



February 28, 2024

The Honorable Delegate Samuel Rosenberg
Chair, Health and Government Operations
6 Bladen Street, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: SUPPORT of House Bill 980
(Public Health- Opioid Restitution Advisory Council and Fund-Revisions) - FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Rosenberg and Health and Government Members,

My name is Aaron Wright, a person going on 10 years in sustained abstinence based recovery. I am the Data and Program Manager for Voices of Hope; a non-profit 501c3 Recovery Community Organization (RCO) that operates in both Cecil and Harford Counties. Our RCO employs 55 individuals either in recovery or family members directly affected by substance use. Our services utilize a stages of change model with helping individuals find, enter, and maintain recovery in the state of Maryland. HB0980 would allow Recovery Community Organizations (RCO's) to customize programs and services catered to the needs of their community.

According to SAMHSA in 2021 20.9 million individuals are in recovery from substance use in the US. That is 20.9 million individuals that rely on types of recovery supports to be productive members of society, live lives with dignity and purpose, while representing that recovery is possible in their communities. We urge the General Assembly to authorize the 25% set aside funding from the opioid restitution funds to allow Recovery Community Organizations to customize and cater to their local recovery communities needs!

Using substances for 23 years to someone who is now a Father, Husband, productive member of society, and a member of the local recovery community. I urge the emergent support and ask the Senate Finance Committee give SB427 a favorable report

Please feel free to contact me, Aaron Wright, aaronwright@voicesofhopemaryland.org and for more information about our RCO Voices of Hope please visit voicesofhopemaryland.org