

March 8, 2024

SB866 - Health - Small Halfway Houses and Small Private Group Homes - County Zoning
Senate Finance Committee

Position: OPPOSE

Dear Esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Recovery180 is a low-intensity residential treatment program that provides substance abuse treatment in a structured sober living environment. We have multiple locations throughout Maryland which include Baltimore City, Carroll County, and Eastern Shore. The program includes six months of housing and clinical services for clients as part of a comprehensive approach to addiction treatment. Clients are supported as they gain skills to improve their physical, mental, emotional, and financial health, with the goal of becoming self-sufficient and independent. As clients complete our programs and take the next step in their recovery, halfway houses and sober living houses are integral in the continuum of care and sobriety.

Maryland's current zoning laws, compliant with the Fair Housing Act and ADA, recognize small halfway houses and group homes as single-family dwellings, crucial for seamless integration into communities. These homes are sanctuaries for those fighting substance abuse, offering them the dignity of recovery within the community's fabric.

Senate Bill 866 threatens this delicate balance, posing risks that are too grave to overlook:

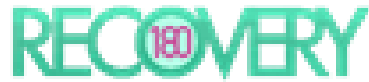
Regulatory Hurdles: Changing zoning laws may inadvertently close facilities that have seamlessly operated in harmony with residential areas, stripping away the chance for many to seek recovery.

Reduced Accessibility: Relocating these homes to less accessible areas could sever vital connections to employment and community services, disrupting the hard-fought progress of residents.

Community Resistance: The bill may invite unwarranted resistance, stigmatizing residents and igniting legal conflicts that further alienate vulnerable groups.

Financial Burden: New zoning laws could impose financial hardships on these facilities, which already operate on limited budgets, diverting funds from critical recovery services.

Housing Shortages: The bill could exacerbate housing challenges, leaving those in recovery with even fewer or no options for safe, supportive living environments.



In conclusion, the passage of Senate Bill 866 would undermine the integrity of recovery homes and the well-being of their residents. We implore you to stand against this bill. Protect the rights and futures of Maryland's recovering community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Dr. John Kotz
Director of Operations
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