

HB 1249 FAVORABLE

Certified Recovery Residences - Refusing Services to Individuals Receiving Medication-Assisted Treatment – Prohibition

Senate Finance Committee

hearing: March 31, 2026

My name is Janet Beebe and I am a dually certified nurse practitioner in adult primary care and psychiatric mental health nursing. I have been a nurse practitioner for over 25 years providing primary care, mental health, substance abuse and pain management services.

I have also served as the President of the Board for a men's sober living residence in my area. During this time as President, I advocated for the use of MOUD (medication for opioid use disorder) as well as psychotropic medications in the formerly abstinence-based facility and was successful in its implementation. This was not an easy transition and some members left the board as a result of the decision to permit the use of MOUD by residents.

Historically these houses have been abstinence-based largely due to tradition, so there is often reluctance to accept the use of medications in these facilities. There is also stigma associated with the use of medications like buprenorphine and methadone, that persons prescribed MOUD "are not really clean" and "a drug is a drug is a drug."

The United States is currently in the throes of an opioid overdose epidemic resulting in the death of over 100 people a day. There are effective treatments for Opioid Use Disorder but only about one quarter of persons who are eligible are prescribed these medications.

Housing can also be a challenge for persons with OUD as returning from treatment or incarceration to a place where there is active drug use can result in relapse. Recovery residences or sober houses are a solution to the housing issue.

Research demonstrates that use of medication for OUD decreases the incidence of relapse and the resultant risk of overdose and death. Patients receiving MOUD remain in treatment longer. Drugs are becoming stronger. Fentanyl is more potent than heroin and is often adulterated with other substances potentially making it more lethal than older opioids. The goal of the various levels of care is to provide excellent care to their residents according to best medical practices and evidence-based standards.

I am asking the committee for a favorable report for HB 1249.

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