

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Committee members for having me today.

My name is David Nalls and I am a person in long-term recovery from a substance use disorder. I have been working in treatment for the past 8 years, starting as a recovery coach and today I am the Staff Development Specialist for Empowered For Excellence in Toledo Ohio. I got into this field to make a difference in the battle against addiction and stigma. I believe we can make a difference but funding has historically been missing from this public health crisis. I am forever grateful for this initial funding that the governor has proposed but we cannot stop here to achieve the goals we have all strived for and to helping people enter and sustain long term recovery.

I would like to start by saying we, the recovery community thank and appreciate the 200 million provided, it is a good start to healing the people and the community.

It is great that the Governor has placed much thought and care into facilitating the care needed to assist people in need of recovery. Peer Recovery support services are needed across the state in large capacity, Recovery Community Organizations containing this service should be promoted with one in each county

When I was in active addiction the time people spent with me was minimal and the time isolated was great. I would be in the community with now where to go, no understanding of the past problems, they only things being addressed were the symptoms of my drug use not the cause. The hope I needed, the hope all individuals in need of recovery is found in the lived experience of the survivor. It was not until I met with others who have walked my path that I learned what it meant to be in recovery. Recovery is not a program, it is not a thing that people do, it is not a simple statement to define freedom, it is the life we live. It is only with your help can we make a difference bring the solution to people instead of demanding they go find it.

Recovery is the solution and recovery is where we should focus our money and efforts. I am in support of the Governor's proposed budget and I ask you consider ensuring that people have the chance I was afforded to find recovery by including significant funding for Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services.

David Nalls