

February 26, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith
Finance Committee
3 East - Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – Senate Bill 558: Recovery Residence Grant Program – Establishment

Dear Chair Griffith and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS and WPS represent over 1000 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS/WPS support Senate Bill 558: Recovery Residence Grant Program – Establishment (SB 558). Recovery residence grant programs can be effective in helping individuals with substance use disorders (SUD) maintain their sobriety and transition back into society. These programs can provide a safe and supportive living environment for individuals in recovery, as well as access to resources such as counseling, job training, and other services.

Research has shown that recovery residences that offer a structured and supportive environment can effectively promote long-term recovery from SUDs. For example, a study published in the Journal of Psychoactive Drugs found that individuals who lived in a recovery residence for at least six months had significantly better outcomes than those who did not. Additionally, some recovery residence grant programs may have specific criteria or requirements for participation, such as a commitment to attending support group meetings or obtaining employment. These requirements can help reinforce positive behaviors and provide a sense of accountability, which can also contribute to the program's effectiveness.

However, the effectiveness of these programs can vary depending on several factors, including the program's quality, the level of support provided, and the individual's level of commitment to their recovery, which arguably all comes down to proper funding. SB 558 attempts to set a threshold level of financing for these residences. Therefore, MPS/WPS ask this committee for a favorable report on SB 558. If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society and the Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee