

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Mark Stasik and it is an honor to be selected to share my story with you all. I am a 66-year-old productive member of society. However, it was a rough road to get here in front of you today. I obtained my first incarceration in 2001 after many years of being a “functioning” alcoholic and marijuana abuser. In my 40’s, I tried methamphetamines for the first time with a friend I had trusted. I loved it. All other areas of my life not so much. My marriage was deteriorating, my children were not given the right attention or affection and my life was spinning out of control. With my first incarceration I was granted a judicial release. That seemed great to be out early, but I returned with no services, treatment or programming to help foster a healthy, crime free life. I made it six months before relapsing. In 2013, I again was incarcerated for 14 months. I was not given any treatment, programming or linkage to resources, and at the end of my 14 months I was released. I made it one week before I relapsed. In 2018, I again was incarcerated for 30 months. This time was different. I was granted Transitional Control (TC) on April 8th, 2021. I was assigned to enter the Oriana House Inc. Halfway House to begin my reintegration back into the community and society as a whole. I was blessed to finally be able to receive the programs, treatment and services I desperately needed. I first chose to associate with like-minded peers that wanted to work toward healthy goals and a healthy lifestyle. I was given assessments and placed into appropriate treatment groups and offered a Recovery Coach (Peer Support). The services, staff and treatment programs helped to guide and support me to a sober and productive future. Oriana House Inc. has a separate “Coffee House” that is run by Treatment and Recovery Coaches, and it saved my life. I got to meet and engage with other peers and counselors that helped to build my support network. I still get to attend even after completing the program. Being disabled I was unable to collect my Social Security Disability until I completed my Sentence. Once I completed my TC program, I was granted a Temporary Shelter Program (TSP) Placement at the Halfway House so I could continue to work on my sober network and community linkage. I was able to successfully move into Sober Housing while I then worked on my relationship with my significant other and continued to work on myself. I am now living at home with my significant other, working part-time at a job I love. I have obtained doctors and a specialist that are helping me get my health and wellness in better shape, and I have an excellent supportive network to count on. Without TC I would have been homeless, poor, and broken. I don’t know what I would have done.

My life is not perfect, but I am stronger and more confident that I can, and do, live a healthy life today. I am grateful to be able to give back to others what was shared with me, and I pray each day that I will be blessed to restore a relationship with each of my children, if the day shall ever come. I know I have the support to help me get through any obstacle.