

February 26, 2025

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,

On behalf of the Good Trouble Church, I am writing in support of House Bill 845 “Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program”. HB 845 will allow community-based organizations to establish overdose prevention programs to reduce overdose deaths, which continue to occur at alarming levels in Maryland.

Like many other amazing community organizations, we have prioritized the distribution of naloxone, fentanyl and xylazine rapid testing strips, and other life-saving interventions within our community. We want you to share in our joy that our efforts have had an impact, within the last few months our outreach staff reversed 7 potentially fatal overdoses with naloxone. At the same time, we want you to know our heartbreak that despite our efforts we are still losing community members to overdose. This is one of many reasons Good Trouble Church believes we need more life-saving interventions in Maryland, like Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Programs.

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.**

Thank You,
Greg Frailey
Good Trouble Church

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