



Powell Recovery Center, Inc.
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March 4, 2021

Delegate Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT of House Bill 396
(Public Health - Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program) - FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Pendergrass and House HGO Committee Members:

Powell Recovery Center, Inc. is writing to express the strongest support for Overdose Prevention Sites in Maryland. The Opioid Epidemic has cost the lives of thousands that might have been saved. Senate Bill 279 “Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program,” will allow community-based organizations to establish overdose prevention programs to reduce overdose deaths, which continue to occur at unprecedented levels in Maryland.

Powell Recovery Center has provided life-saving addiction and dual recovery treatment in Baltimore since 1994. Our Outreach teams travels to the back alleys and abandoned homes to bring people in desperate need to help. In just our 2 block area our Outreach prior to Covid typically administered NARCAN to 10-12 people in our community who were not in treatment in our facility every month. These people were in the last few minutes of life. We also see people die alone from overdose in back alleys. Each month in the City that we love, 75 to 90 people die from overdose - that is 2-3 people every day.

For over 30 years, it has been proven that Overdose Prevention Sites save lives. We urge the General Assembly to authorize overdose and infectious disease prevention services, a proven intervention used across the globe to decrease overdose deaths. The proposed Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program mirrors more than 150 such programs already established across the world. More than 60 cities in 12 countries operate such programs, and numerous studies demonstrate the positive impacts. In all of the 150+ OPS around the world, in which millions of supervised drug injections have occurred, **no one has died of a fatal overdose.**

We ask that the Finance Committee give SB279 a favorable report. For more information about Powell Recovery Center, Inc. or our strong support for Overdose Prevention, please call Kim Wireman at kwireman@pcinc.org.

Sincerely,

Kim Wireman

Kim Wireman, LCSW-C, LCADC
President/CEO