

Siggi Averysson

House of Senate Speech

RCOM

January 29, 2023

Dear Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I Siggi Averysson come forward to address my personal experience and feelings toward the life skills, personal growth, and success I have shared through Recovery Connections of Maine (RCOM) sober living house and programing.

I am afflicted with substance use disorder and throughout my life I have been to all the methadone clinics and multiple suboxone doctors in the Cumberland County area. All my previous attempts at recovery have gone poorly and ended in a jail cell. Jail and prison set me back twice as long as the time spent incarcerated. I have 12 years in prison and county jail where I spent some time living healthy and sober, but no time to work on my recovery. Once I am released, I must catch up on all my time with family that I missed and, on my repairs, bills, and physical things I cannot do from a jail cell.

June 2022, I transferred from prison to RCOM sober living house. The basic needs, housing, food, clothing, and safety are built into the program. For the first time in my life, I could focus on me while having regular contact with my family. At the beginning of my program, I attended intensive outpatient (IOP) classes daily where I learned life skills to live with recovery and built a connection with my new community of successful healthy people.

Soon I moved into the second phase of recovery, where I enrolled into college and found part time work. Currently, I can support myself with rent, food and buy my own clothes. This elevated my self-esteem, and my family is proud of me, and I have a great relationship with my probation officer. Everybody walks their own path to recovery; at RCOM I have the freedom to grow with a powerful network around me.

The connection with all my housemates encourages me to be successful. I watch the others around me in various stages of recovery and learn from them as well as teach them. This gives a new meaning to lead by example. Monthly we have a dinner meeting where we all connect and really see the full spectrum of successful people in recovery. There are new members who made the choice to make their life better and old members who are not only role models but living examples of how a successful life is possible.

My story is only one of many, I see my housemates around me growing daily and it inspires me to be the best me possible. The freedom to grow at your own pace in an environment where we are all tenants in the same building sharing the same experience is what makes the process work so well. We all have similar responsibilities and different stories to tell. I can say without doubt that if I did not find all the support and structure here at RCOM sober living house, I would not be this successful and happy with my life today. I have tried this too many times on my own and let my family and myself down. I have never been able to be this proud to be someone in recovery who can be there for my kids and family.