

January 26, 2020

Chair Delores Kelly  
Finance Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SUPPORT of Senate Bill 279  
(Public Health - Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program) -  
FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Kelly and Senate Finance Committee Members,

I, Stephany Rhodes, support Senate Bill 279 "Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program," which will allow community based organizations such as our organization to establish overdose prevention programs to reduce overdose deaths, which continue to occur at unprecedented levels in Maryland.

I am a person in recovery and have seen first hand the need for this type of program. Access to this type of preventative care and resources would have greatly benefited me year ago and I hope it will benefit many people in the near future.

**For over 30 years, it has been proven that Overdose Prevention Sites save lives.** I urge the General Assembly to authorize overdose and infectious disease prevention services, a proven intervention used across the globe to decrease overdose deaths. The proposed Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program mirrors more than 150 such programs already established across the world. More than 60 cities in 12 countries operate such programs, and numerous studies demonstrate the positive impacts. In all of the 150+ OPS around the world, in which millions of supervised drug injections have occurred, **no one has died of a fatal overdose.**

**I ask that the Finance Committee give SB279 a favorable report.**

-Stephany Rhodes  
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