

Testimony for HB 427 Community and Faith-Based Addiction Recovery Bill

February 14, 2018

Chairman Ginter, Vice Chair LaTourette, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the House Community and Family Advancement Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of Substitute House Bill 427. My name is Steven Kliot, and I am a recovering alcoholic and addict with over two years of continuous sobriety, and also the Resident Manager of a sober house in Mentor, OH that is leased and operated by Clean Start, which is a faith-based organization founded to support addicts and their families.

- I am in favor of Sec. 3705.161. I think that open and honest communication between the department of health and the general public is both important and necessary to help curtail the stigma associated with addiction. Publishing the statistics will not only provide accurate data with respect to the current situation across Ohio's counties, but also provide hope as our efforts succeed and the numbers begin to decline. Monthly updates and press releases will help ensure that, and including hotline numbers will help raise awareness about available resources.
- I am in favor of Sec. 5119.63. Grants for nonprofit faith-based entities (like Clean Start) that support individuals overcoming addiction would be helpful to under-funded organizations which are normally outside the scope of traditional funding streams. Relying on the opinion(s) of public officials from the community served by the grant-requesting entity seems only logical.
- I am in favor of Sec. 5119.64. Grants for transportation assistance will be of enormous benefit. Often times an addict needs only to get to an accepting facility to begin their journey. That facility may be hours away. Although volunteers are commonly used to transport a program's participants, the cost is almost always absorbed by the volunteer providing the transport. Providing monies to ensure that volunteers already giving up their valuable time do not have to incur additional financial burdens would certainly broaden the pool of people willing to make the time sacrifice to help an addict get the help they need.
- I am in favor of Sec. 5119.65. Faith-based rehabilitation facilities grants will be extremely important in the long term support of recovering addicts. It is an absolute fact that addicts who leave inpatient treatment and then move

into a supportive transitional housing situation have a significantly better chance at long term success. Providing grants to faith-based nonprofits is an exceptional way to help increase the number of available beds in sober living facilities. With a facilities grant; organizations like Clean Start, which currently leases and oversees the sober house which I currently manage would be able to purchase property, make needed repairs and upgrades, and continue to seek new opportunities to provide transitional faith-based housing resources to recovering addicts. The criteria outlined in the bill are important in that they recognize both longevity and legitimacy of potential grant recipients.

I thank you all for your time and consideration with respect to both my testimony and this bill. It is my opinion that faith-based organizations can make an incredible impact in the lives of addicts and in the communities in which they serve. Thank you for acknowledging the good work of the people who have come here today to give testimony, and thank you for partnering with us in being a part of the solution!

With Sincere Respect,

Steven Klot