



ADAMHS BOARD

*Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services Board
of Adams, Lawrence, Scioto Counties*

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Ohio House Community Revitalization Committee

Testimony on HB 58

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Chairman Click, Vice-Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Community Revitalization Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 58. My name is Susan Shultz. I am the Executive Director of the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Adams, Lawrence and Scioto Counties, and we are statutorily empowered to establish, to the extent resources are available, a community support system, which provides prevention, treatment, support and rehabilitation services for our community.

I am here today to express support for HB 58 and for the work that Representative Pizzulli and Representative Jarrells is undertaking to try to put forward solutions for one of the challenges we are experiencing in our communities. In my three county Board area, we currently have a total of 201 recovery houses – 11 in Adams County, 80 in Lawrence County, and 110 in Scioto County, per the Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Registry list and the Ohio Recovery Housing certification list. This does not include those providers who still have not registered their homes with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or Ohio Recovery Housing. We also now have 49 certified providers who provide substance Use, Mental Health and Prevention Treatment in our three counties. We have around 155,608 in population per the 2023 census for our three counties. The number of Recovery Houses and Substance Use Providers has exploded in the past 5 years in our area, with most never coming to inform the Boards of their intent to open.

Let me be clear, we support recovery housing, and we want to make sure that individuals in need are able to access high-quality recovery housing when they need it. We also need to make sure that we have the resources in place to evaluate community capacity and that we partner to ensure quality care.

My Board is supportive of the work that Representatives Pizzulli and Jarrells are undertaking to put forward solutions to the problems our community is facing. We are excited to continue

"Empowering residents to be mentally and physically healthy and to lead addiction-free lifestyles"

working collectively with the Representatives and our community partners to improve the recovery housing environment in our three-county Board area.

While I am in support of this bill, I do think it needs additional information to provide clarity to its requirements. We agree that a capacity needs assessment would help communities to identify the level of need for recovery housing. We also believe that ADAMH Boards should be involved in that process. We know how many providers we have and how many houses are in our counties, even those who are not registered yet.

More details need to be built-in around the inspection and investigation roles of ADAMH Boards. For example, for inspections, will we be using a set of already existing standards, or developing something new? Who will be involved in helping develop those standards? I think Boards and providers should be involved in that process. For investigations, we would need additional structure around what the inspection entails. For example, who and how would the investigator be trained? The investigator would need to be trained on not just the recovery housing standards, but also every building codes, and ordinances from each county, city, and village. Clear guidance on what complaints would be investigated and how they are to be resolved and reported is also needed. Our ability to hire inspectors and investigators is a concern, as we would not be able to do so without the fees provided for in the bill, which could take well over a year to receive. We also would like to see the application fee of \$250 changed to more of a tiered cost plan based on a range of resident bed numbers. Additionally, we would need an on-ramp to begin this work with a clear timeframe as we will need time to ramp up our operations for these requirements.

We look forward to continuing conversations with the Representatives to discuss additional improvements to the bill. We are pleased that we have a Representative that wants to address this issue and is willing to work with us to help our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. At this time, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.