislation positions come from a place of apathy or lack of education and thinking about the subject. In fact, it is often the opposite. I am well aware of the sorrow and serious consequences that drug use can bring. One of my closest friends lost her older brother to an overdose, so I have seen the impacts of losing someone to drugs. I grieve with her every year on the anniversary. I grieved with her on her 20th birthday this year, the year that she turned older than he ever got the chance to be. So please know that I take this very seriously, and because of that oppose punitive drug use and trafficking laws. I oppose them because they simply do not work. I understand the appeal of it. There is comfort in the idea that something that can feel as consequential and frightening as drug use and trafficking can be simply aided by legislation. There is an alluring sense of control in this idea. However, it is not that simple. We have tried to alleviate drug-related problems with the kind of legislation that occurs in HB230, and it has not worked. It has only further damaged and divided our most vulnerable communities. There is no empirical evidence that drug induced homicide prosecutions save lives. Ohio is [third in the country](#) for Drug Induced Homicide prosecutions and [fifth in the country](#) for overdose fatalities, showing that harsher prosecution does not reduce death. here is no empirical evidence that drug induced homicide prosecutions save lives. Analyses of drug-induced homicide practices in jurisdictions in New Jersey, Tennessee, North Carolina, Illinois, Louisiana, and New York, found that despite dramatic growth in drug-induced homicide prosecutions, all of the jurisdictions experienced significant increases in overdose deaths, ranging from 7.6% to 20.1% in a single year. [Source](#)

We must try something different. We owe it to all of the lives that have been affected by drug use and trafficking to address these problems from a place of mercy, love, rehabilitation. I know it's what my friend wants. If we can't save her brother, we must save the generations to come with community-oriented actions over harsh legislation that has proven to be ineffective. It is the only way forward.