



**House Children and Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 138  
Proponent Testimony  
June 3, 2025**

Chair White, Vice Chair Salvo, Ranking Member Lett, and members of the House Children and Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on Senate Bill 138. My name is Don Schiffbauer, I am the CEO of Riveon Mental Health and Recovery, but today I come to you representing the Ohio Alliance of Recovery Providers (OARP) for which I serve as a member of the executive board. OARP is a statewide organization of addiction treatment providers, certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, whose members work to increase access to treatment and develop a recovery-oriented system of care for all Ohioans.

SB 138 has been a work in progress for nearly a year for all the organizations involved, and we cannot thank Senator Johnson, as well as former Senator Sykes, enough for their willingness to keep lines of communication open and allowing all the interested parties to get what they needed out of this bill. With SB 138, providers, our state's ADAMH boards, and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services will have more clarity in Ohio Revised Code Chapter 340 moving forward. But perhaps most importantly, the many Ohioans who seek out treatment and recovery will be better served by the structure and transparency of this bill.

Under SB 138, ADAMH boards will establish priorities when determining eligibility for the services and supports needed most in their communities, and they will have the ability to refer people in need of services to those providers. We know that community-based care ensures that mental health and behavioral addiction services are available closer to where people live. This reduces barriers like transportation issues or any stigma that may be associated with seeking care in a more institutional setting. It also makes it easier for individuals from diverse backgrounds to access the care they need.

The new contracting structure established in SB 138 will allow ADAMH boards to adapt to the evolving needs of their populations, respond more quickly to changes in mental health and addiction trends, local challenges, or emerging issues. At the same time, providers will have a well-structured contract outlining clear expectations and notification requirements between the provider and the board. It goes without saying that behavioral health providers and professionals work with very vulnerable populations, which is why we are thrilled that there will be a transition period up to 60 days if a contract is not renewed allowing for the transition of care

from one provider to the next. Every person receiving recovery treatment is different, and finding the right services to continue treatment for each individual person is paramount for providers.

Finally, SB 138 establishes criminal penalties for anyone who operates a recovery housing residence without being certified by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or an authorized credentialing agency. You may recall two years ago in HB 33, the most recent state operating budget, where many new guardrails were enacted for recovery housing – both for credentialing and operating this type of housing. In the final HB 33 version that was signed by Governor DeWine, the criminal penalties were removed, and we believe this is a gap in the law that SB 138 now seeks to rectify. Recovery housing needs to provide a safe and stable environment. High standards of care ensure that the housing is physically safe, emotionally supportive, and free from triggers or distractions that could jeopardize recovery. The safety and stability of the living environment is foundational for residents to focus on their healing process, which is why OARP members believe that those who do not or will not provide the best standard of care for the people in their care have no business operating recovery housing.

OARP members are thrilled to support SB 138, and once again I would like thank Senator Johnson for his leadership on this important issue. While the core of this bill may focus on the crucial relationship between providers, ADAMH boards, and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, we know that what comes out of those relationships provides a strong foundation for individuals to focus on their recovery, access necessary support services, stay sober, and achieve a level of wellness that supports their success, not only personally but also as a member of the community.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our thoughts on SB 138 on behalf of the Ohio Alliance of Recovery Providers. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.