

Dear Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for **HB 886**, which addresses the certification process for Peer Recovery Specialists.

Peer Recovery Specialists are a vital component of the healthcare continuum, particularly as we continue to navigate the complexities of the behavioral health and substance use crisis. These professionals leverage their lived experience to provide a unique, highly effective level of support that traditional clinical roles often cannot replicate. By formalizing and supporting the certification process through HB 886, we ensure

- **Standardization of Care:** Clear certification standards guarantee that individuals receiving peer support are met with a consistent and high quality of service.
- **Professional Recognition:** This bill provides the necessary framework to treat Peer Recovery Specialists as the essential healthcare professionals they are, improving workforce retention and morale.
- **Expanded Access:** Streamlining the certification process will help grow the pool of available specialists, ensuring more Marylanders have access to life-saving recovery support services.

Investing in peer-led interventions is a proven strategy for reducing emergency room visits and improving long-term recovery outcomes. For these reasons, I urge the committee to **give HB 886 a FAVORABLE report**.

Best Wishes,

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