



May 2, 2023

RE: SF2934

Chairs Hoffman and Noor,

I am writing on behalf of the NUWAY Alliance. The NUWAY Alliance is a Minnesota non-profit whose mission is to provide leadership, innovation, and recovery access. The original entity, NUWAY House Inc., was established in 1966 with a mission to provide recovery in supportive environments to individuals dealing with substance use disorder (SUD). Overseeing thirteen licensed 245G co-occurring treatment programs, the NUWAY Alliance accounts for roughly 10% of the state's yearly SUD admissions. On average, Alliance programs are treating over 1100 individuals daily. More than half of those clients are engaged in our R.I.S.E. (Recovery In Supportive Environments) care model pairing clinical services with community based Recovery Residence (sober housing) support. In partnership with the University of Minnesota's Center for Practice Transformation, we are conducting longitudinal research involving over 6000 voluntary enrolled clients empirically demonstrating that access and engagement in sober living settings results in statistically significant improvements in recovery outcomes.

Our model and research make us a significant stakeholder in the proposed legislation of sober homes and we were an active participant in the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Sober Homes Study workgroup commissioned by the legislature. It is important to note that a number of participants in the study including NUWAY, the Minnesota Association of Sober Homes (MASH) and the Minnesota Association of Resources for Recovery and Chemical Health (MARRCH) submitted a letter to the legislature detailing concerns about the methodology and management of the study. As has been well documented at this time, DHS has still not produced the report for review by participants or the legislature despite citing its content as foundational to proposed legislative language.

While we applaud the Senate language defining a sober home, we believe the House language is a bridge too far given the DHS report has not been released. The proposed oversight and regulation does not accurately differentiate sober living from clinical treatment and has the potential to both jeopardize sober living access and irreparably harm sober living community infrastructure.

Rather than rushing to judgement with immediate legislation based on anecdotal references to "bad actors", we would strongly encourage the assembly a true work group, fully inclusive of the community affected to provide in depth exploration of viable strategies to enhance and strengthen sober living environments while maintaining the spirit and wisdom of the recovery community that brought these valued entities into existence.

We are happy to provide further commentary or support as necessary.

NUWAY Alliance
2217 Nicollet Avenue South
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monique Bourgeois".

Monique Bourgeois, MPNA, LADC
Chief Community Relations Officer
NUWAY Alliance

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