

Good afternoon, Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. I am **Diane Potvin**, a person in recovery since Valentine's Day 1987 and a person that manages a men's and a women's sober house. I am here today to express concern about Proposed **S.B. 666, An Act Concerning Safe Residential Treatment Facilities for Effective Recovery.**

I can tell you that there, first of all, is not enough available beds for individuals newly in recovery and the thought of the numbers lessening is frightening. I witness on a daily basis, people that have the opportunity to live in a sober house getting a better grasp on to what needs to be done to stay in recovery. The support that the tenants give each other is so important. It is always nice to know that you are not alone on this journey of recovery and if you are having a bad day...someone is right there within arms length with support and not within arms length of a drink or a drug.

Even though safe housing is not the total answer it is a big part of it. Yes a lot of our tenants have police records but I can say without hesitation that in most cases, with the individual in recovery the neighbors and community have nothing to worry about. They strive to do the right thing, go to work, do not party on weekdays or weekends and just want to get a descent life and learn how to live in a community that has shone them because of their disease, not moral shortcomings. Most are willing to go to great lengths to achieve this.

Licensing would only hurt the recovering person. CCAR has a Housing Coalition that has been active for 2 years and I believe that they, with the help of others can do a better job enforcing 'rules & regulations' that they have developed to keep sober houses safe and productive for our people.

Please listen to the people that need this lifesaving service, not those that want more money and/or votes.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee on this extremely important issue. **Please do not put in place a statute that may well jeopardize access to housing for persons who are striving to recover their lives and become productive members of society. Please consider working with DMHAS and the recovery community to accommodate community needs."**