

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 Bryce Koloseus, 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:

We at Redemption House which is a non-profit organization built on the belief of one-addict helping another opened on June 1st, 2020, and has helped save almost 236 men and women suffering from this disease already. Redemption House was a dream of Rick Delvalle a 13 yr recovering addict himself to bridge the divide that he saw in our healthcare system when it came to addiction services. Redemption House is a safe/sober facility to help those who have no other place to go upon their discharge from detox, sober living, or hospitals. We accept addicts with open arms and strive to show them a loving caring way to live in recovery as we work on getting them into rehabilitation, sober living, and set them up for a new life, and try to give them the best odds to be successful upon departure. we have had many addicts who have come through our program come back and volunteer in order to give back what was given to them and help the newcomer as they were once helped. In doing so we have built a community and support system which cultivates purpose, service, and selflessness in order to make sure there is no addict left behind. We are proud of the progress we have made but we do not underestimate the true seriousness and power of this disease and epidemic as it sweeps across our nation and youth population. We need the support and resources that legislation action can bear to fight this pandemic and give each and every addict a fighting chance to learn and understand that life free from the disease of addiction has so much more to offer than a life chained to this disease.

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 BrianCody'sLaw.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?