

Bill: House Bill 2767

Position: Support

Name: Diana Mann

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Hudson and Wright, and members of the House Committee on Education:

I am writing today in support of House Bill 2767, which will create a long-term, sustainable funding and governance model for recovery high schools in Oregon. Recovery high schools provide a safe, supportive education for youth in recovery from substance use and mental health disorders and it is critical that Oregon begin investing in these life-saving programs.

HB 2767 is the product of an interim interagency workgroup commissioned by HB 5202 in 2022 and offers a clear, collaborative path forward to expand, support and govern recovery high schools across the state.

I grew up surrounded by the impacts of generations of alcohol and other addictions. As an adult, I worked for many years assisting attorneys who represented families devastated by tragedies arising from alcohol and other addictions. Later, in the Multnomah County Courts I worked as a judicial assistant for over 20 years where I personally witnessed the fallout from those in need of recovery. The judges I worked for handled all aspects of this in the judicial system: domestic violence, theft, murders, financial devastation, broken homes, juvenile dependency and termination of parental rights and endless incarcerations. My final years with the courts were focused on providing treatment programs in lieu of incarceration.

In 2015, I became painfully aware of how much of our young populations was impacted by their parents' addictions and their own. At that time I became involved in Al-Anon and began my own recovery. At age 75, I am finally able to acknowledge my family legacy and use the tools of recovery to pay it forward. I am confident that only great things will come from providing the tools of recovery to our youth.

In 2015, I learned there were no treatment programs in Oregon to help our young population achieve sobriety and recovery. Harmony Academy, Oregon's first recovery high school was birthed out of this vacancy and I have been blessed to witness the miracles in young lives as they achieve sobriety, receive their high school diplomas, and carry with them a bright future. I am so grateful for the support system that brought them out of isolation and gave them lifelong tools for hope against all odds. These young people will carry those tools forward for generations to come.

Oregon ranks last in the nation for substance use treatment and recovery support. This legislation provides a cost-effective and proven way to support adolescents in recovery as they work to gain their high school diploma.

On behalf of generations to come, I urge your support for House Bill 2767 and ask that you vote YES on this critically-needed, thoughtfully-created legislation.

Thank you,

Diana Mann