

Testimony against LD109

LD109 "An Act to Improve Safety for Individuals Living in Recovery Residences"

Good morning, Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury and Honorable Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

My name is Kandie Cleaves, I'm a taxpayer and I reside in Garland, I'm testifying against LD109 "An Act to Improve Safety for Individuals Living in Recovery Residences".

Common sense says we should make a Recovery Residences as safe as possible. I am completely in favor of that. What I am not in favor of is a bill that would cause hundreds of people to lose their housing and recovery assistance when there is no other place to transfer them to. We are in a crisis like never before when it comes to substance use and people being unhoused, if you pass this bill, you will be responsible for creating an even worse crisis and inevitably more people will die from it. The very people this bill supposedly seeks to protect. We also risk opening up our state to a lawsuit.

In an emergency sometimes the help that is first provided is often just temporary while we get someone to where they need to be. Sometimes that temporary situation is lacking in many ways. For example, giving people a blanket or tent when they need an actual home. Or simply offering words of wisdom and our well wishes when they actually need a Recovery Coach or counselor. The current situation with Recovery Residences should be seen like that temporary fix. It isn't as good as we would like but it is better than not having it all. We need to do better, but we need to do it in a way that causes the least harm to those attempting to reach recovery.

I ask that if you would like to see additional safety requirements for Recovery Residences that you bring forward a bill that removes the financial burden from the Recovery Residence owners by providing funding, extending time frames for work to be done, and a request for the state to find the funding at the state and or the federal level to fund the safety requirements. And in exchange for funding by the state or federal government that the recipients of said funding agree to remain operational for a set reasonable amount of time so that taxpayers can feel our money was well spent and our crises can be ended. Don't punish the people who are stepping up to the plate to assist in this crisis. And remember that people in need of these services deserve the opportunity to access recovery. Our society and government have helped create the issues faced today and rather than create additional obstacles we need to create opportunities.

Kandie Cleaves

Garland