

Submitter: Tony Vezina

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB1530

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Senate Housing Committee members,

My name is Tony Vezina, and I am in long-term recovery from substance addiction. I work as the Executive Director of 4D Recovery and have the honor of being our State's Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission Chair, but this testimony represents neither.

I fully support SB 1530's investment into Recovery Housing as it played a critical role in my personal recovery. After several years of homelessness, I found myself in Multnomah County Jail, waiting to be released to residential treatment. At this point, my addiction severely impaired my ability to live an everyday life, with every second committed to getting and using heroin.

I went from jail to the Volunteers of America Men's Residential Treatment Center, where I stayed for about six months. I began identifying in recovery while in treatment and started believing that I could live a meaningful life without the use of drugs. It was strongly recommended that I transition from treatment to Recovery Housing, so I found an opening at the sober living house my counselor had stayed at. This was one of the best life decisions I've made.

Recovery housing provided me with the following benefits:

Affordability: I was going to college, working part-time, and attending many 12-step meetings, so having cheap rent was critical in allowing me to focus on myself and my education.

Recovery environment: living in an abstinent setting with others in recovery extended the success I started in residential treatment. As I started learning to live on my own, I was faced with many stressors, and the people at the recovery house provided me with encouragement and hope. Additionally, random urine analysis delivered accountability and satisfied my probation requirements.

Self-sufficiency: I learned how to budget, grocery shop, and handle other responsibilities. I used the money I saved in rent to pay off criminal justice fines, pay for college, and eventually move into a small basement apartment. I stayed in that apartment until I purchased my first home in 2021.

Now, in my professional life, I am working diligently to ensure people with substance use disorder have the same opportunity I did. It is a great feeling knowing that in this session, thousands of Oregonians could have that same opportunity; all they need is

for you to move this investment forward.

Please support recovery housing.

Tony Vezina