

Insurance and Real Estate Committee
February 27, 2020

Testimony in Support of:

H.B. No. 5248, H.B. No. 5254, An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Health Insurance Coverage for Peer Support Services In This State.

H.B. No. 5254, An Act Requiring Health Insurance Coverage For Medication-Assisted Treatment For Opioid Use Disorder

H.B. No. 5256 An Act Concerning Required Health Insurance Coverage For Detoxification And Substance Abuse Services

Co-Chairs Scanlon and Lesser; Vice Chairs Dathan and Hartley; Ranking Member Pavalock-D'Amato and Kelly; and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee:

My name is Alyssa Kassimis .

I got sober at 20 years old after battling an opioid addiction. I got my wisdom teeth out in high school, was prescribed opioids and was hooked. I quickly went from pills to heroin. My insurance would not pay for inpatient, but i found a place that gave me a scholarship for 5 weeks. If it wasn't for that program I do not believe I would be alive today. I have been sober since 8/22/2012. Along my journey I have lost countless friends and family members. Also along my journey I completed my associates in drug and alcohol counseling. Then i completed my bachelors in social work. Then my masters in social work. I am now a licensed drug and alcohol counselor. I work in inpatient treatment. I believe inpatient and long term treatment is needed in order to save the lives of our loved ones. I was given the chance, please help others get another chance. You never know when that one time will save somebody's life. I get to help people find the light in all of that darkness. We need to do whatever it takes to save more lives.

I am urging you to consider these bills to ensure insurance companies are required to provide help to those seeking services and to utilize MAT as a standard form of treatment, the data suggests this is one of the most successful ways to help those recovering from addiction.