

House Bill 1396 Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs – Discharge of Patients and Referral 2
Services – Standards

To all elected delegates:

I have been serving those experiencing homelessness in our state for 11 plus years. Of course, one of the codependents of experiencing homelessness can be substance abuse.

I have witnessed numerous constituents of our state, willing to seek help for their addiction. This bill addresses some of the barriers. One barrier is finding a program that will accept them or their medical benefits, the next concern is the program's credibility, location, and availability.

If they can address these concerns, the next and possibly most important, is the discharge and ongoing treatment or follow-up. So many are released to shelters or homelessness. This only increases their chances of losing their sobriety for various reasons. Some of those paramount reasons are stress of where they will stay, no option but to return to the previous environment, people, places and things, or go to an environment that exposes them to their substance all over again.

Another major concern is follow-up treatment and referrals. The referrals and discharge plans must be in place, verified and made mandatory to ensure success of productivity in the community

I know you have received communication from others expressing these concerns more poignantly, but every word spoken by someone with lived experience should help move the needle for improvement. This bill will do just that!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Bingham

People With Lived Experience Committee