



February 5, 2025

House Health & Government Operations Committee

**House Bill 396 - Prince George's County - Substance Abuse Early Intervention and Detoxification Services Fund - Establishment PG 407-25**

POSITION: FAVORABLE

The Recovery Housing and Treatment Centers Coalition of Maryland (RHTC) writes to support **Prince George's County - Substance Abuse Early Intervention and Detoxification Services Fund - Establishment PG 407-25**. We are a coalition of recovery residences, group homes, treatment centers, and other important services that support the continuum of care throughout Maryland. RHTC works to educate others on the importance of maintaining and expanding recovery facilities and services in Maryland and the benefits that such facilities have on persons in recovery, the community, and the State.

We strongly support House Bill 396. This legislation addresses a critical gap in access to early intervention and treatment for youth struggling with substance use disorders in Prince George's County. House Bill 396 is more than just a funding mechanism for substance use treatment—it is a strategic, evidence-based initiative that prioritizes prevention, early intervention, and long-term recovery. This legislation aligns with best practices in behavioral health and public policy to disrupt cycles of addiction, incarceration, and socio-economic instability.

By funding up to 90 days of treatment, this bill provides timely intervention before substance misuse escalates into lifelong dependency or involvement in the criminal justice system. Many youths lack the financial resources to access treatment. HB 396 ensures that no child is denied treatment due to their family's financial status. Expelled students often face limited options and are at a higher risk of continued substance use and criminal behavior. By integrating health services into the juvenile justice system, HB 396 promotes rehabilitation over incarceration, reducing recidivism rates and supporting youth in leading productive, sober lives.

Additionally, youth substance misuse is a key driver of emergency room visits, overdoses, and long-term medical complications. By intervening early, we can reduce the need for costly emergency interventions and prevent tragic, preventable deaths. The funding mechanism in HB 396 also reduces reliance on state emergency services and public assistance programs, creating long-term cost savings for Maryland taxpayers.



Substance misuse among youth is often linked to trauma, mental health disorders, and socio-economic stressors. Without proper intervention, these underlying issues can escalate, leading to lifelong addiction, homelessness, criminal justice involvement, and premature death. By providing immediate treatment access to students expelled from school, HB 396 prevents further disengagement from education and the workforce, reducing their risk of long-term substance dependency. The involvement of local behavioral health authorities ensures that holistic, trauma-informed care is available, addressing not just substance use but also co-occurring mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

We urge the committee to pass HB 396 and ensure sustainable funding for this vital initiative. Investing in youth treatment and recovery today will lead to stronger, healthier communities tomorrow.

For more information call or email:

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