

Public Health Committee  
March 2nd, 2021



*Testimony in Support of HB-5583*

**AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY INTERVENTION BY A POLICE OFFICER WHEN A PERSON SUFFERS AN OVERDOSE.**

*To allow a police officer to take a person into custody when the officer has reasonable cause to believe that such person is experiencing a drug overdose.*

Co-Chairs Horn and Bradley; Vice Chairs Osten, Paolilo; Ranking Members Champagne and Green; and distinguished members of the Public Safety & Security Committee:

*My name is Linda Bishop, I'm part of a growing coalition of your constituents and we thank you for allowing us to submit testimony in support of HB-5583*

*A friend suggested I share my story with you so that you can better understand what our community is going through as you deliberate these critical proposals - so here goes:*

*My youngest son had a horrible addiction to Soboxen. A drug used to treat an addiction to opiates. My drug of choice was pain pills opioids and if I couldn't find any Molly was always there. My son pick up where I left off. His girlfriend who is also addicted to opiates. They just lost there firstborn son. The state of New York took him at birth. My family has never been able to meet him. He was born addicted. My first born grandson out there because his parents are addicts. My son has been to jail more times than his years on Earth. He has threatened my mom, his father and myself. Him and I have physically faught to many times. Yet he still goes back to Soboxen and pain pills over all. I am at the point I am ready to wash my hands of him. He's not allowed in any family members house, because he is a known theft. I have had to throw him out in the middle of the night in a snow storm with no where to go because he's not allowed to spend the night. I just want my baby back.*

*I simply ask you to strongly consider taking the following action:*

- Review and support HB-5583, as well as a package of similar proposals that our foundation refers to as Brian Cody's Law.*
- Understand that hundreds members affiliated with Brian Cody's Law are in support of this proposal, sponsored by State Representative Carol Hall, from the fifty-ninth assembly district.*
- Consider as well that Brian Cody's Law calls supports any proposal that provides enhanced support systems to help those struggling with opioid addiction, stricter penalties for suppliers of lethal overdoses, better oversight of tracking opioids and waste, and ending safe havens – such as 'trap houses' where numerous overdoses occur on a frequent basis.*
- Please also consider that Brian Cody's law opposes taking addicted people into 'custody', we should not continue the 'lock our way out of this' approach - but rather our organization suggests a 72 hour hold and urges the client be placement into a clinical setting with appropriate supports in place.*
- Read up on the factors that are driving this effort forward on our website [BrianCodysLaw.org](http://BrianCodysLaw.org) and take action with us.*

*In this last decade, 500,000 Americans lost their lives to opioid use disorder. In 2020 alone, right here in your state, overdose deaths hit historic levels. Again! Thousands of citizens here in Connecticut have died since our organization's initial requests were filed. This simply cannot continue!*

*Do we have your support?*