



Senate Bill 546 - Criminal Procedure - Medical Emergency - Immunity

House Judiciary Committee

March 30, 2023

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Evolve Life Centers program provides a wide range of clinically intensive treatment services, including, Partial Hospitalization, Intensive Outpatient, Outpatient, Mental Health, Medium Intensity Residential Treatment, Low Intensity Residential Treatment, Recovery Housing and DUI Education through our 12 plus locations throughout Pasadena and the surrounding area in Anne Arundel County, MD.

Currently, laws in place punish people who use drugs or alcohol and those who try to help them during an emergency. SB546 wants to change that by offering legal protection to those who seek, provide or help someone get medical assistance during a drug or alcohol emergency. The bill also extends the legal protection to those who have violated pretrial release, probation, or parole conditions as a result of seeking medical help during such emergencies. This way, people can get help without the fear of getting into trouble with the law.

At Evolve Life Centers, we have seen firsthand the devastating impact that addiction can have on individuals and their loved ones. We believe SB546 would provide critical support to individuals seeking or providing for medical emergencies related to drug or alcohol use as it recognizes the importance of protecting these individuals from criminal sanctions. This change is necessary as research shows that fear of arrest or criminal penalties can prevent individuals from seeking medical assistance during an overdose or other medical emergency related to drug or alcohol use. This is a major concern as it can mean the difference between life and death for someone struggling with addiction.

Not only would this bill help to reduce overdose deaths, it would provide an opportunity for individuals to access the care and resources they need to recover from addiction. This would effectively remove barriers to medical services and recovery programs for those struggling. By widening access the providers of the State can more actively work towards treating individuals and putting an end to the crisis of substance abuse and addiction in Maryland.

By supporting this bill, the State can take a significant step towards providing valuable care and resources to individuals in need of addiction treatment. SB546 improves lives and the overall wellness of citizens in Maryland which can lead to a number of positive changes from family life to the economy.

For these reasons, Evolve Life Centers politely asks for a favorable report on SB546.

For more information call or email:

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | therese@ashlargr.com