



**Ohio House Community Revitalization Committee
House Bill 58**

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Chair Click, Vice Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, members of the House Community Revitalization Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 58. My name is Molly O'Neill and I am the CEO for Ohio Citizen Advocates for Addiction Recovery.

OCAAR is Ohio's advocacy organization for people with substance use disorders. It is our mission to advocate for those in and seeking recovery from a substance use disorder to ensure political, social, educational, and economic equality. We work to accomplish this through education, mobilization, advocacy training, and listening to our constituents, so that we can lift their expert voices to be heard and considered everywhere decisions are being made about us.

I am here today both as the CEO of OCAAR and as a person in long-term recovery to express strong opposition to House Bill 58. While we share the goals of ensuring high-quality recovery housing across Ohio and protecting individuals in recovery from substance use disorders, this bill creates significant barriers that will ultimately limit access to essential resources. We have heard from proponents of this bill that its intention is to protect Ohio's recovery community. Yet, the recovery community has not been included in the process of developing this legislation.

In our work, OCAAR travels across the state hosting listening sessions for Ohio's recovery community. In these discussions, we ask participants what resource is most needed in their communities for people in recovery to thrive. In every single session, recovery housing is one of the top supports people name. Recovery housing works because it is a community-based solution. Recovery housing is housing. It is not healthcare, it is not clinical, and it cannot be paid for by Medicaid. Requiring a certificate of need for new recovery residences, renovations, or expansions will delay much-needed housing, drive up costs, and discourage community-based providers from opening or expanding at a time when the need for recovery housing is greater than ever.

HB 58 shifts the responsibility for inspections and complaint investigations. This change risks creating an inconsistent patchwork of enforcement across Ohio, as local boards may lack the expertise, resources, or neutrality necessary to oversee recovery housing effectively. Centralizing this oversight ensures that there is a uniform, evidence-based



approach to maintaining recovery housing standards, rather than subjecting providers to varying local interpretations and policies.

Many recovery homes operate on limited budgets, relying on community support and grants to maintain affordability for residents. Recovery housing is not a clinical, nor healthcare service, and is not eligible for Medicaid billing. In most cases, residents pay out of pocket for their rent. Requiring providers to pay costly application fees based on the number of beds will divert critical resources away from housing operations and support services while making it more difficult for people in recovery to find stable housing.

We acknowledge and appreciate the effort to protect Ohio's recovery community. Regulation and standardization are critical to ensuring high quality programs continue to operate. At a time when Ohio continues to battle the addiction crisis, we should be removing barriers to recovery, not creating new ones. Recovery housing plays a critical role in helping individuals sustain long-term recovery, secure employment, and reintegrate into the community. HB 58 threatens to disrupt this vital system by adding excessive regulations that are not only unnecessary but could also have unintended consequences that impact every community in the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.