

The Honorable Chair Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
Chairman, Health Government and Operations Committee  
Room 240 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT of House Bill 845

(Public Health – Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program) - FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and members of the Health Government and Operations Committee,

My name is Eric and I am writing to support House Bill 845 “Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program”. HB845 will allow community based organizations to establish overdose prevention programs to reduce overdose deaths, which continue to occur at alarming levels in Maryland.

Simply taking pharmaceutical companies to court is not enough to combat drug misuse in Baltimore. It has been proven that giving access to items that make drug use safer is doing more to curb overdoses than simply parroting talking points from the poorly aged "war on drugs".

Between December 2023 and November 2024, we lost 1,689 Marylanders to fatal overdoses. We urge

the Maryland General Assembly to authorize overdose and infectious disease prevention services, an intervention proven for over 35 years of research to decrease overdose deaths. The proposed Overdose

and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program mirrors the 200 evidence-based public health

interventions already established across the world in 14 countries, including two in the United States.

Trained personnel monitor participants for signs of overdose and intervene to prevent or reverse overdoses. In addition to overdose prevention services, OPCs provide a welcoming space that helps

bring drug use indoors and connect people to long-term, life-sustaining resources, like addiction services and social supports, including voluntary treatment.

This is an emergency and we urge you to act now. We ask that the Health Government and Operations Committee give HB845 a favorable report.

For more information about this position, please contact [candy@baltimoreharmreduction.org](mailto:candy@baltimoreharmreduction.org)