

Good Afternoon Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and members of the Public Health Committee. I am a recovering addict and my name is Tommy Boyd. I want to thank God for everything.

I want to share with you my message of hope. It goes back as a child where I believed that my addiction started before I picked up a drug. I used to fantasize and compare because I didn't like who I was. It didn't matter what color I was, what size, black wanting to be white, white wanting to be black, fat or skinny, I just didn't like who I was. I got out of myself by doing things to be accepted.

I went in the military and toured Vietnam, using drugs to escape from where I was. My addiction skyrocketed when I came out of the war. I used so that I could try to forget what happened in the war. I had a lot of fear. The war trained me not to get close to people and affected my relationship with society and family. I also had to get professional help after 9/11 from issues I carried with me from being in Vietnam. It brought back stuff from being in the war and why I used and how I felt so patriotic. Having received 3 purple hearts, I realized that I would defend my country at any cost. I'm being treated for posttraumatic stress disorder.

Today, since I've been in recovery my life has changed a whole lot. In the process, I came to understand surrender, powerlessness and my life being unmanageable. Throughout this process I started to have more trust with people. I learned how to read and develop more confidence in myself. I enjoy helping others. It's something today that I really enjoy. I do it for the right reasons. Today I have a better relationship with people today. My daughter, my job...I'm working on my body, soul and spirit. I have bad days too, but that's ok, that's life...I know how to deal with them today instead of getting high. Today because of CCAR, I have been able to give back to the community and put a face on recovery that people do recover. I enjoy doing that too. Like I said before, I will do anything to help people. For the right reasons, I put my recovery first, for anything.

I haven't had to experience the need to personally need a sober house, but I have worked with numerous people seeking recovery. Their experience shows me that they really need safe sober housing, especially in Bridgeport. I will do what ever I can to help support the community in providing this. I hope you will help.

Thank you for listening to my story.